

Health Ministry launches health insurance plan for retirees



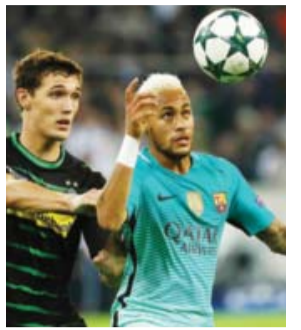
Jets knock out Aleppo hospitals as Russia steps up assault



Missile which downed MH17 transported from Russia: Inquiry



Barca battle from goal down to beat Gladbach 2-1



COURT: PETROL HIKE ILLEGAL, BUT NEW PRICES TO REMAIN

MPs CAUTIOUSLY WELCOME RULING, DEMAND SCRAPPING HIKE



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17 STUDENTS INJURED IN SCHOOL BUS ACCIDENT

SCHOOLGIRL KILLED

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Seventeen boys were injured yesterday when their private school bus turned over along Jahra Road while heading to school in the early hours of the morning. Nine ambulances were dispatched to the scene and the injured students were rushed to Jahra Hospital for treatment, said Assistant Undersecretary for Medical Services Affairs at the Ministry of Health Jamal Al-Harbi in a statement.

Security sources said that nine of the schoolboys suffered mild injuries, four were hospitalized for further treatment, while four others were treated and discharged. Hospital staff are dealing with these cases with utmost priority, considering the injured students' ages range between eight and 11. Officials later said 12 out of the 17 students were discharged. Separately, a six-year-old Kuwaiti girl was instantly killed when she was run over by a school bus in Doha.



KUWAIT: The wreckage of a bus that overturned after colliding with another vehicle, injuring 17 students, is seen yesterday. (Inset) One of the injured students is seen at Jahra Hospital.

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: The administrative court yesterday said the Cabinet decision to increase petrol prices is illegal, since it was issued in violation of the law, but it rejected a request to suspend the increase immediately. Judge Jassem Al-Rashed said the decision was issued by the Cabinet based on a recommendation by a Cabinet committee that reviewed subsidies and prices of public services. However it was implemented without getting the approval of the Supreme Petroleum Council (SPC), the highest oil decision-making body headed by the prime minister, the court said.

This violated a law issued in 1980 establishing Kuwait Petroleum Corporation that states that decisions like this should be approved the SPC and issued in an Amiri decree, the court insisted. Based on this understanding, the court ordered the government to scrap the petrol hike decision issued in August, which came into effect on Sept 1.

The ruling was based on a petition filed by lawyer and former MP Nawaf Al-Fuzai and backed by a number of lawyers and citizens, who said that hiking petrol prices harmed the citizens and residents of Kuwait. But the court rejected another request by them to immediately suspend the increase until the appeals court has issued its verdict in the case. It said that there was no immediate need to suspend the hike decision.

The case will now go to the court of appeals and later to the court of cassation, whose decisions are final. If the appeals court confirms the lower court ruling, then the price hike will be suspended immediately. It was not immediately known what the government will do to rectify the procedural flaw in anticipation of the appeals court's decision.

Continued on Page 13

News

in brief

Troubled Saudi firm lays off Quran printers

RIYADH: Woes deepened yesterday for employees of troubled conglomerate Saudi Oger which laid off more than 1,300 staff at a printing plant for the Holy Quran, a newspaper reported. The once-mighty firm led by Lebanon's billionaire former prime minister Saad Harii has been hit by a drop in income from its core construction business after Saudi Arabia delayed or cancelled projects in the face of plummeting oil revenues. The Saudi Gazette said the contract staff at the King Fahd Quran Printing Complex in the holy city of Madinah received termination notices on Tuesday. It said it obtained a copy of the notice ordering workers "to complete the end of service procedures" as their contracts had been terminated on Sept 3. More than 30,000 Saudi Oger Ltd construction workers, mostly from India, Pakistan and the Philippines, have gone unpaid for up to nine months.

BlackBerry to outsource handsets, halt production

OTTAWA: BlackBerry announced yesterday it would halt in-house production of smartphones, marking the end of an era for the once-dominant Canadian tech firm. Ontario-based BlackBerry said it had reached a deal to outsource production of its phones to an Indonesian partner, and would instead concentrate on software and services. Handsets with the BlackBerry name will be produced under license by PT Tiphone Mobile Indonesia Tbk, a statement by the firms said. BlackBerry, which a decade ago was among the world's largest smartphone makers, has seen its global market share slip to less than one percent as Apple and Android devices have dominated. As the market shifted, BlackBerry has sought to refocus on software, including security applications, and the latest announcement takes the company out of the handset market entirely. (See Page 26)

Playboy features first Muslim woman in hijab

LOS ANGELES: Playboy magazine, which did away with nudity earlier this year as it sought to appeal to a wider audience, is for the first time featuring a Muslim woman wearing a hijab, in a spread that is drawing both praise and criticism. American journalist Noor Tagouri appears in the magazine's October "Renegades" edition, a series that focuses on men and women "who risked it all - even their lives - to do what they love". The 22-year-old journalist who works as a reporter for Newsy, a video news network, is featured wearing a black leather jacket, jeans, sneakers and a hijab. Tagouri, who is of Libyan descent and whose goal is to become the first "hijabi" anchor on commercial US television, says that her struggles as a Muslim woman growing up in the United States have helped her move ahead in her career. Tagouri, who has a social media following of more than 100,000, first gained attention after launching the viral #LetNoorShine campaign in 2012.

CONGRESS REJECTS OBAMA VETO OF 9/11 BILL

SAUDI ARABIA HAS WAYS TO HIT BACK AT LAWSUIT EFFORT



WASHINGTON: This frame grab from video shows the floor of the Senate on Capitol Hill yesterday, as the Senate acted decisively to override US President Barack Obama's veto of Sept 11 legislation. — AP

WASHINGTON: The US Congress voted overwhelmingly yesterday to override Barack Obama's veto of a bill allowing 9/11 victims to sue Saudi Arabia, the first such rebuke of his eight-year presidency. The Senate overrode the veto in a 97-1 vote, followed a short time later by the House of Representatives, which knocked it down with a 348-77 vote, meaning the bill will become law. The rare act of bipartisanship was a blow to Obama, who lobbied hard against the bill, known as the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act (JASTA).

White House press secretary Josh Earnest called the Senate vote "the single most embarrassing thing" the legislative body has done in decades. "Ultimately these senators are going to have to answer their own conscience and their constituents as they account for their

actions today," he told reporters traveling with Obama in Richmond, Virginia.

Coming in Obama's last months in office, the vote shows the White House to be much weakened. Obama has issued 12 vetoes during his presidency. None have been overridden until now, a rare feat given Republicans' longstanding control of Congress. His Republican predecessor George W Bush also issued 12 vetoes, of which four were overridden. The last president to avoid an override was the legendary Democratic congressional dealmaker - and former senator and congressman - Lyndon Johnson.

The White House argued the 9/11 bill would undermine the principle of sovereign immunity, opening up the United States to lawsuits. In a letter to Republican and Democratic Senate

Continued on Page 13

OPEC REACHES FIRST DEAL TO CUT OIL OUTPUT SINCE 2008

ALGIERS: OPEC agreed yesterday to cut its oil output for the first time since 2008, with the group's leader Saudi Arabia softening its stance on arch-rival Iran amid mounting pressure from low oil prices. Two sources in the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries said the group would reduce output to 32.5 million barrels per day from current production of 33.24 million bpd. How much each country will produce is to be decided at

the next formal meeting of OPEC in November, when an invitation to join cuts could also be extended to non-OPEC countries such as Russia, sources said.

Oil prices jumped more than 5 percent to trade above \$48 per barrel as of 1830 GMT after the outcome of OPEC's informal meeting in Algeria took traders by surprise. Still, many said they wanted to see the details of the deal.

Continued on Page 13



ALGIERS: Participants gather ahead of an informal meeting between members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in the Algerian capital yesterday. — AFP

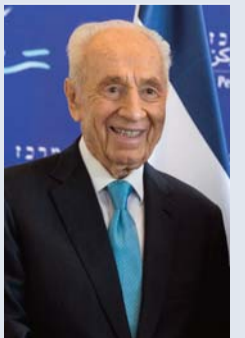
ARABS GREET PERES' DEATH WITH SILENCE

JERUSALEM: Israel's Shimon Peres was widely admired around the world as a peacemaker and visionary, but the view in the Arab world was more complex: Memories linger of another Peres, who built up Israel's military might, waged war in Lebanon and promoted policies seen as harmful to the Palestinians. In a reflection of this sentiment, Peres' death yesterday was greeted with official silence across the Arab world - in sharp contrast to the emotional tributes that poured in from the West.

While a long list of Western dignitaries prepared to descend upon Jerusalem for Peres' funeral tomorrow, no Arab leaders are yet scheduled to come. Even Egypt and Jordan, the two countries that have peace accords with Israel, had no official reaction yesterday. Arad Nir, the foreign affairs commentator for Channel 2 TV, said it would be "very sad" if the people who Peres negotiated with did not attend the funeral. "It puts a question mark on Shimon Peres' vision, his life's mission: Peace," he said.

The silence reflects the animosity toward Israel in the Arab world, particularly at a time when the peace process Peres helped launch has collapsed and Arab anger is high at the headline policies of

Continued on Page 13



Shimon Peres

News

in Brief

Diyar Al Muharrag signs \$366m Islamic financing

DUBAI: Bahrain-based real estate developer Diyar Al Muharrag said yesterday that it had secured \$366 million in Islamic financing from four banks to develop a new housing project. The murabaha contract was signed with Al Salam Bank-Bahrain, Kuwait Finance House, Bank of Bahrain and Kuwait, and Al Baraka Islamic Bank of Bahrain. Murabaha is a common cost-plus-profit arrangement in Islamic finance. The money will be used to help develop the 1.2 million-square-meter Deerat Al Oyoum project, a residential community with a first phase planned for completion in February 2018.

Housing ministers adopt Riyadh meeting agenda

CAIRO: The Executive Office of the Council of Arab Housing Ministers yesterday adopted the agenda of the Council's 33rd session due in Riyadh on December 20. The office decided at the end of its 81st meeting held in Cairo yesterday that the Riyadh session would focus on how to provide emergency housing to those affected by disasters and risks, and to promote relevant effective response, upon suggestions from Egypt, Algeria and Iraq. It added that the ministers, during their Cairo meeting, had reviewed the implementation of housing-bearing resolutions adopted by recent Arab economic, development and social summits. It also called for stepping up Arab countries' participation in a UN housing and sustainable development conference due in Ecuador on October 17-20.



Dean of the diplomatic corps, Kuwaiti Ambassador to Bahrain Sheikh Azzam Mubarak Al-Sabah visits the Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) pavilion. — KUNA

Ambassador lauds Kuwait participation in Petrotech

MANAMA: Dean of the diplomatic corps, Kuwaiti Ambassador to Bahrain Sheikh Azzam Mubarak Al-Sabah praised Kuwait's participation in "Middle East Petrotech 2016" conference held in Bahrain. He added in a press statement, after attending the opening of Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) pavilion, that Kuwait's oil companies have a long tradition and extensive experience in the field of refining and petrochemical industry. He expressed hope that the exhibition contributes to developing Kuwaiti youth worker's expertise in this vital industry. Middle East Petrotech 2016 is the most established exhibition and conference for the downstream refining and petrochemical industries, the event kicked off last Monday and chaired by Kuwait Petroleum International and Saudi Aramco.

KUWAIT'S BIOFUEL PROJECT NEAR COMPLETION

MANAMA: Deputy Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Kuwait's Mina Al-Ahmadi refinery Ahmed Al-Jeemaz said yesterday that the biofuel project has made long strides reaching 65 percent near completion. The project aims to produce approximately 800,000 barrels per day by 2018, he added. Speaking on the sidelines of the participation of Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) in the 'Petrotech Middle East 2016' exhibition and conference, he said that the project will have a significant economic returns through mar-

keting capability of biofuel in the European Union area and the United States.

He explained that the biofuel will enjoy the required specifications and approval with the European environmental standards, which gives Kuwait strong access to the European market and increase the competitiveness and marketing capacity in the European Union area, which imposes environmental standards for such fuel.

He stressed that the project is one of the most vital projects as it provides environ-

mental improvements to the product for the domestic market as well as by reducing environmental pollution for electric power plants, in addition to providing employment opportunities for national labor estimated at about 1,000 jobs.

He pointed to the closure of the Shuaiba refinery in April of next year and attach it to the Mina Abdullah refinery. Asked about the government and the Supreme Petroleum Council's approval to set up an integrated petroleum industry company, Al-Jeemaz

confirmed that this company was born giant and very significant because of its importance in running Al-Zour refinery and terminals to import liquefied natural gas and the presence of an attached petrochemical complex.

He said the company's production capacity will be up nearly at 615,000 barrels per day, becoming one of the largest refineries in the region, adding that 40 percent of its production will be dedicated to the power stations of the low-sulfur biofuel. — KUNA

KUWAIT'S SECURITY CHIEF RECEIVES NATO OFFICIAL

BLEAK ASSESSMENT OF MIDEAST BY THINK TANK

KUWAIT: Chief of the Security Bureau Sheikh Thamer Al-Ali Al-Sabah yesterday received Nicola de Santis, the head of NATO's Middle East and North Africa affairs, discussing bilateral ties and mutual cooperation between the State of Kuwait and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The security bureau said in a statement that the discussions between the two sides dealt with preparations for inaugurating NATO's training center, due in Kuwait late this year. The talks also dealt with activating on a broader scale the mutual cooperation partners' program.

Bleak assessment

In the year to mid-2016, much of the Middle East continued to be affected by state-driven and jihadist violence, political turmoil and worsening economic and social conditions, according to a leading think tank. In its "Strategic Survey 2016: The Annual Review of World Affairs", the UK-based International Institute of Strategic Studies (IISS) think tank said that a sense of frustration and despair pervaded the region, as hoped-for de-escalation on various battlefields failed to materialize and no genuine effort at political reform was made. Instead, tensions grew and public space was tightened, with regimes strengthening their hold on power. The wars in Syria, Iraq, Yemen and Libya led to no decisive victories nor political settlements, while their humanitarian toll and security repercussions increased. Progressively losing territory in Iraq and Syria, Daesh gradually reverted to its role as an insurgent group, and mounted attacks outside the Middle East, the independent research centre said. However the report made it clear that Daesh is "shrinking and its power has weakened."

It underscored that: "Importantly, the Russian intervention in Syria opened a new chapter in the internationalization of Middle Eastern crises. This and the accompanying retrenchment by the US, ahead of the country's 2016 presidential elections, raised the prospect of greater brinkmanship." In the end of its chapter on the Middle East, the study stressed that as Syria "remains the fulcrum of regional com-



KUWAIT: Chief of the Security Bureau Sheikh Thamer Al-Ali Al-Sabah receives Nicola de Santis the head of NATO's Middle East and North Africa affairs. — KUNA

petition in the region, it also emerged as flashpoint for conflict between international powers." The 2016 Strategic Survey analyses the trends that shaped relations between global powers in the past year.

This edition contains an expanded chapter of thematic essays to give broader insight into these important world trends, focusing its analysis of domestic events on those that affect relations between countries. Meanwhile

IISS noted that 2016 was characterized by a "bad-tempered roar against political arrangements seen to be unfair, concocted by others, and out of touch with the current realities of international power or the prevailing winds of domestic sentiment." In this environment, foreign policy became, and will continue to be overshadowed by the prospect of "greater brinkmanship", the study suggested. — Agencies

SAMSUNG

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For more information on the Galaxy Note7 Exchange Programme, please visit www.samsung.com or call 183-(CALL).

KUWAIT'S YOUTH AUTHORITY ADOPTS EXECUTIVE SCHEME

KUWAIT: Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Chairman of the Public Authority for Youth (PAY) Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah declared yesterday that the board has adopted PAY's executive strategy, launched in August and blessed by His Highness the Amir. The board also adopted the proposed budget for the forthcoming fiscal year (2017-2018), said Sheikh Salman who chaired the board's seventh session.

The draft budget, once it has been endorsed by the relevant supervisory and executive authorities, will signal start of major tasks' execution by PAY. He called on PAY's officials to adopt a more creative approach with respect of youth activities by, such as, engaging the civil society and the private sector in the authority's programs.

PAY is working rapidly in line with the higher leadership guidelines aimed at boosting the youth capacities for innovation and excellence in various sectors, he added.

PAY's General Director Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi expressed gratitude to Sheikh



KUWAIT: Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Chairman of the Public Authority for Youth (PAY) Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah presiding over the meeting. — KUNA

Salman for his unlimited support for launching the strategy and adopting the executive scheme. Hamed Al-Aazmi, a board member, said the young citizens account to 72 percent of the Kuwaiti population; a fact that magni-

fies the need to "invest in this segment, meet their aspirations and guide them for the country's development." Part of the attention will be devoted to the large number of Kuwaiti students studying abroad, he indicated. — KUNA

KUWAIT ARMY READY TO SAFEGUARD THE NATION

KUWAIT: The Kuwaiti army is apt and ready to safeguard the nation, Army Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Mohammad Al-Khoder said yesterday. On a visit to the country's aerial defense base, Al-Khoder commended the army's preparedness to carry out its duties, saying this is the result of

diligent work on the army's part. Moreover, he conveyed to the Army Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah's well wishes.

Meanwhile, army official Adel Al-Hafeth said he is grateful for the Army Chief of Staff's visit, vowing to

put forth more efforts to further develop the army's capabilities. Deputy Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Sheikh Abdullah Al-Nawaf Al-Sabah and head of the army's operations Major General Ahmad Al-Omairy accompanied Al-Khoder on his visit. — KUNA



Army Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Mohammad Al-Khoder visits the aerial defense base.

Photo

of the day



KUWAIT: Camels participate in a beauty competition in this file photo, during the popular heritage festival, held at Sabah Al-Ahmad Heritage Village. — KUNA

KUWAIT MINISTRY OF FINANCE DENIES PLANS TO CUT WAGES

MOH LAUNCHES RETIREES' HEALTH INSURANCE



KUWAIT: The Ministry of Finance yesterday categorically denied reports on social media about purported government's intention to slash payments. The official spokesman of the Finance Minister, Khaled Al-Rubaian, said there is no government's intention to review or cut payments or allotments for the civil servants, at present. He indicated that revising the payments "will be applicable to citizens to employed after endorsement of the strategic alternative (scheme)." Al-Rubaian added that the re-examination of the payments' scale would be aimed at hiking salaries of those who are underpaid as compared to others who perform the same job and get higher salaries. The State reforms' scheme does not include a program to trim the salaries and is actually aimed at ensuring welfare for the citizens by tackling "sources of excessive spending."

Retirees' health insurance

In another development, the Minister of Health Dr Ali Al-Obaidi yesterday launched a health insurance for retirees



Minister of Health Dr Ali Al-Obaidi addresses the audience as he launches the retirees' health insurance. — KUNA photos

declaring start of distributing cards for 117,000 eligible citizens, at a total cost of KD 82 million. Minister Dr Al-Obaidi, speaking during the inauguration ceremony, said retirees eligible to benefit

from the service can received their cards at 45 offices in all of the country's governorates. The centers include three hospitals and medical centers, 39 dentistry clinics, 41 laboratories, 41 x-ray centers,

42 private clinics and 43 pharmacies.

Speaking on the ceremony, Al-Obaidi said that the Ministry of Health has stayed true to its word by implementing the health insurance plan for retirees, an endeavor he described as an accomplishment that underscores cooperation between the government and the National Assembly. Moreover, he noted that more than 117,000 retirees are the beneficiaries of the health insurance plan, which provides a slew of health services at a cost of KD 17,000 per person.

Al-Obaidi said that retirees are free to choose from a list of health care providers at their disposal, adding that the plan is meticulous and complies with international health standards. Al-Obaidi said that the health insurance plan for retirees is the latest in a series of projects designed to prop up the health sector in the country. He also added that a number of hospitals and medical facilities are undergoing renovations to ensure top notch healthcare services. — Agencies

BAYT.COM CV SEARCH HELPING EMPLOYERS

DUBAI: Finding the right candidates for your business should not be a time-consuming endeavor, thanks to Bayt.com's powerful CV Search technology. In fact, in 2015 alone, employers successfully contacted over one million job seekers using Bayt.com CV search. This powerful online tool enables employers to streamline the hiring process to make it easier and faster for hiring managers to find the perfect candidate.

Bayt.com CV Search enables recruiters and enterprises to organize the entire recruitment process; it helps them to screen and filter millions of CVs to source the right candidates who match the job description, and immediately establish communication with them. To date, recruiters and potential employers have successfully used the tool to fill vacancies in their companies.

Sana Siddiqui, Group Recruitment Specialist, Al Babtain Group said: "Bayt.com is a quick and effective tool for searching and identifying potential candidates. The search filters offered are very clear and defined in terms of employer preferences and search criteria. The recruitment process, including job postings, screening candidates, shortlisting and interviewing, can be quickly accomplished with the help of Bayt.com, and closing positions, particularly entry and mid-level positions, have become much easier."

Misha Ashar, FMCG Recruitment Consultant, Mindfield Resources Consultancy: "When we registered on the Bayt.com website, what we wanted and got was a huge database of Arab professionals and GCC nationals. As soon as we started using Bayt.com, we realized how much choice we have when it comes to searching through CVs and getting candidates for the job postings. The candidates we found on Bayt.com were relevant to the positions we were looking for."

Ben Fuery, MENA Recruitment Coordinator, Global Staffing Solutions, added: "Bayt.com has provided us with a user-friendly interface and is an excellent tool when identifying professionals with suitable skill sets. When running adverts we have found that the response we get is great. The website itself is varied and serves a multitude of purposes, with salary searches being an added bonus. The CV Search feature has been particularly helpful; with the range of search options allowing us to finely tune our searches and has therefore reduced the time it used to take us to identify and find relevant high quality candidates."

Easy-to-use

"At Bayt.com our mandate is to connect employers with potential job seekers, and to streamline the process along the way. CV Search enables employers to access almost 26.5 million CVs using powerful, easy-to-use search tools to find the right candidates to fill their job vacancies. We urge all employers to get online and try our free CV Search demo to see how they can reap immediate benefits with this technology," said Suhail Masri, Vice President, Employer Solutions, Bayt.com. "At Bayt.com, we are always at the forefront of recruitment technologies. We do our utmost to ensure that these technologies make their way into the hand of potential employers, and job seekers, to empower them to lead their lifestyles of choice." For more information and a free demo on Bayt.com CV Search, please visit: www.bayt.com/en/employers.



NBK RESUMES ANNUAL BEACH CLEANING CAMPAIGN

KUWAIT: Within its annual environmental program to protect Kuwait's seafloor, the National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) recently launched its third

annual beach cleaning campaign with participation from its summer trainees. NBK's PR official Ya'qoub Baqer said that NBK is keen on boosting

environmental awareness and effective participation in various activities designed to protect the environment.

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Philipp Rode, Executive Director of the London School of Economics Cities and senior research fellow at LSE. —Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

'CITIES AND THE NEW CLIMATE ECONOMY'

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: It has been repeatedly argued that cities have a unique opportunity to build a different model of economic growth - one which achieves the benefits of growth but with significantly reduced greenhouse gas emissions alongside co-benefits such as improved health. And it is commonly understood that this will require a focus on actions that are systematically important for how cities function including decisions around urban form, city design and transport.

In partnership with the London School of Economics, Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) hosted on Tuesday at Al-Shaheed Park a lecture based on research by the Global Commission on the Economy and Climate. The lecture entitled "Cities and the new climate economy: On the role of urban form and transport" was presented by Philipp Rode, Executive Director of the London School of Economics Cities and senior research fellow at LSE.

Rode spoke about achieving high-quality, resilient and inclusive economic growth while reducing the risks of climate change. The research aims to drive action by world leaders, business executives and investors ahead of a major summit on climate change. "The decisions we make now will determine the future of our economy and our climate. If we choose low-carbon investment, we can generate strong, high-quality growth - not just in the future, but now. But if we continue down the high-carbon route,

climate change will bring severe risks to long-term prosperity," he said.

Better Growth, Better Climate: The New Climate Economy Report was presented to governments and business and finance leaders at a global launch event at the UN headquarters in New York City, attended by United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon. The report arrives just one week before the UN Climate Summit.

The report finds that there are now major opportunities to achieve strong growth with lower emissions in three key sectors of the global economy - cities, land use and energy. To achieve this growth, governments and businesses need to improve resource efficiency, invest in good-quality infrastructure, and stimulate technological and business innovation.

Rode reviewed the recommendations of the global commission. Better urbanization: We have to make better planned urban development a central element of national economic development strategies. And we must consider greater fiscal autonomy for cities to unleash investment in smarter urban infrastructure. Price externalities: Eliminate fuel subsidies and other subsidies and introduce mechanisms to price externalities such as traffic congestion.

Redirect investment: Redirect existing infrastructure funding towards more compact, connected and coordinated urban infrastructure. Planning and governance: strengthen role of strategic planning at national, regional, and city levels incl. setting up integrated land use and

transport authorities. Financing models: Work in partnership with the private sector at new funding vehicles to unlock capital for mass transit and other smarter infrastructure.

The NCE Cities Research Program is led by LSE Cities at the London School of Economics. The program includes a consortium of researchers from the Stockholm Environment Institute, the ESRC Centre for Climate Change Economics and Policy, the World Resources Institute, Victoria Transport Policy Institute, and Oxford Economics. The NCE Cities Research Program is directed by Graham Floater and Rode. ABSTRACT Urbanisation is one of the most important drivers of productivity and growth in the global economy.

Between 2014 and 2050, the urban population is projected to increase by around 2.5 billion people, reaching 66 percent of the global population. By 2030, China's cities alone will be home to nearly 1 billion people. India, Nigeria and Indonesia will also experience rapid population growth. If managed well, the potential benefits of this urban growth are substantial.

The economic potential is driven by raised productivity resulting from the concentration of people and economic activities in cities that leads to a vibrant market and fertile environment for innovation in ideas, technologies and processes. Similarly, well-managed cities in high income countries could continue to concentrate national economic growth, through re-densification and the roll out of innovative infrastructure and technologies.



'GOOD TO HAVE THEM BACK' TARGETS NEW GENERATION

KUWAIT: MoI's Relations and Security Media Department has stressed its keenness in creating a new generation capable of dealing with security and traffic issues. The

Department said that the media awareness campaign launched by the beginning of the new school year under the title of 'Ya Zeen Oudathom (Good To Have Them Back)

has been distributing special awareness brochures and holding lectures, seminars and exhibitions on traffic for all age categories from kindergarten to high school.

KUWAITI COMMITS 'SUICIDE'

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: A Kuwaiti was found hanging in his house in Abdullah Mubarak, said security sources.



Mock drill in Adan

In collaboration with KFSD, Adan Hospital yesterday held a mock drill evacuating the ICU due to a water leak inside the unit.



Asian arrested over CDs

An Asian was arrested for illegally publishing CDs containing movies and indecent scenes, said security sources, noting that 100,000 CDs were confiscated on raiding the suspect's store. The sources estimated the confiscated CDs are worth over KD 130,000. The suspect's partner is still at large.

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DAR AL-ATHAR AL-ISLAMIYYAH LAUNCHES CULTURAL SEASON

KUWAIT: Dar Al-Athar Al-Islamiyyah launched its 21st cultural season, and the first lecture of the season was presented by Dr Ziad Rajab of the Tareq Rajab Museum. The topic was about his late father and founder of the museum, Tareq Rajab. Tareq Sayid Rajab was born in Kuwait City in 1935 in a house adjacent to Mubarakiya School, where his grandfather was the headmaster. During his childhood, he was surrounded by literary and artistic influences including his grandfather and his brother Farhan, a writer and a musician. Tareq was also influenced by other Kuwaitis, including his special tutor

and guardian Sheikh Abdul Rahman Al-Duaij, who encouraged his interest in manuscripts and ancient Arabic literature. Rajab began seriously collecting Islamic art objects in the 1970s and decided to open his collection to the public in 1980, when the Tareq Rajab Museum was founded. The museum continued to expand until 2004, when he opened the Museum of Islamic Calligraphy due to his lifelong interest in Arabic writing and literature. Tareq Rajab died on June 26, 2016 aged 81. His son said his legacy continues to live on from the institutions he established.



JAC AND IAEA SIGN COOPERATION AGREEMENT IN NUCLEAR MEDICINE

KUWAIT: Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah Molecular Imaging Center (JAC), one of the centers of the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences' (KFAS), signed an executive agreement yesterday with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in Vienna to strengthen cooperation between the two parties in the field of peaceful nuclear use, particularly in the field of nuclear medicine.

The agreement was signed on the sidelines of the 60th session of the IAEA General Conference, by Dr Adnan Shihabuddin, KFAS Director General, and Aldo Malavasi, IAEA Deputy Director General of the Department of Nuclear Sciences and Applications. Dr Shihabuddin announced that this agreement was the first with the IAEA in the field of nuclear medicine and pointed out that it materialized as a result of hard work and intensive coordination with the agency in the past few months to adopt a mechanism of mutual cooperation in the field of nuclear medicine.

He also noted that based on the agreement, a number of training courses will be launched for specialists on positron emission tomography (PET) and the production of radioactive materials including sound and safe production practices, the exchange of data and information of mutual interest, and the dissemination of relevant research findings through publication.

Director General of the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) Dr Samira Omar, praised the agreement, stating that it falls within the framework of the outstanding cooperation between Kuwait and the IAEA in peaceful nuclear applications in medicine, particularly in nuclear medicine. JAC Director Dr Nahil Al-Nafisi said that



Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah Molecular Imaging Center (JAC) and the International Atomic Energy Agency officials sign an executive agreement to strengthen cooperation.

signing this agreement represents the culmination of the joint cooperation between the agency and the center, which started from the beginning of operations at the center and has continued for the past three years.

Dr Nafisi added that the center has hosted many IAEA experts in the past to study the work protocols and assess the radiation protection procedures, as well as to oversee that applications are within international standards to ensure quality of production of radioactive materials. She noted that the center has participated in several regional technical workshops

and international scientific conferences organized by the agency.

The signing ceremony was attended by Dr Sadik Maarafi, Kuwait's permanent ambassador to the United Nations in Vienna, Dr Omar, Dr Nafisi, Dr Nader Al-Awadi, and KISR Executive Commissioner for International Cooperation and the national focal point with the IAEA, in addition to members of the permanent mission of Kuwait to international organizations in Vienna. The IAEA side was represented by Dr Diana Beiz, Head of the Nuclear Medicine Department and a number of IAEA officials.

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Crime

Report

'UNDER THE INFLUENCE'

KUWAIT: A 34-year-old Briton under the influence of drugs was arrested after he tried to enter Shaab Palace holding a sword he waved around. Security sources noted that the suspect damaged a police patrol car's windshield with the sword before policemen controlled and arrested him. Also, two bedoons were arrested in Salmiya with drugs, said security sources.

Students attacked

A young man and a 'tomboyish' girl barged into a private university campus, where they assaulted a number of girls before fleeing. In their rush to leave, they left tomboy's ID behind with the campus security, said security sources.

Landmine in Kabd desert

A citizen reported finding a landmine in Kabd desert. Another citizen also reported finding a landmine near his farm along Salmi highway. Bombs squads were dispatched to the scenes in both cases to deal with the mines.

Drunk citizens arrested

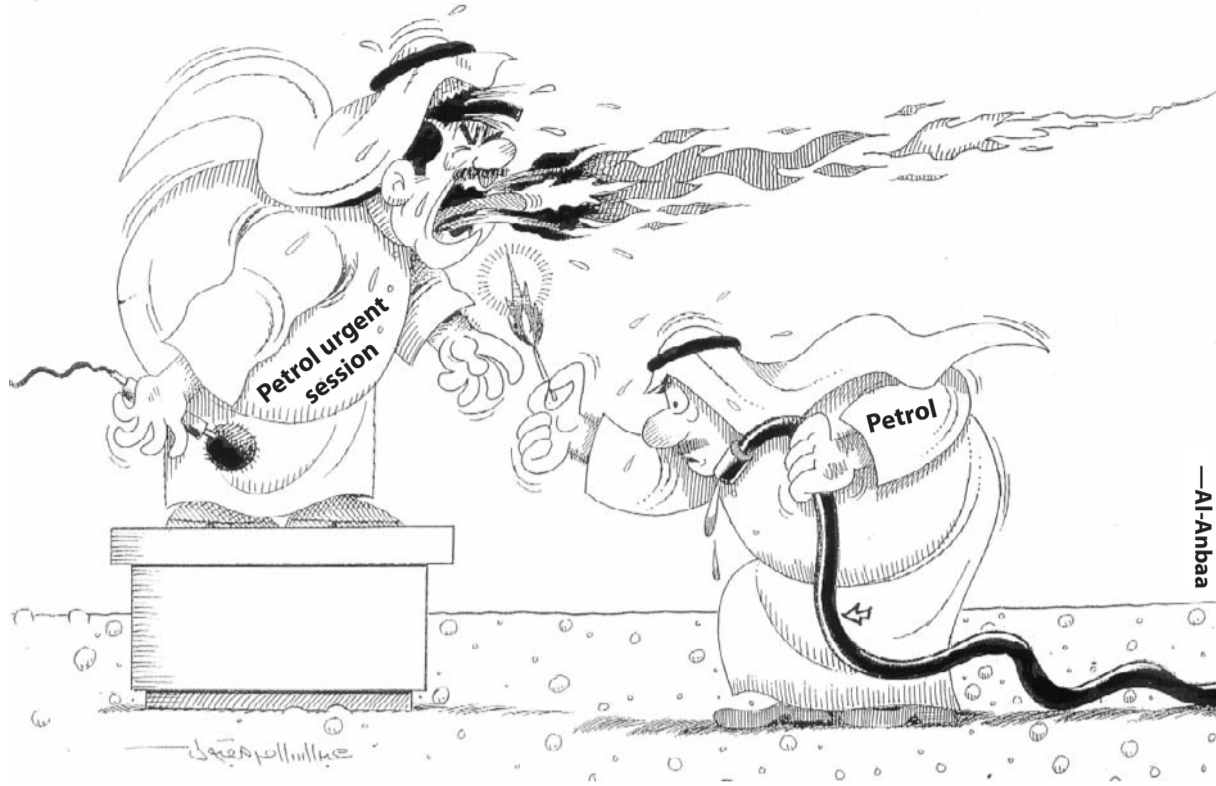
Two drunk citizens were arrested for deliberately ramming their vehicle into an expat's car, assaulting him and demanding he repairs their vehicle. Security sources noted that eyewitnesses said that the accident was the two heavily drunk citizens' fault.

Homebrewed liquor

A Nepalese was arrested in Mangaf with homebrewed liquor he had prepared for sale, said security sources, adding that detectives found 148 bottles in the suspect's vehicle.

Illicit pills and meth

A citizen was arrested in Ahmadi with illicit pills and meth, said security sources. The suspect resisted arrest before he was controlled and detained. A citizen wanted for nine cases, including financial claims, theft and robberies, was arrested in Ahmadi. —Al Rai, Al-Anbaa



النبا

Al-Anbaa

AL-BANNA AND 'PURSUER OF COURTESANS'

By Saleh Al-Shayaji

The Egyptian writer Ahmed Al-Shahawi wonders why the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood Hassan Al-Banna never showed interest in the Prophet's (PBUH) poet Hassan ibn Thabet, instead showing great interest in another poet known to lead a shameless life full of passion for women and liquor, because of which he became famous as Sari Al-Ghawani (Pursuer of Courtesans) instead of his real name Muslim ibn Al-Walid, in the Abbasid era.

The reason behind Shahawi's exclamations is that Banna issued this book only a few years after he founded the Muslim Brotherhood in the mid-1930s, and thus his book became the first Arabic book about this particular poet that later became a reference for whoever wrote about him. Shahawi also noticed that Banna was infatuated by this poet's lifestyle and poetry that mainly focused on women and wine.

This sounds weird and needs an explanation. How can the founder of an Islamic group, which later on became the most famous and most widely and geographically widespread, combine his religious values and his interest in a poet mainly interested in women, liquor and shamelessness? Where was he more credible - in calling for Islam

or in calling for the poet's shamelessness and love for women and liquor? Do the current followers of the Muslim Brotherhood know about this book written by their founder and supreme guide? Do they share the same interest in poetry about women and booze?

In my opinion, and I am not defending Banna here, assessment should be subject to various elements including the time when a specific incident took place, because things that may seem strange to us nowadays might have seemed normal according to the norms of those times. For instance, we might criticize a girl from the 1960s wearing a miniskirt, forgetting that such attire was prevalent then, was not eccentric and was not worn by certain classes of women.

In my opinion, towards the beginning of his life, Banna went through a period of experiments and thus launched his religious call, while at the same time, started a career in literature and poetry, deciding to carry on with whichever succeeded first. I do wish he had succeeded in literature and poetry, because then we would have been in a much better situation!

—Translated by Kuwait Times

الجريدة Al-Jarida

KUWAIT AIRPORT- FEEL SORRY AND DISGUSTED

By Ali Mahmoud Khajah

On each visit to Kuwait International Airport, I feel very sorry and disgusted with it, especially when I reminisce about how the very same airport used to look like when I was younger, before it was disfigured and tampered with. I still remember how some hotshot genius came up with the idea of expanding the airport into a massive, chaotic shopping mall with shops occupying the majority of its area, leading to unbearable congestions.

What use are these shops, except for the telecom branches and money exchangers, for passengers? Necessary services can be provided after the passport lounge, with a limited number of outlets such as car rental offices in order to avoid unjustified congestions currently taking place.

An airport usually gives the first impression about a country. It is a basic element of evaluation for all visitors. I personally feel much embarrassment on seeing visitors arrive at the airport during high seasons. A visitor will surely be infatuated with the airport's pink color that has only been chosen as an official one by the civil aviation department because the director likes it.

Visitors are keen on easier procedures in checking in and out. Order is the thing our miserable airport misses. Arriving and departing passengers meet everywhere. Smoking, which is banned, is seen all over the airport. The arrival passport lounge immediately gets overcrowded when five flights land simultaneously. Both long and short term parking lots are not enough, simply because the airport has turned into a shopping mall, attracting more customers than passengers. The traffic department is incapable of controlling traffic at the main gate.

I am fully convinced that the main missing element is not a spacious building. Any new building will never solve the problem, because order is the key thing we lack at the airport, as well as in many other public facilities. Many smaller airports receive heavier passenger traffic simply because they are well-organized and managed. We do not need pink boards, cafes, restaurants or garment stores inside the airport to improve it. All we need is a very strict system, which we lack in most sectors in Kuwait.

—Translated by Kuwait Times



KUWAIT: The Ambassador of the Republic of Botswana Manyepedza Lesetedi on Tuesday organized a reception on the occasion of the Botswana National Day. It was attended by diplomats and top dignitaries —Photos by Joseph Shagra

AL-TIJARI OFFERS PREMIER CUSTOMERS A DISCOUNT AT NEW MOWASAT HOSPITAL

KUWAIT: As part of Commercial Bank of Kuwait's ongoing endeavors to offer its customers tailor-made services that include discounts and promotions in partnership with top notch retailers, service provider centers and health care providers, the bank has announced a special 15% discount offered to its Premier customers at New Mowasat Hospital on selected

medical services including Dermatology and Cosmetics Surgery, Dietary Services, Department of Digestive Diseases and Endoscopy, Rheumatology and Physical Medicine Center.

The discount is offered for all Al-Tijari Premier customers using debit or credit cards. The promotion period will expire on 31/12/2016. New

Mowasat Hospital is one of the leading hospitals in Kuwait. The Commercial Bank of Kuwait always strives to cater for its customers' ever-changing needs and requirements by providing them the best offers and discounts in Kuwait in recognition of their continuous loyalty and trust in the bank's services and product offerings.



SAUDI HAS SPECIAL STATUS IN THE MINDS OF KUWAITIS

KUWAIT: Ajman tribe leader Sheikh Sultan bin Salman Al-Hethleen said Saudi Arabia has a special status in the hearts and minds of Kuwaitis, Arabs and Muslims, especially under the leadership of the current Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdul Aziz, his Crown Prince Mohammed bin Nayef and

Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. Speaking in a press release on the occasion of celebrating Saudi Arabia's 86th national day, Bin Hethleen stressed that it was a day of joy for all Arabs and Muslims. He also hailed the efforts exerted by Saudi Arabia to make this year's hajj season a successful one.



**Probe: Malaysian jet
 downed by missile
 launcher from Russia**

INDIA-PAKISTAN TENSIONS THREATEN SOUTH ASIA SUMMIT



BAGHDAD: This file photo taken on January 26, 2016 shows US soldiers speaking as they train Iraq's 72nd Brigade taking part in a live-fire exercise in Basmaya base. — AFP

**US TO SEND 'AROUND 600' MORE TROOPS TO IRAQ
 GIS TO TRAIN LOCAL FORCES**

WASHINGTON: The United States is ready to send around 600 troops to Iraq to train local forces for an upcoming offensive on the Islamic State group stronghold of Mosul, US officials told AFP yesterday.

IS seized Mosul along with other areas in June 2014, but the country's forces have since regained significant ground from the jihadists and are readying for a drive to retake Iraq's second city.

Speaking on condition of anonymity ahead of a formal announcement, the officials said the troops would mainly be deployed to Qayyarah, a strategically vital air base south of Mosul that will help funnel supplies and troops toward the city.

US Defense Secretary Ashton Carter was due to make an announcement later Wednesday while on a work trip to Albuquerque, New Mexico. "In consultation with the government of Iraq, the United States is prepared to provide additional US military personnel to train and advise the Iraqis as the planning for the Mosul campaign intensifies," another US official said, again speaking on condition of anonymity.

A US-led coalition is carrying out air strikes against IS in Iraq, and Washington has authorized the deployment of more than 4,600 military personnel to the country. Most are in advisory or training roles, working with Iraqi and Kurdish peshmerga forces, but some American troops have fought IS on the ground, and three members of the US military have been killed by the jihadists in Iraq.

Earlier yesterday, Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi's office indicated it has requested "a final increase in the number of American trainers and advisers" to support Iraqi troops in the northern city. The statement from Abadi's office noted that American forces are helping Iraq in its battle against the jihadists, but their presence remains extremely politically sensitive due to the nine-year war the United States fought in the country.

The statement said the number of trainers and advisers would start to be reduced as soon as Mosul is retaken from IS, and also asserted that no American troops had fought alongside Iraqi troops.

In reality, American special forces have fought IS alongside Iraqi Kurdish forces on several occa-

sions that have been made public, and likely in other operations that have not come to light.

A million displaced?

Speaking in New Mexico on Tuesday, Carter said he expected the Mosul offensive to begin in the coming weeks, but stressed the decision was an Iraqi one. "The plan is quite elaborate," he said. "All of this is under the command of Prime Minister Abadi." The United Nations warned that military operations there could cause up to a million people to be displaced.

Last week, US President Barack Obama said US-backed Iraqi troops could be in a position "fairly rapidly" to liberate Mosul, though he warned "this is going to be hard, this is going to be challenging."

Separately, the US military concluded Tuesday that a rocket fired earlier this month at the Qayyarah air base, which houses hundreds of US troops, contained no mustard agent, as initially suspected. In neighboring Syria, hundreds of US forces are deployed alongside Kurdish and rebel fighters to battle IS, which is also facing air raids by the international coalition.

The Pentagon has expressed concern IS fighters could use mustard gas to defend Mosul. Even after Mosul is retaken, the war against IS will be far from over. The jihadists

are likely to revert to insurgent tactics, such as bombings of civilians and hit-and-run attacks on security forces, following the demise of their "state" in Iraq. — AFP

**MAN SUES POLICE, TASER OVER
 STUN GUN-INDUCED HEART ATTACK**

KANSAS CITY: A Missouri man is suing an imprisoned police officer convicted of violating his civil rights two years ago, when the officer repeatedly shot him with a stun gun during a traffic stop and gave him a heart attack that he says nearly killed him.

Bryce Masters, who was 17 at the time of the September 2014 confrontation with Independence police officer Timothy Runnels, also is suing the Kansas City suburb, its former police chief and Arizona-based Taser International Inc., which made the stun gun and which Masters accuses of marketing a "defective, unreasonably dangerous" product. The lawsuit, which seeks unspecified damages, was filed Monday in federal court in Kansas City.

Runnels, who has apologized in court to Masters and said he never meant to harm him, was sentenced in June to four years in federal

prison for violating Masters' civil rights. Witnesses testified that Masters went into cardiac arrest when Runnels shot him in the chest with a Taser after the teen refused to get out of his car.

Video evidence

Video from Runnel's patrol car shows Runnels using the stun gun on Masters and, after the teenager went limp from the electrical charges, handcuffing him and dragging him to the curb, where he dropped Masters on the pavement face-down. "You don't like to play by the rules, do you?" the lawsuit quotes Runnels as telling the unresponsive Masters, whose teeth were broken when they hit the pavement.

According to the lawsuit, Masters had been in cardiac arrest for more than seven minutes by the time an ambulance arrived. No one had

tried resuscitating him, and he had turned blue. He eventually was "remarkably" revived using a heart defibrillator.

According to prosecutors, Runnels "continuously" shocked Masters with his stun gun while the teen was on the ground and unthreatening, then submitted a misleading police report that omitted or falsely described the amount of force he used. Runnels also tried to hinder the police department's investigation of the matter, prosecutors alleged.

Taser declined comment Wednesday, telling The Associated Press by email that it doesn't discuss pending litigation. The Independence police department did not immediately respond to messages seeking comment. Runnels' previous attorney, J.R. Hobbs, told the AP that Runnels' family is considering its options on how to respond to the lawsuit. — AP

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TRUMP'S RIDICULED CLAIM TOPS SOCIAL CHATTER

LOS ANGELES: Donald Trump's remark that he had "much better temperament" than Hillary Clinton carried the night as the No. 1 most-social moment on Facebook and Twitter during their first presidential debate Monday night.

"I think my strongest asset, maybe by far, is my temperament," Trump said during the debate, prompting Clinton to respond, "Whew!" with a grin and shimmy of her shoulders. The debate, held at Hofstra University in New York, was moderated by "NBC Nightly News" anchor Lester Holt.

The Republican nominee was roundly mocked on social media and by late-night TV hosts for the "temperament" comments, given his notorious tendency to spout angry and spiteful comments, not to mention his performance during the debate in which he repeatedly interrupted both Clinton and Holt. Shortly after the debate ended a pro-Clinton super PAC, Priorities USA Action, released a 30-second

ad on YouTube coupling Trump's comment about temperament being his "strongest asset" with obscenity-strewn clips of him hurling invective (which the org said also began airing in seven states):

Conversations

Trump, for better and for worse, sucked up most of the oxygen on social media. On Facebook, he had 79% share of the conversation, compared with 21% for Clinton, while Twitter said Trump's share of tweets was 62% versus 38% for Clinton during the debate.

The most-retweeted tweet of the night was four years old: It was a Trump post from Nov. 6, 2012, in which he wrote, "The concept of global warming was created by and for the Chinese in order to make US manufacturing non-competitive." During the debate Trump falsely said he had never called

global warming a hoax, after Clinton called him out on the issue.

Overall, 18.6 million people on Facebook in the US generated 73.8 million likes, posts, comments and shares related to the Trump-Clinton debate, which ran from 9 p.m. ET until just past 10:30 p.m. Over the course of the entire day, Facebook reported 55 million views of debate-related Facebook Live videos.

The Facebook livestreaming activity included ABC News' coverage of the first presidential debate, which exceeded 8 million views. In total, ABC News said its digital coverage of the first presidential debate notched 4.2 million unique visitors across its properties on desktop, mobile and over-the-top platforms. — Reuters

Meanwhile, CBSN, CBS News' digital streaming news service, set a new single-day viewership record Monday with 2.98 million streams and 1.4

million unique viewers for the day. At press time, Twitter did not have data on number of users who engaged in tweeting about the debate, but the company said it was the most-tweeted-about debate to date. Twitter also live-streamed the debate, under a deal with Bloomberg Media, showing the video alongside a stream of related tweets.

According to Facebook, the most-discussed issues among users related to the debate were: taxes, ISIS, racial issues, the US economy, and crime and criminal justice.

ESPN's FiveThirtyEight said it hit an all-time single-day record traffic across all metrics during the event, including 8.2 million minutes and an average minute audience of 5,720, according to Adobe Analytics. Between 9 p.m. and midnight ET, FiveThirtyEight.com attracted 30,700 average minute impressions and peaked at 40,500 between 10 and 11 p.m. — Reuters



ALEPPO: A wounded Syrian child is rushed into a hospital after she was hit by mortar shells that targeted Aleppo's government-controlled Aziziyah and Suleimaniyah neighbourhoods yesterday. — AFP

WARPLANES KNOCK OUT ALEPPO HOSPITAL AS RUSSIAN-BACKED ASSAULT INTENSIFIES

TURNING POINT IN THE CIVIL WAR

BEIRUT: Russian or Syrian warplanes knocked a major Aleppo hospital out of service yesterday, hospital workers said, and ground forces intensified an assault on the city's besieged rebel sector, in a battle that has become a potentially decisive turning point in the civil war.

Shelling damaged at least another hospital and a bakery, killing six residents queuing up for bread under a siege that has trapped 250,000 people with food running out. The World Health Organization said it had reports that both hospitals were now out of service.

The week-old assault has already killed hundreds of people, with bunker-busting bombs bringing down buildings on residents huddled inside. Only about 30 doctors are believed to be left inside the besieged zone, coping with hundreds of wounded a day. "The warplane flew over us and directly started dropping its missiles ... at around 4 a.m.," Mohammad Abu Rajab, a radiologist at the M10 hospital, the largest trauma hospital in the city's rebel-held sector, told Reuters.

"Rubble fell in on the patients in the intensive care unit." M10 hospital workers said oxygen and power generators were destroyed and patients were transferred to another hospital. There were no initial reports of casualties in the hospital.

Photographs sent to Reuters by a hospital worker at the facility showed damaged storage tanks, a rubble strewn area, and the collapsed roof of what he said was a power facility. The government of President Bashar al-Assad, backed by Russian air power, Iranian ground forces and Shi'ite militia fighters from Iran, Iraq and Lebanon, has launched a massive assault to crush the rebels' last major urban stronghold.

Syria's largest city before the war, Aleppo has been divided for years between government and rebel zones, and would be the biggest strategic prize of the war for Assad and his allies.

Taking full control of the city would restore near full government rule over the most important cities of western Syria, where nearly all of the population lived before the start of a conflict that has since made half of Syrians homeless, caused a refugee crisis and contributed to the rise of Islamic State.

Unprecedented bombing

The offensive began with unprecedentedly fierce bombing last week, followed by a ground campaign this week, burying a ceasefire that had been the culmination of months of diplomacy between Washington and Moscow.

Washington says Moscow and Damascus are guilty of war crimes for targeting civilians, hospitals, rescue workers and aid deliveries, to break the will of residents and force them to surrender. Syria and Russia say they target only militants.

U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon also said those using "ever more destructive weapons" were committing war crimes and that the situation in Aleppo was worse than "a slaughterhouse". The Syrian army said a Nusra Front position had been destroyed in Aleppo's old quarter, and other militant-held areas targeted in "concentrated air strikes" near the city.

France's Foreign Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault said he was working to put forward a United Nations Security Council resolution to impose a ceasefire in Aleppo, and that any country that opposed it would be deemed complicit in war

crimes. "This resolution will leave everyone facing their responsibilities: those who don't vote it, risk being held responsible for complicity in war crimes," he said.

Another hospital, M2, was damaged by bombardment in the al-Maadi district, where at least six people were killed while queuing for bread at a nearby bakery, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights monitoring body and residents.

Food supplies are scarce in the besieged area, and those trapped inside often queue up before dawn for food. The collapse of the peace process leaves US policy on Syria in tatters and is a personal blow to Secretary of State John Kerry, who led talks with Moscow despite scepticism from other top officials in President Barack Obama's administration. — Reuters

Battlefield victory

Washington says the offensive shows Assad and Russian President Vladimir Putin have abandoned negotiations in order to seek battlefield victory, turning their backs on an earlier international consensus that no side could win by force.

Assad's Iranian and Lebanese Hezbollah allies have said in recent days the war will be won in combat. But the rebels remain a potent military force even as they have lost control of urban areas. The collapse of peace efforts ends a proposed scheme to separate Western-backed fighters from hardened jihadists.

It has also raised the question of whether the rebels' foreign backers, states including Saudi Arabia, Turkey and the United States, will increase military backing to rebels who have long said weapons they provide are inadequate.

The rebels' main demand has long been for the provision of anti-aircraft missiles, but Washington has resisted this, fearing they could end up in the hands of jihadists. US officials told Reuters in Washington that the collapse of the Syrian ceasefire had heightened the possibility that Gulf states, particularly Saudi Arabia, might arm rebels with shoulder-fired anti-aircraft missiles. A senior rebel commander, speaking on condition of anonymity, said it was not out of the question that this could happen. "The Americans might thinking about doing something, but nobody knows how big it will be," the commander said.

Another rebel commander told Reuters his group had received deliveries of a new type of Grad surface-to-surface rockets. The rockets, with a range of 22-40 km, had arrived in "excellent quantities" and will be used on battlefronts in Aleppo, Hama and the coastal region, Colonel Fares al-Bayoush said.

Fierce fighting accompanied by air strikes was reported on Wednesday in northern Hama province between rebels, the Syrian government and allied forces. The Syrian army is trying to recapture territory lost this week to insurgents who launched a major offensive to push down towards government-controlled Hama city at the start of September. — Reuters

BOMBINGS KILL AT LEAST 17 IN BAGHDAD

BAGHDAD: Bombings targeting shopping areas in Shiite districts of the Iraqi capital on Tuesday killed at least 17 people and wounded more than 50, security and medical officials said.

The Islamic State jihadist group claimed an attack in the Baghdad Jadida neighborhood in the east of the city, saying it was carried out by a man wearing an explosive vest. Officials said at least eight people were killed and at least 29 wounded in Baghdad Jadida, although some said the area was hit by a roadside bomb as well as a suicide bomber.

Conflicting accounts are common in the confused aftermath of attacks in Iraq: police at the scene said it was hit by a roadside bomb that wounded six people but left no fatalities. Another suicide bomber targeted the Bayaa area in south Baghdad, killing at least nine people and wounding

at least 26, officials said.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for that attack, but IS frequently carries out suicide bombings targeting Iraqi Shiite Muslims, whom it considers to be heretics. Tuesday's violence came two days after another suicide bombing claimed by IS killed six people in western Baghdad. A day before that, bomb and gun attacks claimed by the jihadist group killed 12 people in the area of Tikrit, a city north of the capital.

Iraqi forces are preparing for a push on Mosul, the last IS-held city in the country, after regaining much of the Iraqi territory the jihadists seized in June 2014. But IS has maintained the ability to carry out attacks in government-controlled areas even as the jihadist group lost ground, and it is likely to increasingly turn to such insurgent tactics if it loses Mosul. — AFP

TURKEY JAILS 32,000 IN COUP PROBE AS MASS TRIALS LOOM

ISTANBUL: Turkey said yesterday that courts have placed 32,000 suspects under arrest on charges of links to a group run by the US-based preacher blamed for July's failed coup, as the country braces for the most extensive trials in its history.

Justice Minister Bekir Bozdag told NTV television that 70,000 people had been investigated after the attempted putsch on July 15, 32,000 of them remanded in custody. "This process is continuing," he said. The numbers of those arrested marks an increase of more than 10,000 from figures previously given by the government.

Bozdag said that there could be new arrests, while some of those currently held could still be freed under judicial control or freed entirely. Some two-and-a-half months after the coup attempt aimed at ousting President Recep Tayyip Erdogan led to a crackdown unprecedented in Turkey's modern history, there is still no indication as to when trials might start.

The trials of tens of thousands of people will be the biggest legal process in Turkey's history and are set to put the system under enormous pressure. "It is not entirely clear how the trials will be carried out," Bozdag acknowledged.

Cramped jails

Bozdag said trials would take place in cities across the country and not in one single venue. But he indicated that in some places, purpose-built facilities would need to be set up. While the minister said Istanbul already had sufficient capacity for its trials, a special venue was needed for Ankara and work was taking place on a trial venue at Sincan outside the capital. "People are not going to be put on trial in just one place but trials will take place in all of Turkey," he said.

Turkey has already granted some 38,000 convicts early release in an apparent bid to create more space in cramped jails for the coup suspects. Turkish media reports say the authorities plan to build 174 new prisons over the next five years, which would increase the country's current prison capacity of less than 200,000 by another 100,000.

The purge after the coup has touched every sector in Turkey with those arrested

'Resist persecution'

The defeat of the coup prompted a wave of solidarity in Turkey, which had seen governments directly ousted on three occasions by the military since 1960. But amid signs that the unity is beginning to crumble, the leader of the opposition Republican People's Party (CHP) on Wednesday made his most severe criticism yet of the crackdown.

Kemal Kilicdaroglu said the CHP was against the state of emergency which he said had affected one million "victims" across Turkey.

He claimed teachers had lost their jobs simply for being union members, soldiers jailed as they followed orders on the night of the coup and cited the case of a police officer detained for sending money through a Gulen-linked bank. "We must defend justice... I will resist this persecution," Kilicdaroglu said in a televised speech from the city of Tokat. "I will be on the side of the oppressed." — AFP



ISTANBUL: This file photo taken on July 15, 2016 shows people taking to streets near the Fatih Sultan Mehmet bridge during clashes with military forces. — AFP

INTERNATIONAL NEW YORK TIMES JOURNALISTS LEAVE PARIS

PARIS: The editorial production room of the International New York Times, a Parisian fixture for nearly 130 years, closed on Tuesday, staff said. Editorial production of the international version of the New York Times in Paris stopped a few days ago under a plan that the owners announced in April.

The publication has appeared under various titles over the course of its long history, most recently as the International Herald Tribune, which it dropped in 2013. One Paris-based editor, who asked not to be named, told AFP yesterday:

"We had a party with champagne here last night."

Editing and pre-press print production of the paper will be transferred to New York and Hong Kong. The Paris news bureau of the New York Times and an advertising department will remain in the French capital.

Pascal Lebegue, a French union representative for the paper, said 69 of the 113 jobs in

Paris would be lost. "It was the presence in Paris of the journalists who wrote it which made the newspaper what it was. Now they are based in New York," Lebegue said.

The International Herald Tribune, the only international newspaper in English produced in Paris, first appeared in 1887 as the Paris Herald, aimed at American expatriates. When its first owners, the New York Herald, shut in 1966, the New York Times and the Washington Post took over part ownership and from 1991 they had a 50-50 share in the newspaper.

The New York Times eventually took full ownership in 2003 and in 2013 renamed it International New York Times. When the plan to shut the editorial offices in Paris was announced, editors said in a memo to staff: "Only by moving ahead with this proposal can we assure our ability to maintain our international print presence for the coming years and do so in a way that will best serve our international readers." — AFP

FEMALE VOTERS REACT TO TRUMP

KING OF PRUSSIA, PENNSYLVANIA: When Donald Trump challenged Hillary Clinton's stamina on the debate stage, Pennsylvania voter Patricia Bennett said she heard a "dog whistle" that smacked of unmistakable sexism. "Why doesn't he just say that she needs more testosterone?" said Bennett, a 69-year-old independent from the Philadelphia suburbs who plans to vote for Clinton in November.

Across the country, Lisa Lowe, a Colorado Democrat who was lukewarm about Clinton before Monday's debate, said Trump behaved like a "negative bully." Kris Stotler, an undecided Virginia Republican, was disappointed by Trump's jarring criticism of a former beauty queen's weight, comments Clinton forcefully condemned during the faceoff. "It's incredibly distasteful, and it doesn't stop," Stotler, 48, said of Trump. "Even if you thought that, why would you say that?"

Bennett, Lowe and Stotler were among two dozen female voters from battleground states who spoke with The Associated Press on Tuesday. Nearly all expressed concerns with Trump's critical and often demeaning comments about women, as well as his approach toward Clinton in the debate.

Shared Concerns

The concerns were shared, too, by some women who plan to vote for Trump in November, though his supporters were more forgiving in their assessments. "I think you'll see a different comeback from him in the next debate," said Carole Staats, a 60-year-old Republican from Lansdowne, Pennsylvania. While Clinton has held a lead in preference polls among female voters throughout her general election contest with Trump, she aims to widen that margin as much as possible to offset her weakness with men. She also needs to urgently energize younger female voters, who have been more skeptical of the first woman nominated for the White House by a major U.S. political party.

After Monday's debate, Clinton's team believes it has all the ammunition it needs to rally women in the campaign's closing weeks. That's due in part to strong execution by Clinton, who arrived at the debate armed with numerous past statements Trump has made about women. She was particularly assertive in calling him out for once labeling 1996 Miss Universe winner Alicia Machado "Miss Piggy" after she gained weight. — AP



MIAMI: Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump visits a restaurant on Tuesday. — AP

CLINTON SEEKS CAMPAIGN LIFT FROM SANDERS, MRS OBAMA

DIRECT APPEAL TO YOUNGER VOTERS

WASHINGTON: Hillary Clinton yesterday sought to build on her widely praised debate performance by making a direct appeal to younger voters whose enthusiasm drove Bernie Sanders' unlikely campaign.

Clinton was joining Sanders on the campaign trail for the first time since they held a "unity" rally in July in an attempt to unify the Democratic Party. Since then, Clinton has continued struggling to win over young Americans who formed a critical pillar of the coalition that twice elected President Barack Obama.

The setting for the latest display of unity between Clinton and her primary rival - New Hampshire - was indicative of the areas where Clinton's campaign believes she still has the most work to do. Sanders, from neighboring Vermont, resoundingly defeated Clinton in the February primary in New Hampshire, a battleground state in the November election.

Concerned that his supporters have yet to embrace Clinton's campaign, Obama said he's frustrated that people "just do not give her credit." He suggested one reason was because she's a woman and the US has never had a female president. In a radio interview airing Wednesday with host Steve Harvey, Obama implored his supporters to make sure they're registered and to vote for Clinton. "My legacy's on the ballot," Obama said. "All the work we've done over the last eight years is on the ballot."

Trump on the defense

A day after Donald Trump appeared defensive over his debate performance, the Republican was working to flip the script. He's claiming the debate was a success for him too, with his campaign saying it had raised about \$18 million for Republicans in the day after Monday's debate. Both candidates were putting a renewed focus on facetime with voters in the most competitive states during the lull between the first debate and the next major campaign showdown: the vice presidential debate on Tuesday. Trump planned rallies Wednesday in Iowa in Wisconsin in addition to a speech in Illinois.

Trump was hoping to regain his footing after veering into problematic territory the day before, when he revived his decades-old criticism of a former beauty pageant winner for gaining "a massive amount of weight." Trump's combative tone after Monday's debate - he also lashed out at the debate moderator and complained about his microphone - was perceived as a tell by the



RALEIGH: Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton speaks during a campaign stop at Wake Technical Community College on Tuesday. — AP

Republican nominee that he knew his debate performance had been lacking.

Aiming to demonstrate a broad base of support among both parties, Clinton's campaign was also dispatching Michelle Obama, a Democrat, and former Virginia Sen. John Warner, a Republican.

Mrs. Obama was holding a pair of events in

Pennsylvania, a state Clinton is hoping to use as a firewall to prevent Trump from claiming the 270 electoral votes needed to win. Clinton's campaign also debuted its first television ad featuring the first lady, who has been one of the most effective campaigners for Democrats this year. In the ad, Mrs. Obama casts Clinton as a president "our kids can look up to." — AP

COMEY ON CAPITOL HILL AGAIN TO TALK EXTREMISM, CLINTON EMAIL

WASHINGTON: For the second time in two days, FBI Director James Comey will be on Capitol Hill to answer questions about the agency's response to recent acts of extremist violence and whether more could have been done to prevent attacks in Orlando and New York.

Comey also is expected to face questions about why the FBI granted immunity to Hillary Clinton's former chief of staff as part

of a now-closed investigation into Hillary Clinton's use of a private email server as secretary of state.

Comey will be the sole witness as the House Judiciary Committee reviews the FBI's performance. Comey told a Senate panel Tuesday that the FBI is transparent about mistakes, but he offered little new information about the June Orlando nightclub massacre or the Manhattan bombing this month. — AP



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BUCKINGHAM PALACE MAINTENANCE BOSS JAILED OVER BRIBES

LONDON: The official in charge of maintaining Buckingham Palace, Queen Elizabeth II's London residence, was yesterday jailed for five years for accepting more than £100,000 (\$130,000, 116,000 Euros) to award valuable contracts.

As deputy property manager for the Royal Household, Ronald Harper, was also responsible for maintaining St James's Palace, Clarence House and Windsor Castle until he was suspended in 2012.

Judge Nicholas Loraine-Smith at London's Southwark Crown Court sentenced the 64-year-old to three-year and two-year jail terms for two

counts of conspiracy to make corrupt payments, a total of five years. "During his employment, Harper personally received more than £100,000 in covert payments from companies which were awarded lucrative and prestigious contracts for mechanical and electrical work in Buckingham Palace, the Queen's Gallery, St James's Palace and Kensington Palace," said a statement from the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), the state prosecutor.

Judge Loraine-Smith said that Harper had appeared a "hard-working, apparently loyal team player, admired and trusted by colleagues", but that was hiding a "dishonest and greedy" side.

"Nobody could have guessed that a trusted insider such as yourself could think of going to the lengths that you did to corrupt the system for personal gain," he said. "Your betrayal of your colleagues' trust and your lack of remorse at what you did are both remarkable."

Harper received corrupt payments from the former owners of electrical firm Melton Power Services (MPS) and maintenance group BSI Nordale. The court was told the payments were made to secure or retain lucrative contracts with the Royal Household.

Former MPS director Steven Thompson, 62, was

earlier jailed for 18 months while BSI Nordale director Christopher Murphy, 56, received an 18-month sentence.

Buckingham Palace said it had worked closely with police "from the moment allegations against Ron Harper came to light. "While this was an isolated case, it has reinforced the Royal Household's broader commitment and determination to maintain good governance and prevent corruption," it added.

Five other people also received non-custodial sentences after being found guilty in June and August of being part of the conspiracy.—AFP

PROBE: MALAYSIAN JET DOWNED BY MISSILE LAUNCHER FROM RUSSIA

SOLID EVIDENCE

NIEUWEGEIN, NETHERLANDS: Dutch-led criminal investigators said yesterday they have solid evidence that a Malaysian jet was shot down in 2014 by a Buk missile that was moved into eastern Ukraine from Russia.

Wilbert Paulissen, head of the Central Crime Investigation department of the Dutch National Police, said communications intercepts showed that pro-Moscow rebels had called for deployment of the mobile surface-to-air weapon and reported its arrival on July 17, 2014, in rebel-controlled areas of eastern Ukraine.

The deadly surface-to-air weapon that blasted Malaysian Airlines Flight 17 out of the sky at 33,000 feet, killing all 298 people aboard, was launched that day from farmland in the rebel-held area of Pervomaiskiy, 5 kilometers (3 miles) from the eastern Ukrainian town of Snizhne, the investigation found.

Witnesses there reported an explosion and a whistling sound and a patch of field was set on fire. From that and other evidence collected by the Joint Investigation Team, "it may be concluded MH17 was shot down by a 9M38 missile launched by a Buk, brought in from the territory

of the Russian Federation, and that after launch was subsequently returned to the Russian Federation," Paulissen told a news conference yesterday in the Dutch town of Nieuwegein.

Conclusions

The conclusions of the investigative unit - which includes police and prosecutors from the Netherlands, Ukraine, Belgium, Australia and Malaysia - were consistent with previous reporting by The Associated Press, which established soon after MH17's destruction that a tracked Buk M-1 launcher with four SA-11 surface-to-air missiles had been sighted the same day in the rebel-controlled town of Snizhne near Pervomaiskiy.

A separate investigation by Dutch safety officials last year concluded that the Amsterdam-to-Kuala Lumpur flight was downed by a Buk missile fired from territory in Ukraine held by pro-Russian rebels. Dutch police spokesman Thomas Aling said the joint investigation findings differ in that they are designed to be solid enough to be used as evidence in a criminal trial. Where and when a trial might take place is still to be determined, Aling said.

Russia has consistently denied allegations that pro-Moscow rebels in eastern Ukraine were responsible for downing the passenger plane. On Monday, the Russian military said it has new radio-location data that showed the missile that downed the Boeing 777 did not originate from rebel-controlled territory, and said it would turn that data over to investigators.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov reiterated that assertion on Wednesday ahead of the Dutch report. "If there was a rocket, it could only have been launched from a different area," he told reporters, referring to Russian radar data. "You can't argue with it, it can't be discussed."

Ukrainian officials countered that the Dutch-led team's findings prove Russia's complicity in the tragedy. "A new and very important element in today's report is the information about the route by which the weapon came from Russia to Ukraine and was removed in the opposite direction through part of the Ukrainian-Russian border that was controlled only by Russia and their militants," Ukraine's Foreign Ministry said in a statement. "This again points to the direct involvement of the aggressor state in the downing of the aircraft."

In the Joint Investigation Team, police and judicial officials have been working together to gather the best possible evidence for use in prosecution of the perpetrators.

They have faced extraordinary challenges. The crime scene in Ukraine's eastern Donetsk oblast region where the plane was brought down on July 17, 2014, killing all aboard, was located in an active war zone. During the days following the downing, pro-Kremlin militants limited access to the crash site.

Eleven containers crammed with debris from the jetliner were ultimately brought to the Netherlands. A research team took soil samples in eastern Ukraine and established the location of cellphone towers and the layout of the local telephone network to verify intercepted phone calls from the militants. Forensic samples were taken from passengers' and crew members' bodies and luggage, and satellite data and communications intercepts were scrutinized. The team also appealed for information from witnesses who may have seen the missile launch.

About two-thirds of the passengers aboard MH17 were Dutch nationals; the crew members were Malaysians. Malaysia proposed setting up an international tribunal to try those responsible for the plane's destruction, but Russia vetoed a U.N. Security Council resolution in favor of a tribunal.—AP



GILZE-RIJEN, CENTRAL NETHERLANDS: In this Tuesday, Oct. 13, 2015 file photo, journalists take images of part of the reconstructed forward section of the fuselage after the presentation of the Dutch Safety Board's final report into what caused Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 to break up high over Eastern Ukraine last year, killing all 298 people on board, during a press conference.—AP

HOLLANDE DEFENDS 'SERIOUS' PRE-ELECTION BUDGET TARGETS

PARIS: French President Francois Hollande defended his government's 2017 budget targets yesterday, seven months ahead of the next election, in the face of skepticism from experts.

Hollande said the Socialist government's aim to cut the deficit to 2.7 percent of GDP for 2017, the lowest in a decade and under the European Union's limit of 3.0 percent, was "credible and serious." France has repeatedly broken the EU's fiscal rules and a top independent watchdog has said it doubts Paris will reach its target next year either.

But Hollande insisted his government had made consistent progress towards hitting its deficit goal. "A forecast can always be discussed, but until now, and for the last four budgets, we have kept to the commitments we have made," Hollande told a cabinet meeting hours before the draft budget was unveiled, according to the government's spokesman. "So we will continue to defend both the perspectives for growth and the target we have set, which is credible and serious," Hollande added.

An independent watchdog, the High Council

of Public Finances (HCFP), said this week it doubted that France could hit the 2.7 percent deficit target, which would be France's lowest in a decade. Finance Minister Michel Sapin however joined Hollande in dismissing that suggestion, saying: "We will keep this commitment."

Hollande has yet to decide whether to seek re-election, but if he does, his economic record will be key. The draft budget also maintained an ambitious growth forecast of 1.5 percent for 2017. Growth of that size is instrumental for the government's tax and spending plans as well as to meet the public deficit commitment.

'Irresponsible' right-wing pledges

But the OECD and the IMF have both downgraded their growth forecasts for France to 1.3 percent and 1.2 percent, respectively. Sapin offered modest tax cuts targeting the middle class and small and medium-sized companies, but blasted as "irresponsible" right-wing candidates for the presidency who have promised bigger tax giveaways.

"The candidates for the presidential election,

or the (right-wing) primary before that, who promise immediate tax cuts and say the control of public expenditure can be postponed until tomorrow, are irresponsible," Sapin said. France will spend 381.7 billion euros (\$428.8 billion) next year, a rise of 7.4 billion on this year.

The government said it will make savings in the social security budget and will claw back more money than expected from tax dodgers. Hollande, who is deeply unpopular in opinion polls, has said he will decide by the end of the year whether to stand for re-election.

He has made reducing unemployment one of the key conditions for seeking a second term, but his hopes suffered a blow when figures released this week showed a sharp rise in joblessness in August. The number of unemployed in mainland France grew by over 50,000, or 1.4 percent, to 3.56 million, according to the labor ministry. Former president Nicolas Sarkozy and a former prime minister, Alain Juppe, are the favorites in November's two-round primary which will decide the centre-right candidate for the presidency.—AFP



CALAIS, FRANCE: In this Thursday, March 3, 2016 file photo, unidentified migrants leave the makeshift camp near.—AP

FEAR AS FRENCH HAMLET ANTICIPATES CALAIS MIGRANTS

CHAMPTERCIER, FRANCE: Residents of Champtercier fear their hamlet in the foothills of the Alps is about to become a new flashpoint for Europe's migrant crisis: Its population of 800 is slated to grow sharply when it takes in 100 migrants from an overflowing camp in Calais next month.

Hundreds of suspicious residents are petitioning to keep the newcomers out and a minor presidential candidate has taken up their cause. Similar resistance has surfaced in other towns as the government prepares to shut the Calais camp and send as many as 9,000 migrants to 164 sites around France where they can apply for asylum and get reliable shelter, food and medical care.

The mayor, who agreed to accommodate the migrants in a shuttered vacation resort on the edge of Champtercier, is distraught at what she sees as an irrational, overblown reaction. "It's a question of humanity, a question of solidarity toward Calais, toward those people who are victims. They are victims first of war, of trafficking, of all they had to live through" in Calais, Mayor Regine Ailhaud-Blanc told The Associated Press. She initially offered to take in two or three refugee families, and was taken aback when the regional administration announced that it would instead be 100 single young men from Sudan and Eritrea.

Jungle camp

But the mayor remains committed to the idea of helping those in the so-called jungle camp in Calais, a filthy slum home to a growing population of migrants from the Mideast and Africa trying to cross the English Channel and reach Britain. The camp has become a symbol of Europe's botched response to the migrant crisis, and a disgrace for the government of France.

So the government is sending the migrants to places like Champtercier, nearly 1,000 kilometers (600 miles) away. Those who come here will not be in the center of town but in a cluster of small buildings and bungalows unused since 2010.

Panicked about the arriving migrants, Champtercier's residents created a Facebook page and online petition to ask the mayor to reject the migrants, due to arrive Oct. 15. The vacation center's management company, Villages Club du Soleil, will receive 18 Euros a day to care for each migrant, according to the regional administration. The migrants will also have 7 euros a day in pocket money.

The town hall and regional administra-

tion held a meeting Monday to address the concerns. Instead of calming tensions, the meeting turned into a forum for expressing fear and hatred of migrants. Anti-Muslim sentiment was pervasive, even though roughly half of Eritreans are Christian. Many complained that taxpayer money would go to foreigners instead of needy French people. Security is a prominent, but vague, fear. "I'm afraid. If I take the children to school, I take my daughter alone to school, if my husband is not there what is going to happen? If some of them are sitting there, if we refuse to give them cigarettes or stuff like this, this may cause problems," said Caroline Sorriaux.

Another concern is the relatively large number of migrants. "I think, as human beings, we have the same values. I am very open to hosting strangers. My concern is the number - around 100 people - and how it will take place," said craftsman Bernard Perez. Others were less accommodating. "We know very well that gathering people like this, you create problems," said teacher Nathalie Davin-Baro. "You think the blue sky and lavender will change their behavior?" The regional administration, or prefecture, said authorities chose to put 100 people in one spot because it is cheaper. In addition to food and shelter, migrants will have access to French classes and medical care, and a free shuttle to travel 10 kilometers (six miles) to the nearest administrative center to pursue the lengthy process of asylum applications.

President Francois Hollande says migrants will stay in the reception centers for up to about four months while authorities study their cases. As in the US elections, immigration is emerging as a key campaign issue for France's presidential race. France has seen rising support for the nationalist views of far right candidate Marine Le Pen of the National Front, which is resisting the plan to spread Calais' migrants around France.

Former President Nicolas Sarkozy, also a candidate, increasingly espouses similar views. A minor conservative candidate, Nicolas Dupont-Aignan, took up the cause of the suspicious Champtercier residents, visiting and posting an online video urging them to "resist." Despite resistance, the mayor wants to stay optimistic. "These fears are completely irrational. It's the fear of the stranger, fear of what we don't know," she said. "That's why I invite people to come and meet them, talk with them and maybe know more about their stories. To understand." — AP

UK OPENS SECRET FILES ABOUT 'JEWISH TERRORISTS' IN 1940S

LONDON: The call to British military security forces came early in the morning, shortly after 1 a.m., and could not be ignored. The informant's message was alarming: Assassins planned to kill the commander of British forces in Palestine the following morning; evasive action was needed. The source didn't know the details of the plan, but warned that Gen. Evelyn Barker would be attacked on the brief journey between his home in Jerusalem and his office at British headquarters. The assailants were militant Jews from the Stern Gang, determined to drive the British from the land in their bid for Jewish sovereignty.

Before dawn broke on Nov. 14, 1946, according to secret documents declassified yesterday by the National Archives, Barker's security team was notified of the imminent threat. He changed his route, other special precautions were put in place, and he arrived without incident.

Barker was particularly controversial because of his incendiary comments after militants bombed Jerusalem's King David Hotel, used by the British as a political and military base, in July 1946, when Britain

was still the administrative power in Palestine under an arrangement worked out in 1920, but was increasingly unable to control events as Jews and Arabs sought control.

Death toll

The King David Hotel blast killed more than 90 people and infuriated Barker, whose offices were in the hotel. He reacted by banning British troops from having any social or business dealings with Jews, saying that they would be punished "in a way the race dislikes as much as any, by striking at their pockets and showing our contempt for them." The plot against Barker is only one of hundreds of plans described in the newly public files that detail how British officials were tormented by the militants. The official British attitude toward the Jewish underground is summed up on the file's title page: "Jewish Terrorist Activities in the Middle East." British influence was waning and the militants sensed a lack of resolve that could be exploited, said Saul Zadka, author of "Blood in Zion: How the Jewish Guerrillas drove the British Out of Palestine." — AP



PARIS: France's President Francois Hollande (R) speaks next to French former Justice Minister Christiane Taubira (L) during a ceremony for the rehabilitation of late and former strikers of the general coal miners' strike in 1948 at the Elysee Palace yesterday.—AFP

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CHINA AGREES TO HELP CAMBODIA OVERHAUL ITS CRITICIZED JUDICIARY

PHNOM PENH: China is to help Cambodia revamp its judiciary, a system that opposition party supporters say is in thrall to Prime Minister Hun Sen, and that the United States has criticized as "politicized and ineffective."

The two sides signed a memorandum of understanding on Chinese assistance for Cambodia's courts this week, Ministry of Justice spokesman Chin Malin said yesterday, adding that China would provide training, finance and expertise. "There will be training and exchanges of visits between the two countries' officials, at a level up to technician and minister," Chin Malin told Reuters.

China would also provide expertise to improve Cambodia's commercial courts, he said. "Assistance for the judiciary is like promoting human rights ... Once, there is a good legal system, it promotes respect for human rights."

China is Cambodia's closest ally. Relations between Cambodia and Western powers including the United States and European Union, are frequently strained by various differences including over human rights.

Cambodia has backed China on its territorial claims in the South China Sea to the disappointment of some of Cambodia's neighbors, who

have rival claims with China. The US State Department said in a 2015 report on rights in Cambodia that a "politicized and ineffective" judiciary was among Cambodia's most significant human rights problems.

The government didn't respect judicial independence and the courts "were subject to influence and interference," it said. The judiciary has come in for particular criticism recently over cases against opposition leaders that they say are politically motivated by Hun Sen's government in the run-up to what is expected to be a close general election in 2018.

The government and judiciary reject accusations of bias. The independent Cambodian Center for Human Rights said that given a lack of judicial independence in China, it was difficult to see how the agreement would address Cambodia's chronic problems. "While technical assistance is required ... the involvement of China may serve to further entrench the endemic lack of judicial independence in Cambodia's courts," said the center's director, Sopheap Chak.

"Without a true separation of powers, any reform of Cambodia's courts will be meaningless," she said. —Reuters

INDIA-PAKISTAN TENSIONS THREATEN S ASIA SUMMIT

4 COUNTRIES PULL OUT

NEW DELHI: A key South Asian summit was in doubt yesterday after India and three other countries pulled out following a deadly attack on an army base that New Delhi blames on a Pakistan-based group.

India has sought to isolate Pakistan in the wake of the raid on its base in the disputed region of Kashmir, which killed 18 soldiers and triggered public fury. On Tuesday it said Prime Minister Narendra Modi would not attend the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) summit in Islamabad in November, in a major snub to its neighbor.

Without naming Pakistan, India's foreign ministry said "increasing cross-border terrorist attacks in the region and growing interference in the internal affairs of member states by one country" had created an environment that was not conducive for a meeting.

Hours later, Bangladesh said it was also pulling out. Afghanistan and Bhutan-both close

India allies-have since followed suit, according to an official with the Nepali government, current chair of SAARC. "Pakistan has been interfering in our internal affairs for some time," a senior Bangladesh foreign ministry official told AFP, requesting anonymity. "That's why we have pulled out of the SAARC summit."

Under pressure to act after the Kashmir raid, Modi warned Pakistan in a major speech on Saturday that India would push to make it a parish state. Pakistan denies any involvement in the September 18 attack, the worst of its kind in over a decade. But India's army has blamed Jaish-e-Mohammad, a Pakistan-based militant group that was also implicated in an audacious assault on an Indian air force base in the northern town of Pathankot in January.

India and Pakistan have fought three wars since partition in 1947, two of them over Kashmir, where the two countries regularly exchange fire across the disputed border. At the

last SAARC summit in 2014 a newly-elected Modi shook hands with his Pakistani counterpart Nawaz Sharif, raising hopes of warmer ties. Just over a year later Modi made a surprise Christmas Day visit to Pakistan for a meeting with Sharif. But those hopes were dashed by the Pathankot attack in which seven Indian soldiers died, and peace talks have been on ice ever since.

'Closer to China'

Current SAARC chair Nepal said it hoped the issues would be resolved but could not comment on whether the summit would go ahead. "The host will take decisions regarding the summit," said Jhabindra Aryal, joint secretary with Nepal's foreign ministry.

The leaders of the eight SAARC countries-which also include Sri Lanka, Nepal and the Maldives-expressed frustration after the last summit in Kathmandu with the slow pace of progress towards greater regional integration.

Analysts say this is due to the mutual mistrust between Pakistan and powerhouse India. Cyril Almeida, a columnist in Pakistan's English-language daily Dawn, said India's move to exclude Pakistan from regional discussions was not unexpected. "Diplomatically, (it's) maybe not a big deal for Pakistan given that SAARC is widely perceived as ineffective," he said. "But (it's) a fresh sign of Pakistan not being in a comfortable place in its own region."

Analyst Ashok Malik said the withdrawals would have little practical impact on Pakistan. "It basically scores a symbolic and a political victory. As for Pakistan, this will push it even closer to China," said Malik, head of the Delhi-based Observer Research Foundation's regional studies initiative.

Pakistan said it remained "committed to peace and regional cooperation" and accused India of perpetrating "terrorism" on its soil. "As for the excuse used by India, the world knows that it is India that has been perpetrating and financing terrorism in Pakistan," tweeted foreign ministry spokesman Nafees Zakariya late Tuesday, citing the capture of an Indian intelligence officer in Balochistan earlier this year.

Pakistan has repeatedly accused India of interference in the southwestern province, which borders Iran and Afghanistan and is afflicted by Islamist militancy and a separatist insurgency.—AFP



KATHMANDU, NEPAL: This file photo taken on November 27, 2014 shows Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi (2L) point a finger at Pakistan's Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif (2R) during the closing session of the 18th SAARC summit.—AFP

H K MARKS 2ND ANNIVERSARY OF 'UMBRELLA REVOLUTION'

HONG KONG: Hundreds of Hong Kong pro-democracy supporters holding yellow umbrellas held three minutes' silence outside the city's government offices yesterday to mark the second anniversary of mass protests challenging Beijing.

The anniversary of the "Umbrella Revolution" comes as tensions remain high in the semi-autonomous city, with fears growing that China is tightening its grip. Huge rallies in 2014 demanding fully free leadership elections and other democratic reforms for Hong Kong brought parts of the city to a standstill for more than two months.

Those demands were snubbed by Beijing, but since then former Umbrella Movement protesters have won seats as city lawmakers. Some of them are now pushing for a complete break from China as the fledgling independence movement gains support. Former Umbrella Movement protest leader Nathan Law, 23, became Hong Kong's youngest legislator in the recent citywide elections. He now advocates self-determination for Hong Kong.

Speaking to the crowds yesterday, Law urged them to keep fighting. "It's important for you to find the impulse and bravery from before to

allow for an even bigger resistance next time," he said, speaking on a stage beside the "Lennon Wall"—a staircase near the government complex that became plastered with notes of support for protesters during the 2014 rallies.

Law was joined by political ally Joshua Wong, 19, who also addressed the crowds. In an interview with AFP Wednesday, Wong said the democracy movement was in a "long-term battle facing the largest communist regime in the world." "We just have to show our persistence, courage and commitment," he said.

Tear gas moment

At 5:58 pm (0958 GMT) those gathered held three minutes' silence to mark the time two years ago when police fired tear gas at student-led pro-democracy protesters.

That galvanized tens of thousands to come onto the streets in support. The largely peaceful demonstrations spawned sprawling protest camps, with tents and artworks set up on highways and shopping streets.

The movement gained its name from protesters' use of umbrellas to shield them from tear gas, pepper spray, sun and rain alike. Supporters Wednesday said they felt the rallies had changed

the city for the better. "The Umbrella Movement transformed many in the city to care about the community, so we must make an effort to remember this incident," said school student Joy Chan, 14.

Chan said she had taken part in the protests in 2014 — many school-age protesters joined the demonstrations and makeshift classrooms were set up so they could continue their studies.

Housewife Claire Weber, 42, said she was at the site two years ago when police fired tear gas at the crowds. "No matter what, or how messy the political environment gets, we must persist," she told AFP. The atmosphere Wednesday was carnivalesque, with souvenirs including miniature yellow paper umbrellas—the symbol of the movement—handed out to those taking part.

Meters-tall signs reading "I want real universal suffrage" were displayed, an echo of the slogans of 2014.

Hong Kong was handed back to China by Britain in 1997 under a semi-autonomous "one country, two systems" deal, which guaranteed its freedoms for 50 years. But there are deep concerns those liberties are under threat in a number of areas, from politics to education and the media.—AFP



HONG KONG: Activists hold yellow umbrellas, a symbol of the pro-democracy movement, as they observe three minutes of silence to mark the moment tear gas was used by police on the same day in 2014, in front of the government headquarters in Hong Kong yesterday, on the second anniversary of the pro-democracy "Umbrella Revolution".—AFP



PYONGYANG: North Korean women wave flags cheering on their fellow countrymen as they start their day during morning rush hour yesterday.—AP

PYONGYANG STARTS DAY EARLY WITH PATRIOTIC MUSIC

PYONGYANG: North Korea's capital is still a pretty quiet place compared to most urban centers around the world, but it gets its start early - and orderly.

Rush hour generally hits its peak at about 7 a.m. Pedestrians hustle along the sidewalks or peddle along on the city's bike lanes, usually narrow strips of sidewalk painted green that started to appear about a year ago, while workers and students who can't walk or bike to where they need to go load onto the subways and fill the city's buses and electric streetcars.

By about 6:30, long lines of men in neckties or olive-colored work clothes and university students in their uniforms - white shirts or blouses, and dark trousers or skirts accented by red ties or scarves - can be seen waiting for their cross-town rides, which are usually standing-room-only. Retirees pack up their folding chairs and head out to the Potonggang and Taedonggang rivers to begin fishing shortly after sunrise.

Cleaning crews, often made up of elderly people or elementary school kids, are also out early to trim grass and pick up litter, a big part of which is inevitably cigarette butts, since North Korea is one of the most smoker-friendly countries in the world. Work for most in North Korea's capital starts at about 9 a.m. and schools an hour earlier. With North Korea now on one of its "loyalty drives" stints, when the citizens are called on to show special devotion to leader Kim Jong Un and often put in extra hours to boost productivity, Women's League units are out in force in front of subway entrances and other strategic locations to dance and wave red flags as loud

patriotic music blares from boom boxes.

Sometimes they are joined by middle school brass bands in their morning ritual, which is intended to encourage workers to start their day off with more vigor. For good measure, there are often small vans around with loudspeakers blasting propaganda.

The current loyalty drive is in about the 80th day of its full 200-day duration.

It was called shortly after a big meeting of the country's ruling party that was held in May to rally the people behind Kim's newly announced political and economic policies, or, basically, to just rally them behind Kim and his ruling regime. But its focus has recently been shifted to making a patriotic show of support for victims of major flooding that hit the country's northern-most province after an unusually strong typhoon hit late last month.

Along with the big red billboards that say "200 Day Battle" that are now all over the city, loyalty drive countdown signs are also posted outside of businesses and government offices. Other billboards exhort citizens to work with "Mallima Speed," the country's latest catch-phrase. It's a reference to a mythical Pegasus-type horse that could travel tremendous distances at great speed.

A similar phrase was used back in the days of national founder Kim Il Sung, Kim Jong Un's grandfather, but in today's North Korea the speed has been multiplied by 10.

Sometimes the countdown signs aren't always in sync, with one poster giving a different countdown than another just a few blocks away. But the message is the same - now is the time for all good North Koreans to show their mettle.—AP



ONSONG, NORTH HAMGYONG PROVINCE, NORTH KOREA: in this Friday, Sept. 16, 2016, file photo, workers recover cement blocks from flood-damaged areas.—AP

1 MONTH AFTER FLOODS, URGENT AID NEEDED IN NORTH KOREA

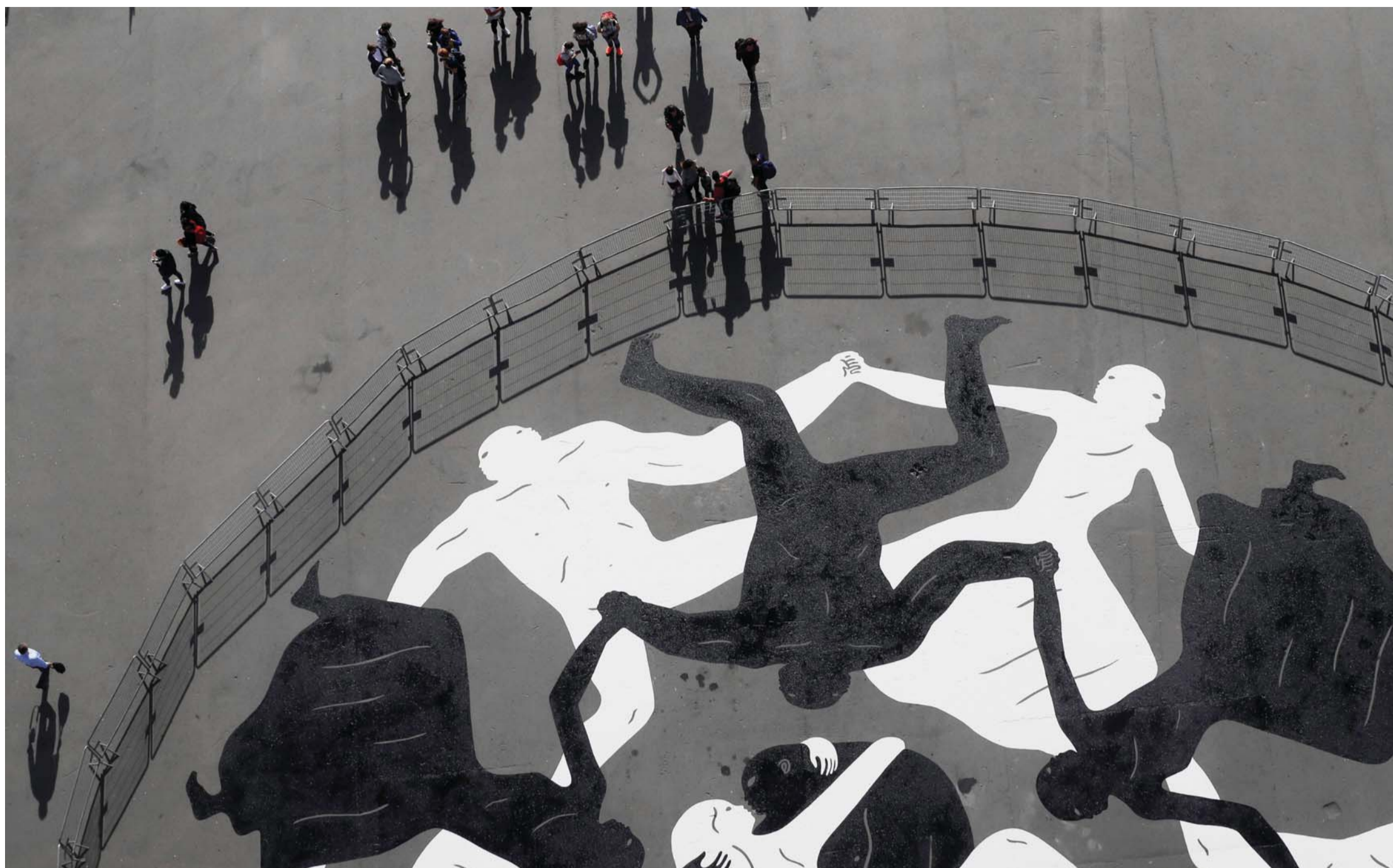
PYONGYANG: More than 70,000 people displaced by severe flooding in North Korea nearly a month ago are urgently in need of supplies and shelter before winter sets in, a Red Cross official in Pyongyang said yesterday. The floods were caused by a typhoon that hit the country's northernmost province late last month. Officials estimate that more than 130 people died and another 400 are missing. Typhoon Lionrock, amplified by a low-pressure system in the area, created floods that submerged, severely damaged or destroyed 30,000 homes and displaced 70,000 people. "The disaster was pretty horrendous for the people affected," Chris Staines, head of International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in North Korea, said in an interview with The Associated Press. "About 600,000 people have some level of immediate effect from the disaster."

Emergency assistance

The Red Cross is seeking \$15.5 million to provide emergency assistance to the dis-

aster zone over the next 12 months. Staines said extensive damage to roads and railways caused delays in getting supplies to the disaster zone. He said that has improved and the flow of supplies, workers and building materials is accelerating. But he said more work needs to be done urgently.

"The big pressure right now is about winter," he said. "By the end of next month, it will be sub-zero overnight and within two months it will be into the minus 10s, minus 20s, middle of winter minus 35 or more. So people are really at great risk." Staines said the natural disaster could be followed by another calamity - a health disaster - if shelter and the necessary supplies don't get to those who need them quickly. "People need to have some place that is safe and warm and dry to stay out of the winter," he said. North Korea has launched a massive effort to rebuild the disaster zone, diverting resources from other projects around the country and sending throngs of workers, builders and soldiers to fix roads, remove rubble and lay the foundations for new shelters. — AP



ARABS GREET PERES' DEATH WITH SILENCE

Continued from Page 1

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. The Israeli-Palestinian issue is not high on the region's agenda these days, amid other wars and crises, noted Michael W Hanna, a Middle East expert at the New York-based Century Foundation. "Besides, Peres left behind a complicated legacy," he said.

Peres gained worldwide fame - and a Nobel Peace Prize - as the architect of the historic Oslo interim peace accords with the Palestinians in the mid-1990s. Late in life, he established a "peace center" in Tel Aviv that promoted coexistence between Israelis and Palestinians, and as the nation's president he used the global stage to call for peace. But in the Arab world, especially among Palestinians, many saw Peres' vision of peace as all talk. "He often presented himself as a man of peace, but no one in the Arab world really believed him," said Abdullah El-Sennawy, a prominent Egyptian columnist. "Whenever there was war, he was there."

As one of Israel's founding fathers, Peres was associated with the "naqba", or catastrophe, that befell the Palestinians in the war surrounding Israel's creation, when hundreds of thousands fled or were forced from their homes. "Peres was a significant contributor to the historic injustice that occurred to the Palestinian people," Ghassan Khatib, a former Palestinian government spokesman in the West Bank, wrote on his Facebook page.

As a Defense Ministry official during the 1950s, he helped turn Israel into a regional military power and played a central role in secretly developing what is widely believed to be a sizable nuclear arsenal. And after Israel captured the West Bank in the 1967 Mideast war, Peres was an early defender of efforts to build

Jewish settlements in the occupied territory - a position he would later abandon.

Even after spearheading the interim accords with the Palestinians, Peres led or defended tough military actions by Israel. While Peres was caretaker prime minister in 1996, Israel assassinated the Hamas militant group's chief bomb maker in the Gaza Strip - prompting a wave of bloody revenge suicide bombings that are seen as a chief reason for his subsequent election loss to Netanyahu. Under Peres that same year, an Israeli military operation in Lebanon included a deadly artillery strike on a UN compound in the village of Qana that killed dozens of civilians who had fled fighting to take refuge there.

"Real peace is implemented on the ground, not by killing women, children and the elderly, then taking the Nobel prize," said Mohammad Jaafar, who was among the survivors of the Qana bombardment. The incident is a key part of Peres' legacy across the region. Announcing Peres' death yesterday, Iran's state television called him "the butcher of Qana". "He will stand in front of God and defend himself for his heinous crimes against humanity," said Hamad Al-Qahtani, a Kuwaiti government employee. "He killed refugees, orphaned children and destroyed families. May he get what he deserves."

More recently, during his presidency, Peres defended Israeli offensives against Hamas in Gaza in 2009, 2012 and 2014 in which hundreds of civilians were killed. In one famous encounter at the 2009 World Economic Forum in Davos, Peres clashed with Turkey's then-prime minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, about the Israeli offensive in Gaza. "You kill people," Erdogan said, rejecting Peres' argument that the invasion was an act of self-

defense because Hamas had launched rockets at Israel.

In Gaza yesterday, Hamas expressed joy over Peres' death, and in Iran, local media reported that students distributed candies at Imam Sadeq University to celebrate. Sami Abu Zuhri, a spokesman for the enclave's Hamas Islamist rulers, said: "The Palestinian people are happy over the departure of this criminal, who was involved in many crimes and in the bloodshed of the Palestinian people." "Shimon Peres was an example of how the world can forget someone's crimes if they only live long enough," Sultan Saoud Al-Qassemi, a popular commentator in the United Arab Emirates, wrote on his Twitter feed.

Not all the reaction in the Arab world was negative.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, a negotiator in the Oslo process, expressed "sorrow and sadness" over Peres' passing. Officials said Abbas was considering attending the funeral tomorrow. And in Iraq, Iyad Jamal Al-Din, a Shiite cleric and former politician, praised Peres as a "wise leader who helped his people". "What have Arab leaders done for their people? Peres turned Israel from a militia to a state. Today, the last wise man of the Israelis has passed," he said.

Iranian political analyst Hassan Hanizadeh said Peres had been a moderating force in the region and helped prevent conflict. Netanyahu and other hard-liners will now have "a more free hand in implementing their hard-line policies in the region and world," he said. — Agencies

CONGRESS REJECTS OBAMA VETO OF 9/11 BILL

Continued from Page 1

leaders obtained by AFP, Obama said: "I strongly believe that enacting JASTA into law would be detrimental to US national interests". Obama warned of "devastating" consequences for the Pentagon, service members, diplomats and the intelligence services. It would "neither protect Americans from terrorist attacks, nor improve the effectiveness of our response to such attacks," he warned. "The United States relies on principles of immunity to prevent foreign litigants and foreign courts from second-guessing our counterterrorism operations and other actions that we take every day."

Families of 9/11 victims have campaigned for the law, convinced the Saudi government had a hand in the attacks that killed almost 3,000 people. Fifteen of the 19 hijackers were Saudi citizens, but no link to the government has been proven. The Saudi government denies any ties to the plotters. The bill's co-sponsor, New York Democrat Chuck Schumer, told senators it "would allow the victims of 9/11 to pursue some small measure of justice".

Behind the scenes, Riyadh has been lobbying furiously for the bill to be scrapped. A senior Saudi prince reportedly threatened to pull billions of dollars out of US assets if it becomes law, but Saudi officials now distance themselves from that claim. The US-Saudi relationship had already been strained by Obama's engagement with Saudi's foe Iran and the July release of a secret report on Saudi involvement in the 9/11 attacks.

The kingdom maintains an arsenal of tools to retaliate with, including curtailing official contacts, pulling billions of dollars from the US economy, and persuading its close allies in the Gulf Cooperation Council to scale back counterterrorism cooperation, investments and US access to important regional air bases. "This should be clear to America and to the rest of the world: When one GCC state is targeted unfairly, the others stand around it," said Abdulkhaleq Abdullah, an Emirati Gulf specialist and professor of political science at United Arab Emirates University. "All the states will stand by Saudi Arabia in every way possible," he said.

When Saudi Arabia wanted to pressure Qatar to limit its support for the Muslim Brotherhood group in Egypt, it spearheaded an unprecedented withdrawal of Gulf Arab ambassadors from Doha in 2014 and essentially isolated the tiny gas-rich nation within the GCC. When Sweden's Foreign Minister Margot Wallstrom strongly criticized Saudi Arabia's human rights record last year, the kingdom unleashed a fierce diplomatic salvo that jolted Stockholm's standing in the Arab world and threatened Swedish business interests in the Gulf. Sweden eventually backedpedaled.

Chas Freeman, former US assistant secretary of defense for international security affairs and ambassador to Saudi Arabia during operation Desert Storm, said the Saudis could respond to this bill in ways that risk US strategic interests, like permissive rules for overflight between Europe and Asia and the Qatari air base from which US military operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria are directed and supported. "The souring of relations and curtailing of official contacts that this legislation would inevitably produce could also jeopardize Saudi cooperation against anti-American terrorism," he said.

Fahad Nazer, an analyst at intelligence consultancy JTG and a former political analyst at the Saudi Embassy in Washington, said he'd be surprised if Saudi Arabia cut back counterterrorism cooperation since it's been beneficial for both countries. Still, relations with Washington had already cooled well before the 9/11 bill sailed through both chambers of Congress. The Saudis perceived the Obama Administration's securing of a nuclear deal with Iran as a pivot toward its regional nemesis. There was also Obama's criticism of Gulf countries in an interview earlier this year, despite their support for the U.S.-led fight against the Islamic State group in Iraq and Syria.

Joseph Gagnon, a senior fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics, said estimates put the figure of official Saudi assets in the government at somewhere between \$500 billion and \$1 trillion when considering potential foreign bank deposits and offshore accounts. The kingdom had \$96.5 billion in holdings of Treasury securities in August, according to the most recent number released by the Treasury Department. Saudi Arabia ranked 15th in its holdings of US Treasury debt.

Gagnon, who previously worked at the US Federal Reserve Board and Treasury, said there isn't much realistically the kingdom could do to move against the dollar or other US assets "that would hurt us a tenth as much as it would hurt them." He said the US would actually welcome downward pressure on the dollar and questioned what other markets are big enough to absorb what they could sell. The US-Saudi Business Council's CEO and Chairman Ed Burton says business between the two countries will continue, though potential deals could be jeopardized by JASTA. "No business community likes to see their sovereign nation basically assailed by another nation," Burton said.

As one of the world's largest oil exporters with the biggest economy in the Gulf, Saudi Arabia also has other business partners to choose from in Europe and Asia, said President and CEO of the National US-Arab Chamber of Commerce David Hamod. "America is no longer the only game in town," he said. "No one knows how Saudi Arabia might respond to an override of President Obama's veto, but what's the point of calling the kingdom's bluff?"

The CEOs of DOW and GE sent letters to Congress warning of the bill's potentially destabilizing impact on American interests abroad. Defense Secretary Ash Carter this week sent a letter to Congress saying "important counterterrorism efforts abroad" could be harmed and US foreign bases and facilities could be vulnerable to monetary damage awards in reciprocal cases.

Such reactions may not come directly from Riyadh but countries connected to Saudi Arabia, said Stephen Kinzer, a senior fellow at the Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs at Brown University. He said the eight-decade-long US-Saudi relationship is "entering into a new phase," in which ties will be mostly underpinned by arms sales, unlike during the era of warm relations under President George W Bush. Abdullah, the Gulf analyst at UAE University, said he expects to see a GCC that acts more assertively and independently of the US in places like Yemen, Bahrain and Egypt. "This is not just a threat. This is a reality," he said. — Agencies

OPEC REACHES FIRST DEAL TO CUT OIL OUTPUT...

Continued from Page 1

"We don't know yet who's going to produce what. I want to hear from the mouth of the Iranian oil minister that he's not going to go back to pre-sanction levels. For the Saudis, it just goes against the conventional wisdom of what they've been saying," said Jeff Quigley, director of energy markets at Houston-based Stratas Advisors.

Saudi Energy Minister Khalid Al-Falih said yesterday that Iran, Nigeria and Libya would be allowed to produce "at maximum levels that make sense" as part of any output limits which could be set as early as the next OPEC meeting in November. That represents a strategy shift for Riyadh, which

has said it would reduce output to ease a global glut only if every other OPEC and non-OPEC producer followed suit. Iran has argued it should be exempt from such limits as its production recovers after the lifting of EU sanctions earlier this year.

The Saudi and Iranian economies depend heavily on oil but in a post-sanctions environment, Iran is suffering less pressure from the halving in crude prices since 2014 and its economy could expand by almost 4 percent this year, according to the International Monetary Fund. Riyadh, on the other hand, faces a second year of budget deficits after a record gap of \$98 billion last year, a stagnating economy and is being forced to cut the salaries of government employees. — Reuters

COURT: PETROL HIKE ILLEGAL, BUT NEW PRICES...

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But the surprising court ruling could stop, though temporarily, any actions planned by the lawmakers against the price increase, because the issue is now being looked by courts.

Commenting on the ruling, MP Saleh Ashour said he does not believe that the court is really competent to abolish a decision by the government, like the petrol price hike. He said there is no way out of the problem except to convene a National Assembly emergency session to take a clear decision against the increase without any delay. The lawmaker insisted that there is no justification not to hold the emergency session, since all the constitutional requirements are available.

Ashour said that the petrol price increase has affected the majority of the people and that the session should be held in public so the Kuwaiti people should know the details. He said this is better than holding an informal meeting, which is not open to the people. Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem said on Tuesday that he agreed with lawmakers to invite the government to a meeting next week to discuss the petrol price issue. He said the meeting will replace the emergency session.

MP Faisal Al-Duwaisan welcomed the court's verdict, saying that the ruling is evidence of the government's lack of planning. He also urged the government not to

rush decisions. MP Sultan Al-Shemmari warned that the government will be faced with a "tsunami of grillings" if it does not withdraw the petrol price hike in response to parliamentary and popular demands. He said he will not accept that the government plugs the budget deficit at the expense of citizens.

The petrol price hike, ranging from about 40 to 80 percent depending on the type, met stiff opposition from lawmakers and activists when introduced following a slide in oil revenues. It was the first such increase since 1998. MPs want the government to compensate Kuwaiti citizens who comprise around 30 percent of the 4.3 million population, which also includes about three million foreigners. The Cabinet has said the decision is part of a series of measures to meet a budget deficit due to a sharp drop in oil revenues, which previously made up around 95 percent of the country's total income.

Kuwait liberalized the prices of diesel and kerosene in Jan 2015, and revises them monthly. Other oil-rich Gulf states had already raised fuel and electricity prices. In April, the parliament approved a government-sponsored bill to raise electricity and water prices paid by foreign residents and businesses, but exempted Kuwaiti citizens. The OPEC member recorded a budget shortfall of KD 4.6 billion (\$15.3 billion) in the fiscal year which ended on March 31. It was the first shortfall since the fiscal year to March 1999.

Kuwait Times

THE LEADING INDEPENDENT
DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF
ESTABLISHED 1961

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Editor-in-Chief
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EDITORIAL : 24833199-24833358-24833432
ADVERTISING : 24835616/7
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Issues

RENZI'S REFORMS LEAVE ECONOMY AND VOTERS FLAT

By Crispian Balmer

Prime Minister Matteo Renzi logs the progress of Italian government projects on big sheets of paper, keeping track of everything from work on a long-delayed motorway to simplifying the notoriously complex tax code. "My priority is achieving results. That is the only reason for being here," he said recently in the gilded rooms of Palazzo Chigi, the centre of Italian government. But for all this attention to detail, he has failed to end years of endemic economic underperformance, disappointing many who had bought into his image as a "Demolition Man" out to vanquish the vested interests that have dragged Italy down.

After 2-1/2 years in power, Renzi can point to some achievements - such as liberalising rigid labour rules, granting legal protection to same-sex couples and offering a series of small-scale tax cuts to workers. Nevertheless, recovery from deep recession has stalled, with zero growth recorded in the second quarter of 2016 - the joint lowest reading in the 19-nation euro zone - and efforts to end a deep-rooted banking crisis failing to take wing.

The sense of letdown felt by some voters helps to explain why Renzi is struggling to sell his most ambitious reform yet, a complex revision of the Italian constitution. Italy will vote in a referendum on Dec. 4 on the overhaul, which Renzi says will bring much-needed political stability by emasculating the Senate, stripping the upper house of its power to bring down governments and stall legislation. The 41-year-old prime minister has promised to quit if he loses the ballot, but public opinion is turning against him and almost all surveys now show the 'No' camp is ahead, meaning his short reign could be about to end.

"Very few people understand what this constitutional reform is all about, so the majority of people will be voting simply for or against the government," said pollster Renato Mannheimer, who this week put the 'No' vote at a commanding 55 percent. "Renzi's reforms are not winning people over," he told Reuters. "The economic situation is hurting him, the recovery isn't there, Italy is doing worse than other European countries and people are growing increasingly pessimistic."

Hits and Misses

The reform most identified with Renzi is his 2015 Jobs Act, which made it easier for firms in the private sector to hire and fire employees. More than half a million jobs have been created since the law was introduced and the European Central Bank said last week it had "helped spur renewed employment dynamism". However, the rate of growth has slowed as incentives to encourage hirings have been cut. Labour Ministry data show a year-on-year fall of 29.4 percent in new contracts for regular, open-ended employment in the second quarter of 2016.

Another reform that has been praised by economists, but has been slow to bear fruit, is a 2015 banking shake up, aimed at strengthening Italy's army of cooperative lenders and consolidating the fragmented financial sector. It has given rise to just one merger to date, although more consolidation is expected if market conditions improve. "We have been waiting for this reform for 20 years," said Lorenzo Codogno, the Italian Treasury chief economist from 2006 to 2015, who now heads consultancy firm LC Macro Advisors. "Unfortunately the market situation is very fragile, but with a bit of luck the banking sector will look totally different in two or three years' time," he said.

Separate efforts to help banks offload billions of euros of bad loans are also struggling, leaving Italy's third largest lender Monte dei Paschi di Siena in desperate need of new funds to stay afloat. Other reforms have created more problems than solutions, including a complex new code for public procurement. This is designed to boost transparency, but includes 220 norms and has caused much uncertainty in ill-prepared public offices. "It is possible that resulting delays to public tenders is one of the reasons GDP came to a standstill in the second quarter," said Codogno.

Another part of the overhaul of the public administration could cost the state money, economists say. The legislation looks to boost productivity by offering bonuses, but this is hard to police in the state sector. The prime minister's own office already runs a rewards scheme and everyone in the economics department won a full bonus last year. A separate reform of state broadcaster RAI was meant to cap annual salaries at 240,000 euros (\$268,800), but loopholes allowed the director general to earn 650,000 euros last year. "I cannot explain that reform in political or economic terms," said a government adviser who was not authorized to speak to the media. "Often I think ministers have rushed through reforms simply to make themselves look busy." — Reuters

PUTIN'S PARTY WINS MAJORITY IN RUSSIAN PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS



PUTIN FACES DILEMMA AFTER VOTE WIN

By Andrew Osborn

Vladimir Putin appears politically invincible after Russia's ruling party won its biggest ever parliamentary majority this month. But he faces an increasingly pressing dilemma: How best to ensure the survival of a system built around himself. With a presidential election due in March 2018, Putin, 63, must decide whether or not to run again. He must also decide whether to bring that vote forward to 2017 to reset the system early to hedge against the risk of a flat-lining economy.

Few outside his tiny coterie know what he will do. Most Kremlin-watchers are sure he will run again and win, delaying the successor question until 2024. Others say he may surprise. On the face of it, staying on looks to be an obvious choice. Polls give Putin an approval rating of about 80 percent, the ruling United Russia party just won 76 percent of seats in parliament, and his annexation of Ukraine's Crimea sealed his savior-of-the-nation image in many Russian eyes.

But beneath the surface, Putin's problems are piling up. They include what is forecast to be an anemic economic recovery, the lack of an obvious successor, voter apathy, his own complaints about the physical demands of the job, and the risk of destabilising clan infighting inside the system. Increasingly, it also seems that the only way Moscow can reset ties with the West would be for Putin to stand aside. The United States and European Union imposed economic sanctions over Russia's actions in Ukraine in 2014 and thus far there has been

little sign of a lifting of trade restrictions.

Nikolai Petrov, a political analyst at Moscow's Higher School of Economics, believes Putin could preserve the system's legitimacy if he handed over to a hand-picked successor in 2018. "It's a possible scenario," Petrov told Reuters. He said he was sceptical Putin would choose that path, however, despite being under pressure to find alternative ways of maintaining broad support for the system beyond nationalism and foreign military adventures. "Putin is a hostage of his own popularity," said Petrov.

People who know Putin say he is growing weary. In an unguarded moment picked up by microphones last year, he was heard complaining about how little he slept. One former high-ranking official close to the Kremlin said Putin, in power either as president or prime minister for nearly 16 years, was fatigued. "Putin is tired, he's getting older," the source, who declined to be named, told Reuters.

Dmitry Gudkov, a liberal opposition politician who lost his seat in this month's elections, told Reuters Putin looked certain to run again regardless because he was afraid stepping down might leave him vulnerable to prosecution for his actions in Ukraine. "With a lot of enemies both inside and outside the country, he's starting to feel less secure. It doesn't look like a time when he'd give up control," said Gudkov. Putin is fond of a surprise though. Many thought he would not step down from the presidency in 2008, but he did, albeit to make a triumphant return to the office four years later.

The source close to the Kremlin said the outcome of the US presidential election and

how the winner dealt with Russia initially was likely to influence Putin's decision. "Putin is rather taken by global politics and won't run unless 'a firm hand' is needed," said the source. "Otherwise he will leave it to (Prime Minister Dmitry) Medvedev." Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton would take a tough line with Moscow, unlike Republican contender Donald Trump who has said he wants to reset ties with Russia, people close to the Kremlin believe.

The Enemy Within

The economic outlook is bleak. More than two years after the West imposed sanctions, their impact appears to be waning and the economy is expected to return to modest growth next year. A continuing dearth of foreign investment, something that has played a major role in kick-starting growth in the past, means the recovery is likely to take years however and growth is forecast to reach only around 0.5 percent in 2017 and stay that way for a prolonged period.

Maintaining a semblance of popular support amid signs that growing numbers of voters believe their participation in elections is an empty ritual is becoming harder too. Turnout at the Sept 18 vote fell to a post-Soviet low. And while there are no signs of serious unrest among the elite, Putin's allies are starting to worry that a threat might emerge from within the system one day. "Our state is always destroyed from the top and from inside," Dmitry Olshansky, a columnist for the pro-Kremlin Komsomolskaya Pravda tabloid, wrote after the election, saying the appearance of the

state's victory might be deceptive.

Such fears and the need to reshuffle officials to create the impression that the system is renewing itself help explain why Putin has replaced a slew of senior Kremlin, security and regional officials in recent months, a process seen continuing.

Early Elections?

Putin will have to make his mind up about the timing of the next presidential election soon. Alexei Kudrin, an economics adviser to the government and a former finance minister, suggested bringing the vote forward to next year from 2018, saying that would allow the authorities to win a new mandate to launch tough reforms. Kudrin, a Putin ally, did not say who he thought should stand, but the country's elite assumed he was talking about Putin.

The finance ministry fuelled speculation that such a decision has already been taken, publishing a letter in July talking about a presidential vote in 2017. The same source close to the Kremlin said there was now a more than 50 percent chance of an early presidential election. Political analyst Petrov said he thought early elections were highly likely unless Trump won the US presidency and lifted sanctions.

A different source close to the Kremlin said: "By 2018, the economy won't be any better and the population will be weary. There will be more negativity around, Putin's rating will be falling, and our financial reserves will be running out," the source, who also declined to be named, said. "All this backs the argument for early elections." — Reuters

INDIA CRACKDOWN TURNING SOME TO MILITANCY

By Douglas Busvine and Fayaz Bukhari

Simmering anger over India's crackdown on 10 weeks of protests in Kashmir risks drawing more young people to radical rebellion, demonstrators and security officials warn, as the sense of despair and alienation from New Delhi deepens. In the worst unrest in the disputed Himalayan region for six years, more than 80 civilians have been killed and thousands wounded, a widespread curfew is in place and suspected ringleaders are being held without charge.

"They are treating us like 'dons', like we are criminals," said Bilal Bhat, a 27-year-old journalist who is active in a local youth civil rights movement. Bhat was taken in by police in August and told to stop posting articles on Facebook. It was the second time he has been held. "When I was beaten by the cop, I cursed myself for taking a pen - I should have taken a gun instead," he told Reuters. A conflict that has seeped for decades and spilled into war twice between nuclear-armed rivals India and Pakistan usually passes little noticed by the international community.

But the scale of the violence and security crackdown, and, more recently, a sharp escalation in tension between the neighboring countries, have made the outside world sit up and pay attention. India's security forces have also reinforced their already large presence in Kashmir, drafting in 20,000 paramilitaries and 10,000 more soldiers. A senior Home Ministry official said India's security forces had reduced their use of pellet ammunition, which has drawn widespread condemnation, and had been instructed only to fire when they felt directly threatened.

"It is clear that the local Kashmiri youths were being used by Pakistan to attack Indian forces," the official said, responding

to questions from Reuters about the use of force and risk of youth radicalization. "It is true that there is a lot of anger among the Kashmiris, but we cannot legitimise their anger if it is for all the wrong reasons."

Root of the Problem?

India blames Pakistan for a raid earlier this month on a base that killed 18 soldiers, in the deadliest attack on its army in 14 years, prompting Hindu nationalist supporters of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government to call for revenge. Several countries, alarmed at the prospect of a military response by India, condemned the attack, while Pakistan denied any involvement. Journalist Bhat and others see the start of the latest crisis in Kashmir not as the attack on the army camp in Uri on Sept 18, but the killing by Indian security forces of Burhan Wani, a popular separatist militant leader, on July 8.

Stone-throwing protesters took to the streets in a display of support for the slain insurgent that also reflected deep-rooted unease about a central government they say is pursuing a Hindu-nationalist agenda to pacify and assimilate India's only Muslim-majority region. Many of those killed in the clashes died from shotgun pellets or rifle bullets fired by police and paramilitary troops, and the supposedly non-lethal pellet rounds have blinded hundreds of bystanders, including children and women.

"The police are using brute force," said one protester, a 27-year-old university graduate who works in the private sector and spoke to Reuters at a safe house in the old town of Srinagar, the summer capital of India's northernmost state. "They are leaving local boys with no choice but to take up arms. You are creating home-grown rebels by your actions - and then you are labelling them as terrorists."

Hospital Ward Full

The ophthalmology ward of Srinagar's main SMHS hospital is still overflowing with patients either partially or fully blinded by pellet rounds fired by police or paramilitary troops. Some, like Mushtaq, a 22-year-old student from the restive district of Pulwama, say they were demonstrating when they were shot at. Despite being blinded in his right eye, which was swathed in a bandage, Mushtaq said: "I would go out again and protest once I recover."

Others, like an 18-year-old high school student who gave his name as Muhsin, say they were bystanders caught in the cross-fire. Four young boys tried to escape by jumping into the nearby Jhelum river but were fired on by police. Muhsin dove in to try and rescue one boy who had been shot, only to be hit himself in the left eye and blinded. He was unable to save the boy, who drowned.

The 850-bed hospital has received hundreds of casualties from street clashes, which have died down for now. "I don't know how we managed," said Dr Nisur Al-Hassan, a consultant at the hospital and president of the Doctors Association of Kashmir. Hassan said he had seen patients "with eyes gone, spleens gone, kidneys gone. These pellets have pierced their hearts, their abdomens, their brains. We can only operate on three to five patients at a time. You can only imagine."

'Failure to Anticipate'

Human rights activist Khurram Parvez, a vocal critic of the security crackdown, was on the way to present his findings to a UN rights meeting in Geneva when he was turned back at Delhi's international airport on Sept 14. After Parvez returned home to Srinagar he was briefly detained, and then re-arrested under a public safety law that allows suspects to be held for six months

without being charged. Parvez is not alone: In jail is moderate separatist leader Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, while hundreds more suspected protest ringleaders have been detained over the past month in raids on towns and villages across the Kashmir Valley.

Schools in Srinagar have been commandeered and turned into barracks and, even in quieter parts of the city of 1.3 million where the curfew has been lifted, there is a heavy security presence. Most shops remain shut. A senior army officer said the outbreak of protests in Kashmir had at first been overwhelming. "Our failure was in not being able to anticipate the extent of the protests," the officer said, on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak on the record. "We were unable to stabilize the cycle of violence and killing. Some lives were lost because the use of force was required. Our crowd control methods are primitive, but in this part of the world nothing else would have worked."

In the meantime, the protests have given a new lease of life to militants who have been sighted among the crowds and are believed by the authorities to be playing an active role in organizing them. "It's a very organized hoodlum element that works with the militants," said a senior police officer with long experience of the insurgency in Kashmir that first broke out at the end of the 1980s. The officer pulled a smartphone out of his pocket and showed a video circulated by Zakir Rashid Bhat, named to replace Wani as Hizbul Mujahideen's commander in South Kashmir.

The video shows men in uniform beating protesters and is accompanied by a soundtrack of rhythmic chants urging people to be faithful and to take revenge against the police. "This is the imagery of ISIS," the police officer said, referring to the extremist group Islamic State. "The radicalization is growing stronger." — AFP

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KENYA'S OLYMPIC TEAM LEADER CHARGED WITH THEFT

NAIROBI: Kenya's Rio Olympics manager Stephen Soi was charged yesterday with four counts of stealing more than 25 million shillings (\$250,000 dollars) destined for athletes and officials in Brazil. Soi, who denied the charges, is the National Olympic Committee of Kenya's (NOCK) assistant secretary. He was accused of fraudulently taking the money out of the country without informing immigration officers. Kenyan prosecutors said Soi, a former police officer, being an official trustee of NOCK, stole the money which had been entrusted to him by Athletics Kenya "for purposes of making payments towards the accommodation of Kenyan athletes and officials during the Rio Olympics in Brazil." Two NOCK officials, vice-chairman Pius Ochieng and secretary-general, Francis Kinyili Paul, also appeared in the same court charged with fraudulently acquiring the Team Kenya kit from Nike. — AFP



IOC REPRIMANDS THREE BOXERS FOR RIO BETTING

LAUSANNE: The International Olympic Committee (IOC) said yesterday it had handed "severe reprimands" to three boxers for betting on fights at the Rio Games, two of them Irish. Michael Conlan, Steven Donnelly and Britain's Anthony Fowler-cousin of the former Liverpool and England footballer Robbie Fowler-breached rules introduced for the Games in August. Donnelly was found to have made two bets on himself to lose one of his bouts-which he later won so did not win any money. "Participants at the Olympic Games are not permitted to bet on Olympic events and are obliged to report any approach or suspicion of manipulation," the IOC said in a statement. Bantamweight Conlan, 24, welterweight Donnelly, 28, and middleweight Fowler, 25, must now all prove they have successfully followed the IOC's educational programme if they want to fight at Tokyo 2020. The punishments were not harsher because "there was no intent to manipulate any event," the IOC said. The IOC also dished out a reprimand to the Olympic Council of Ireland and the British Olympic Association for not properly informing their athletes about the rules relating to gambling. — AFP

JOSE MOURINHO 'FEELS SORRY' FOR ALLARDYCE

MANCHESTER: Manchester United manager Jose Mourinho said yesterday he "feels sorry" for Sam Allardyce and still respects him, a day after his reign as England boss came to a sudden and premature end. After a mere 67 days in charge of the national side, Allardyce paid the price on Tuesday for indiscreetly talking with undercover Daily Telegraph reporters posing as Far East businessmen. The 61-year-old was secretly filmed giving advice on how to get around transfer rules as he also criticised the Football Association's decision to rebuild Wembley and mocked his England predecessor Roy Hodgson. Allardyce, appointed England manager in July on a £3 million (\$3.9 million, 3.5 million euro) a year contract, also agreed to travel to Singapore and Hong Kong as an ambassador for their fictitious firm for a fee of £400,000. United manager Mourinho, who once accused Allardyce of playing "19th century football" when the latter was in charge of West Ham, said Wednesday: "The only thing I can say is that I like Sam. I feel sorry for that because I know that was a dream job and I feel sorry for him." — AFP



HAMILTON VOWS TO GIVE EVERYTHING IN TITLE FIGHTBACK

KUALA LUMPUR: Lewis Hamilton said he will give everything at this weekend's Malaysian Grand Prix as he looks to bounce back in the Formula One championship after losing his lead to a rampant Nico Rosberg.

The triple world champion lies eight points behind his Mercedes team-mate after the increasingly impressive Rosberg powered to a hat-trick of victories in the last three races. The German triumphed in Belgium, Italy and in his 200th grand prix at Singapore 10 days ago where Hamilton, who finished third, was hit by mechanical problems.

With six grands prix left, Hamilton knows time is running out in a rollercoaster, 21-race season that has seen the Englishman trail by as many as 43 points at one stage and lead by 19 just three races ago. "Singapore was a difficult weekend for me, so to come away with a podium in the circumstances was pretty good damage limitation," Hamilton said this week.

"I have no idea if the momentum will swing back to me or when it might. I just have to keep giving it my all and hope for the best," said Hamilton, world champion in 2008, 2014 and 2015. "It's going to take some good results to get back in front and stay there but I've had

plenty of those in the past, so there's no reason to think they won't come back to me again," said Hamilton. "Sepang is my first shot at it. It's a track I usually go pretty well at."

Mercedes can seal the constructors' championship in Malaysia with a one-two finish, but Rosberg sounded a note of caution about their rivals. "Red Bull and Ferrari are both pushing us really hard, so there will be some tough weekends ahead," said the championship leader, who came third at Sepang in 2015 behind winner Sebastian Vettel and Hamilton.

"Malaysia didn't work out perfectly for us last year, so if we can win it this time against such tough opposition that would be really awesome."

WEATHER GODS

Red Bull's Daniel Ricciardo pushed Rosberg all the way in a thrilling climax to the Singapore Grand Prix, closing a 30-second deficit to less than half-a-second at the chequered flag. But the Australian admitted that Singapore was his best chance of registering a dry victory this campaign, so he now needs the weather gods to intervene to have a chance in Malaysia.

The race, which often sees rain and thun-



KUALA LUMPUR: Mercedes driver Lewis Hamilton of Britain smiles during a press conference in Kuala Lumpur, yesterday, ahead of the Malaysia Formula One Grand Prix this Sunday in Malaysia. — AP

derstorms, has been moved from its traditional early-season slot to the middle leg of an "Asian swing", sandwiched by the Singapore and Japan grands prix.

Ricciardo believes the calendar switch won't affect his chances of a wet race, which would benefit the Red Bulls with their superior downforce. "I checked the weather and it seems pretty constant all year round so that shouldn't change much," said Ricciardo.

A wet race would also interest Vettel, as he tries to bridge a 26-point gap to Ricciardo in third place. Vettel drove superbly from the back of the grid to finish fifth in Singapore after a suspension failure in qualifying.

And he knows his way around Sepang, having won in Malaysia in 2010, 2011, 2013 and 2015, and is confident Ferrari can finish the season on a high. "I think if we get everything right then we know we have a strong package, for sure," Vettel said. He added that Ferrari, 15 points behind Red Bull, would battle all the way for second place in the constructors' championship. "I think going forward we have confidence. We're here to fight and that's what we're going to do," the four-time world champion said. — AFP

FRANKIE DETTORI IN HUNT FOR RECORD SEEKING ARC RIDE

PARIS: Frankie Dettori is on the hunt for a ride in Sunday's Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe after his intended mount Fascinating Rock was diverted to the Champion Stakes.

The star Italian rider, who at the weekend celebrated the 20th anniversary of his famous 'Magnificent Seven' winners at Ascot, claimed his fourth triumph in Europe's richest race last year on Golden Horn.

Dettori was hoping to bid for a record fifth success on Fascinating Rock, but trainer Dermot Weld now plans to bypass Chantilly in favour of the Champion at Ascot later in October. Irish handler Weld will still be represented in the five million euros (\$5.6 mn) showpiece by Harzand. His Epsom and Irish Derby hero kept on course for Sunday's Group One after showing no ill effects from the injury he picked up last time out in the Irish Champion Stakes.

The 8-1 shot's big race rider Pat Smullen told At The Races: "Harzand is in tremendous form and I'm really happy with him. I suppose there is only one negative that the ground looks like being on the quick side but you never know, they might get a drop of rain between now and raceday. All is well with him." Harzand is nothing if not hardy, as he prevailed at Epsom after a pre-race injury scare.

Smullen commented: "He's a tremendous horse and has some healing power - the way he recovered from Epsom with that bruised foot to bounce back and win the Irish Derby. "Again he's recovered from being struck into behind in the Champion Stakes and I think it's a great sign in the

horse that he's got that healing power and those little things don't affect him. He's able to take it like all the good ones do." Postponed, one of only two trained in England, is 2-1 favourite following the defection due to injury at the weekend of France's top shot, the unbeaten classic-winning filly La Cressonniere.

Her trainer Jean-Claude Rouget could still have an interest in proceedings in the shape of his French Derby and Irish Champion Stakes winning colt Almanzor, who has the Champion at Ascot as an alternative. Almanzor was one of 19 left in the latest forfeit stage with Aidan O'Brien set to be three-handed with Found, Order of St George and Highland Reel. Japanese contender Makahiki has been giving off positive vibes since his warm up prep in the Prix Niel over course and distance three weeks ago.

The Japanese Derby winner is the latest in a long line of Japanese visitors to attempt to land the Arc, a list that includes his sire, Deep Impact who finished third in 2006. Makahiki's French jockey Christophe Lemaire reported after his mount's last searching pre-Arc workout: "He picked up well and I was very happy with him. Running up to the Arc I was looking for signs he is in good condition and I was reassured on that front."

He is battling for second favouritism with O'Brien's Found at around 6-1. Sunday's Arc and the 2017 edition are being staged in Chantilly as its traditional home at Longchamp undergoes a major renovation. — AFP

WARY MERCEDES WITHIN REACH OF TITLE TRIPLE

SEPANG: Mercedes look all but certain to wrap up their third straight Formula One constructors' crown in Sunday's Malaysian Grand Prix but the spectre of a rare defeat in last year's race still haunts them. The champions have won all but one race this season and arrive at the Sepang circuit 222 points clear of closest challengers Red Bull and 237 ahead of Ferrari. With a maximum of 215 points available from the five races remaining after Sunday, Red Bull and Ferrari can only hope something keeps championship leader Nico Rosberg and Lewis Hamilton off the podium. With the race moving to October from its recent early season March slot, Mercedes could become the first team to clinch the constructors' crown in Malaysia since Ferrari in 2000.

The German team are refusing to tempt fate, however, to the extent that their official race preview did not mention directly the possibility of clinching the title at Sepang.

"Like Singapore, this was a race where we underperformed last year, so we will need to push hard to put that right," said team boss Toto Wolff. "We're in good shape-but we must remain on our toes to get the ball over the line."

The 5.5-km Sepang circuit always throws up the chance of an upset, with Red Bull's Daniel Ricciardo particularly keen to capitalise after coming agonisingly close to victory in Singapore. The

potential for a shake-up could be even greater this year with the circuit resurfaced and the gradient of some corners changed.

Mercedes were dealt a shock defeat last season when Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel won, ending the Italian team's longest victory drought in over two decades. But Rosberg banished memories of a similarly off-colour weekend for Mercedes in Singapore last year with his win around the floodlit streets of the city-state two weeks ago.

The German has jumped back into the overall lead, opening up an eight-point advantage over Hamilton, with his third win in a row and eighth of the season.

No driver has ever failed to take the title after winning eight or more races in a season and the German is starting to look like he has the measure of Hamilton.

"I've had a good run lately and I'm enjoying the moment," said Rosberg. "But as far as the next race goes, or the next one after that and so on... it's anyone's game." Triple champion Hamilton, who turned a 43-point deficit into a 19-point lead with a streak of six wins from seven races heading into the August summer break, will try and hit back with what would be his 50th win. Compatriot Jenson Button, making way for rookie Stoffel Vandoorne at McLaren next season, will also be in the spotlight as he lines up for his 300th start. — Reuters



NO 31 TOYOTA PRIUS APR GT EARNS PODIUM FINISH IN ROUND 6 OF 2016

TOKYO: The No 31 Toyota Prius apr GT driven by Koki Saga and Yuichi Nakayama competed brilliantly to claim second place in Round 6 of the 2016 Autobacs Super GT 300 series, which took place recently at the 45th International Suzuka 1000km race held at the Suzuka Circuit in Japan. The No. 31 Toyota Prius apr GT stands second in the team rankings at this stage with two more rounds to go for the season.

The teams were competing in difficult conditions that saw rain falling intermittently. Due to the length of the Suzuka 1000km race, there was no morning free practice session held as in the other GT rounds. Instead, the usual 8-minute warm-up time before the start was extended to 20 min-

utes. When the race started, the track was partially wet, which led most of the teams to start the race with dry-condition tires, with the exception of the No. 31 Toyota Prius apr GT driven by Koki Saga. Having chosen rain tires, Sagahad trouble keeping pace, and he decided to return to the pit for a tire change at the end of the third lap.

After changing to dry-condition tires and changing drivers from Koki Saga to Yuichi Nakayama, the team returned to the race having lost considerable ground.

The No. 31 Toyota Prius apr GT, however, continued to compete, and in the last half of the race and with two laps remaining, Nakayama went ahead to finish second in a close contest. Round 7 of the

2016 championship now takes place in Thailand on October 8th and 9th, 2016.

According to Takayuki Yoshitsugu, Chief Representative, Middle East and North Africa Representative Office, Toyota Motor Corporation, "It was an excellent result for the No. 31 Toyota Prius apr GT and I would like to congratulate the drivers and the entire support staff for this outstanding performance. The experience gained through participation in top-level motorsports has contributed significantly in helping Toyota to build ever better cars to put a smile on the faces of our customers. We also appreciate the support of our fans and their constant encouragement for our racing initiatives."





TORONTO: Toronto Blue Jays' Troy Tulowitzki attempts to turn a double play over Baltimore Orioles' Michael Bourn during the ninth inning of a baseball game, Tuesday in Toronto. — AP

BLUE JAYS BEAT ORIOLES 5-1 IN AL WILD-CARD SHOWDOWN

BALTIMORE: Aaron Sanchez struck out 10 in six innings, Josh Donaldson and Ezequiel Carrera homered and the Toronto Blue Jays defeated the Baltimore Orioles. Carrera and Donaldson each had two RBIs for the Blue Jays (87-70) who have moved two games ahead of the Orioles (85-72) in the race for the first wild-card spot in the American League. Sanchez (14-2) allowed five hits, three walks and one run to end a string of three straight no-decisions outings.

NATIONALS 4, DIAMONDBACKS 2

Anthony Rendon hit a go-ahead three-run homer in the sixth inning and Max Scherzer won his 19th game as the Washington Nationals came back to beat the Arizona Diamondbacks 4-2 despite getting just three hits. Scherzer (19-7) gave up six hits and two runs with two walks and 10 strikeouts.

YANKEES 6, RED SOX 4

Rookie Tyler Austin hit a tiebreaking two-run home run with none out in the bottom of the seventh inning, lifting the New York Yankees to a 6-4 victory over the Boston Red Sox and preventing their rivals from clinching the AL East title. Austin gave the Yankees a 6-4 lead when he lifted a 1-1 pitch from David Price (17-9) into the right field seats. Austin's homer prevented the Red Sox from clinching their eighth division title

and ended their 11-game winning streak. The Red Sox (92-65) need one win or a Toronto loss to clinch. The Blue Jays kept the celebration on hold by getting a 5-1 win over Baltimore. The Yankees (81-76) remained mathematically alive in the wild card race and are four games behind Baltimore with five to play.

RANGERS 6, BREWERS 4

The Texas Rangers regained the best record in the American League by rallying past the Milwaukee Brewers. Texas (93-65) moved a half-game ahead of Boston (92-65) in the race for home-field advantage throughout the AL playoffs. Jonathan Lucroy, acquired from Milwaukee at the trade deadline, lined a two-run double in the sixth for the go-ahead runs.

CUBS 6, PIRATES 4

Chris Coghlan gave Chicago an early lead with a three-run triple in the second inning and the Cubs built on what was already the majors' best record with a 6-4 win over the Pittsburgh Pirates. Chicago are 101-56, the most wins by the franchise since the 1910 Cubs won 104 games.

TIGERS 12, INDIANS 0

Miguel Cabrera drove in five runs with a homer and double to surpass 100 RBIs for the 12th time while Justin Verlander dominated the

Cleveland Indians' reserve-laden lineup with 7-2/3 innings to lead the Detroit Tigers to a 12-0 victory. The win pulled Detroit to within one game of Baltimore for the second American League wild-card spot with five games to play. Justin Upton added a three-run homer and Andrew Romine hit a two-run shot for the Tigers. Verlander (16-8) struck out 12 and walked one.

METS 12, MARLINS 1

Jay Bruce and Yoenis Cespedes hit their 31st homers of the season to lead the New York Mets to a 12-1 win over the Miami Marlins. Bruce hit a two-run homer in the second, and Cespedes matched him in the third as the Mets (84-74) kept their narrow lead over the San Francisco Giants and the St. Louis Cardinals in the NL wild-card race. New York broke the game open with a five-run eighth inning, getting a two-run single by Curtis Granderson and a three-run double by Lucas Duda.

ROYALS 4, TWINS 3 (11 INNINGS)

Raul Mondesi scored on Billy Burns' sacrifice fly in the 11th inning as the Kansas City Royals beat the Minnesota Twins. Mondesi opened the inning by drawing a walk from Tommy Milone, the ninth Twins pitcher. He stole second and Jarrod Dyson advanced him to third on a bunt. After Whit Merrifield and Eric Hosmer were walked intentionally, Burns delivered the game-winning sacrifice fly to center.

ASTROS 8, MARINERS 4

Rookie Alex Bregman delivered a game-tying pinch-hit with two outs in the sixth inning to ignite a six-run frame that pushed the Astros to a 8-4 victory over the Seattle Mariners. Bregman dumped an RBI single into center field off Mariners right-hander Felix Hernandez (11-7) to even the score at 4-4 before George Springer and Marwin Gonzalez drove in two runs each to chase Hernandez and complete the onslaught. The Astros (83-75) pulled within 2-1/2 games of the second American League wild card spot with the win.

WHITE SOX 13, RAYS 6

Chris Sale tied a career high by earning his 17th victory in the Chicago White Sox's 13-6 win over the Tampa Bay Rays. Sale (17-9) allowed three runs on eight hits in seven innings, struck out seven and walked none in his 31st start, which possibly could be his last for the White Sox. The ace left-hander, who is scheduled to start again on Sunday, has been the subject of trade rumors since the All-Star break and might be dealt in the offseason if the White Sox decide the price is right.

CARDINALS 12, REDS 5

Aledmys Diaz, playing his first game since close friend Jose Fernandez died, belted a grand slam in St. Louis' rout of Cincinnati. The Cardinals cracked five homers including a pair in the sixth when Matt Adams lined his 16th to center, followed by Randal Grichuk's 24th two batters later. St. Louis stayed within 1-1/2 games of the New York Mets for the National League's first wild-card spot.

BRAVES 7, PHILLIES 6

Pinch hitter Emilio Bonifacio's infield single with the bases loaded in the eighth inning capped Atlanta's come-from-behind victory over Philadelphia. The Braves trailed 6-0 after two innings but came back by scoring two runs in the eighth against a Phillies' bullpen that has allowed 34 runs over the past five games.

ANGELS 8, ATHLETICS 1

Jefry Marte hit his first career grand slam to lead Los Angeles to a rout of Oakland. Kole Calhoun added two doubles and a triple, scored

MLB results/standings

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

American League Eastern Division				National League Eastern Division					
W	L	PCT	GB	W	L	PCT	GB		
Boston	92	65	.586	-	Washington	92	65	.586	-
Toronto	87	70	.554	5	NY Mets	84	74	.532	8.5
Baltimore	85	72	.541	7	Miami	78	79	.497	14
NY Yankees	81	76	.516	11	Philadelphia	70	87	.446	22
Tampa Bay	65	92	.414	27	Atlanta	64	92	.410	27.5
Central Division				Western Division					
Cleveland	91	66	.580	-	Chicago Cubs	101	56	.643	-
Detroit	84	73	.535	7	St. Louis	82	75	.522	19
Kansas City	80	77	.510	11	Pittsburgh	77	80	.490	24
Chicago Sox	76	81	.484	15	Milwaukee	71	87	.449	30.5
Minnesota	56	101	.357	35	Cincinnati	66	91	.420	35
Western Division				Western Division					
Texas	93	65	.589	-	LA Dodgers	90	67	.573	-
Seattle	83	74	.529	9.5	San Francisco	83	74	.529	7
Houston	83	75	.525	10	Colorado	73	84	.465	17
LA Angels	71	87	.449	22	San Diego	67	90	.427	23
Oakland	67	90	.427	25.5	Arizona	65	92	.414	25

twice and drove in a run while going 3-for-3. Mike Trout contributed his 99th RBI. Right-hander Ricky Nolasco (8-14) won his third successive start. Rookie Ryon Healy collected three hits and had the only RBI for the Athletics.

PADRES 7, DODGERS 1

Rookie Hunter Renfroe had two home runs and seven RBIs to lift the San Diego Padres past the Los Angeles Dodgers. Renfroe, among the wave of prospects called up last week from Triple-A El Paso, had an eighth-inning grand slam and a three-run homer in the first to upend the newly minted National League West champ. Renfroe, a first-round pick in 2013, has three homers in six games.

He hit his first grand slam off Louis Coleman, the Dodgers' sixth pitcher. The Dodgers fell two

games behind the Washington Nationals in the race for home-field advantage in their upcoming National League Division Series.

GIANTS 12, ROCKIES 3

Buster Posey and Hunter Pence hit back-to-back home runs, and Brandon Crawford had two triples among four hits as the San Francisco Giants compelled a 12-3 thumping of the Colorado Rockies.

Left-hander Matt Moore struck out a career-high tying 11 and allowed only one run in 7-2/3 innings, helping the Giants (83-74) remain a game ahead of the St. Louis Cardinals (82-75) in the battle for the second National League wild card. The New York Mets (84-74) maintain a half-game lead on San Francisco for the first wild card. — Reuters

WADA DEFENDS TUE SYSTEM AFTER LEAKED DATA

SEVRES: The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) yesterday defended the Therapeutic Use Exemption (TUE) system after some athletes' confidential medical data was leaked by a group of Russian hackers, shedding light on potential abuse.

A group identified as APT28 and Fancy Bear by US cyber-security researchers revealed TUEs for leading athletes including Tour de France cycling champions Chris Froome and Bradley Wiggins and tennis grand slam winners Serena Williams and Rafa Nadal.

TUEs allow athletes to take banned substances for verified medical needs and are signed off by sports federations.

"TUEs fall under international standards... They are scrutinised by the medical community," WADA Senior Science Director Olivier Rabin told a joint news conference with International Bureau of Weights and Measures (BIPM). "WADA can review and appeal the TUEs. If there is a risk of abuse, WADA has the right to overturn," Rabin said, adding that the leaked information had only very limited value. Suggestions that the number of TUEs had dramatically increased in the past year are false, added Valerie

Fourneyron, the head Health, Medicine and Research at WADA. "The number seems to have increased) because more and more national anti-doping agencies have put the TUEs into ADAMS (Anti-Doping Administration and Management System)," she said. "Several countries in the past year have put all their TUEs on ADAMS - Italy, France, Tunisia, Malaysia."

Team Sky boss Dave Brailsford defended Wiggins on Monday, saying the 2012 Tour de France champion's TUEs were "not being used to enhance performance".

A leading expert, however, said on Wednesday that the explanations of Wiggins and Brailsford were "shaky". "There is no logic in injecting yourself with (the corticosteroid) Kenacort before the start of a grand tour," Dr Armand Megret, an expert for the Movement for Credible Cycling, told French sports daily L'Equipe.

"It does not make sense that such a champion with such team with such an organised staff can take corticoids so casually." The data revealed the Briton was given permission to take triamcinolone before the 2011 and 2012 Tours as well as the 2013 Tour of Italy. — Reuters



Al-Mutairi receiving the award

KFH HONORS GOLD MEDALIST AL MUTAIRI WITH 2KG GOLD AWARD

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) offered 2 kg gold award to the gold medalist Ahmad Al-Mutairi in recognition of his triumph in capturing the gold medal in the wheelchair competition for 100m at the Rio 2016 Paralympics, held in Brazil.

This recognition emanates from KFH's long standing endeavors to support and patronize the Kuwaiti champions who raise the name of Kuwait at the international forums and global events. It also reassures the bank's ongoing commitment towards assuming its part in society.

Al-Mutairi lauded KFH for this recognition that affirms the bank's keenness to recognize the distinguished people, while

reflects its prestigious status as a global leading Islamic financial institution.

It is worth noting that KFH had previously honored Kuwaiti shooter Fahaid Al-Deehani with 2 KG Gold for winning the Gold medal in the men's double trap event at the Rio 2016 Olympics, and 1 KG Gold award to the Kuwaiti shooter Abdullah Al-Rashidi for capturing the bronze Olympic medal in the men's skeet championship at the same Olympics.

Al-Mutairi's victory reiterates that Kuwaiti youth, especially people with special needs, have the abilities to overcome all hardships and add more achievements to the records of the Kuwaiti sports.

FORMER AUSTRALIA CRICKETER MAX WALKER DEAD AT 68

SYDNEY: Former Australia cricketer Max Walker, whose awkward and unorthodox bowling action earned him the nickname Tangles, has died. He was 68.

Cricket Australia yesterday said Walker died after a battle with cancer. Walker played 34 test matches between 1972 and '77, taking 138 wickets at an average of 27.47, including six five-wicket hauls. He also took 20 wickets in 17 one-day internationals from 1974-81. Walker was a useful batsman who scored 586 runs at 19.53 including an unbeaten 78 in his final test against England at the Oval.

After retiring from cricket he became a commentator, a popular raconteur and a best-selling author whose humorous books included *How To Hypnotise Chooks And Other Great Yarns*.

In 2011, he was made a Member of the Order of Australia for services to cricket and for his social work. Keith Stackpole, who played with Walker in 13 tests and

captained him in the Victoria state team, said Walker was under-estimated because he played in the shadow of the great fast bowlers Dennis Lillee and Jeff Thomson.

"He was loved around the world by teammates and opponents alike and to my mind seriously underestimated," Stackpole told the Daily Telegraph. "You think of Thommo and Lillee as the tear-aways, whereas 'Tang' was a medium pacer with the biggest heart I have come across on the cricket field. Once he realized he wasn't a fast bowler, as distinct from a medium fast bowler, he became a very, very good player."

Greg Chappell, who played with Walker in 34 tests, recalled the unusual, wrong-footed action surprised batsmen. "The right arm over left earhole is how he described his bowling," Chappell said. "Maybe Mike Proctor and Lance Cairns were similar but part of Max's distinguishing feature was his unusual action, mean-

ing batsmen were never always sure where the ball was coming."

Walker had been a successful Australian Rules football player in Melbourne before concentrating on cricket. He started as a batsman but realized his strength lay as a bowler. Walker took 12 wickets in his first two test matches, including 6-15 from 16 overs in the second innings of the second test against Pakistan at Sydney in 1973. Pakistan needed only 158 to win and was 83-3 until Walker's match-winning spell.

On Australia's subsequent tour to the West Indies, and after criticism of his selection, Walker took 26 wickets at 20.73, shouldering the heaviest bowling responsibility after Lillee and Bob Massie were lost to injuries.

Walker was a favorite among fans for his handlebar moustache and larger-than-life personality. "Tangles was one of the great fellows. A big loveable bear of a



Max Walker

man who parlayed his talent, first as a footballer turned cricketer, and then with

his bonhomie and ability to tell a good yarn, to set himself up for a wonderful career after cricket," Chappell said. "He'd be the first to tell you it was a pretty good result for someone who trained as an architect but never really designed anything apart from what he would describe as a 'few chicken coops.' "He was a big man with a big heart, very likable, and a lot of fun to play cricket with."

Cricket Australia chief executive James Sutherland said Walker played an important role in Australia's success in the 1970s. "It was a golden era of test cricket under the captaincy of Ian and Greg Chappell, and Max's medium fast bowling and his unmistakable bowling action were a feature of those teams, and then in the late 1970s when he joined World Series Cricket," Sutherland said. "As a cricketer, with ball or bat in hand, Max was always fiercely competitive. He was a genuine crowd favorite wherever he played." — AP

JORDAN'S WOMEN'S U-17 TEAM PREPARE TO TAKE ON WORLD

AMMAN: Jordan's under-17 women footballers are set for the contest of their lives as the first international all-female tournament ever held in the Middle East kicks off in Amman tomorrow. FIFA's U-17 Women's World Cup starts with a showdown between Jordan and Spain at the capital's 13,000-seat international stadium. "We've worked hard to get ready," Jordan central defender Anoud Gazi said after an evening training session at a stadium south of Amman. "Playing in a World Cup, it's a dream for me and the other players. I'm really excited about the match."

The 16-year-old faces high school final exams at the end of the year, but for now she's taking time off to pursue her dream. "I haven't been to class for a month. The headmaster said 'don't think about anything—just the World Cup,'" she told AFP. FIFA and the Jordanian government are hoping the contest will help promote women's football in Jordan and across the conservative Muslim-majority region.

As in other parts of the Middle East, football is Jordan's most popular sport, but it is dominated by men. FIFA say 13,890 women and girls are registered at football clubs in 19 countries across the Middle East and North Africa. They said Jordan has been a pioneer, launching a women's football programme in 2005 and now aiming to "shine a light for girls and women throughout the Middle East and beyond".

ROLE MODELS

The country's Queen Rania has also been supportive, saying female footballers can be role models who challenge negative perceptions of women.

"To have young girls playing sports, and playing football specifically, can do so much to change attitudes and perceptions as to how society perceives girls and young women," she said in a statement released by FIFA. Organisers are hoping for a sellout opening match on Friday, promoting the tournament with posters around Amman

bearing portraits of five smiling players and the slogan: "One heart, one goal, one team." The players have become local celebrities, arriving at training sessions in a brand new bus escorted by police cars with flashing lights. The government is using the competition to promote Jordan's image as an open country and a haven of peace amid conflicts rocking the Middle East. Jihadist attacks, such as the murder earlier this week of a Jordanian writer accused of blasphemy, and the war in neighbouring Syria have hit the country's tourism businesses hard.

Tourism Minister Lina Annab said the tournament was "an opportunity that must be taken to promote Jordan", and that players and delegations would be given tours of the country's most famous sites.

SMASHING STEREOTYPES

On the sporting front, the Jordanian players are under no illusions. After a 7-0 defeat to Brazil a week before the tournament, they're aware of the challenge they face.

But they remain optimistic. Centre-forward Sarah Abu Sabbah, who plays for Germany's Bayer Leverkusen, said football is "full of surprises".

She recalled the semi-final of the 2014 World Cup. "Who would have imagined that Germany would beat Brazil 7-1 at home?" she said, her face sweating after a training match. "Playing in a World Cup is a dream I've followed since childhood," she said. "We have prepared well for the tournament and we are ready for the match. I'm confident we can win." With the girls in the final stage of preparations, their parents gathered to watch them train. Amjad al-Fakhouri, father of defender Zina, said he has been bringing his daughter to training sessions for the past three years. "I pay for private lessons so she can catch up on the classes she's missing at school," he said.

"I encourage her to become a good footballer and smash the stereotypes of our society, which refuses to see girls in shorts playing football." — AFP



DHAKA: Afghanistan's captain Asghar Stanikzai, left, plays a shot, as Bangladesh's wicketkeeper Mushfiqur Rahim watches during the second one-day international cricket match in Dhaka, Bangladesh, yesterday. — AP

AFGHANISTAN SHOCK BANGLADESH TO LEVEL THREE-MATCH SERIES

DHAKA: Afghanistan skipper Asghar Stanikzai top-scored 57 runs as his side shocked Bangladesh by claiming a two-wicket victory in the second one-day international to level the three-match series 1-1 in Dhaka yesterday.

Bowlers set up the win for Afghanistan as leg-spinner Rashid Khan took 3-35 and Mohammad Nabi claimed 2-16 to help the visitors dismiss Bangladesh for a modest 208 runs on a slow pitch at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium. Man-of-the-match Nabi showed his all-round skill scoring 49 runs and putting on 107 runs with Stanikzai in the fifth wicket as Afghanistan recovered from 63-4 to reach 212-8, completing their second win against Bangladesh in four meetings. Stanikzai hit four fours and two sixes in his 95 balls to atone for some of his causal batting in the opening match, which saw Afghanistan lose by seven runs despite dominating Bangladeshi bowlers for a long period.

Defending a modest score, Shakib Al Hasan gave Bangladesh some hope with three early wickets before finishing with 4-47, but Nabi and Stanikzai stood firm to put Afghanistan in a strong position. Mashrafe Mortaza trapped Nabi leg-before to end their partnership before debutant Mosaddek Hossain, who claimed 2-30, including one off his first ball, removed Stanikzai.

But Najibullah Zadran made 22 and other lower-order batsmen gave him valuable support to see Afghanistan home, setting the third and final match on October 1 as the series decider.

Stanikzai hailed his bowlers for their brilliant effort. "This match, the credit goes to the team. Nabi and Rashid bowled really well," he said.

"The ball reversed in the end, but Najib did it for us." Earlier, Bangladesh could only pass the 200-run mark owing to an unbeaten 45 runs of Mosaddek, who shared 43 runs with Rubel Hossain in the last wicket pair.

Put into bat first, Bangladesh, who were look-

SCOREBOARD

DHAKA: Scoreboard of the second one-day international between Bangladesh and Afghanistan at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Dhaka yesterday:

Bangladesh		Afghanistan	
Tamim Iqbal c Dawlat b Ashraf	20	Mohammad Shahzad c Taskin b Shakib	35
Soumya Sarkar c Hashmatullah c Ashraf	20	Nawroz Mangal c Taijul b Shakib	10
Mahmudullah Riyad b Naveen-ul-Haq	25	Rahmat Shah lbw b Shakib	0
Mushfiqur Rahim c Naveen-ul-Haq b Shah	38	Hashmatullah Shahidi lbw b Mosaddek	14
Shakib Al Hasan lbw b Nabi	17	Asghar Stanikzai c Sabbir b Mosaddek	57
Sabbir Rahman lbw b Rashid	4	Mohammad Nabi lbw b Mortaza	49
Mosaddek Hossain not out	45	Najibullah Zadran c Mosaddek b Taskin	22
Rubel Hossain run out	2	Rashid Khan lbw b Shakib	5
Mashrafe Mortaza c Dawlat b Nabi	2	Mirwais Ashraf not out	9
Taijul Islam lbw b Rashid Khan	10	Dawlat Zadran not out	4
Taskin Ahmed lbw b Rashid Khan	0	Extras (lb2, w5)	7
Total (all out 49.2 overs)	10	Total (eight wickets; 49.4 overs)	212
Extras (b1, lb7, w8, nb1)	17	Fall of wickets: 1-14 (Mangal), 2-14 (Shah), 3-59 (Hashmatullah), 4-63 (Shahzad), 5-170 (Nabi), 6-174 (Stanikzai), 7-189 (Rashid), 8-208 (Najibullah)	
Fall of wickets: 1-45(Tamim), 2-50 (Soumya), 3-111 (Mahmudullah), 4-122 (Rahim), 5-138 (Shakib), 6-138 (Sabbir), 7-141 (Mortaza), 8-165 (Taijul), 9-165 (Taskin), 10-208 (Rubel)		Did not bat: Naveen-ul-Haq	
Bowling: Nabi 10-3-16-2, Dawlat 8-1-47-0(w4), Ashraf 5-0-23-2, Naveen-ul-Haq 8.2-0-49-1(w1), Rashid 10-2-35-3 (w1), Shah 8-0-30-1(nb1, w2)		Bowling: Mortaza 10-0-31-1 (w2), Shakib 10-0-47-4, Taskin 4.4-0-32-1(w2), Taijul 10-0-38-0, Mosaddek 10-1-30-2 (w1), Sabbir 2-0-8-0, Rubel 3-0-24-0	
		Result: Afghanistan won by two wickets	

ing for their 100th ODI win and to wrap-up the series after winning Sunday's first match by a narrow seven runs, made a cautious start with the opening pair fetching 45 runs.

Mirwais Ashraf, who claimed 2-23, removed both the openers Tamim Iqbal (20) and Soumya Sarkar (20) before Mushfiqur Rahim and Mahmudullah Riyad revived the innings, adding 61 runs for the third wicket.

Afghan spinners took control of the proceedings once Naveen-ul-Haq bowled Mahmudullah

for 25. Rahim, who scored 38, soon followed Mahmudullah attempting his favourite slow-sweep as Naveen-ul-Haq took the catch at deep square leg off leg-spinner Shah.

Nabi trapped Shakib Al Hasan leg-before for 17 before Rashid worked out the lower order.

Bangladesh captain Mortaza lamented their poor batting. "Our batting wasn't up to the mark. The wicket was on the slow side, and after getting 20-30 runs, somebody should have made a good score," he said. — AFP



Jordanian football player Anoud Imad smiles as she gets ready for FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup in Jordan.

SARFRAZ RECKONS WIN WILL LIFT PAKISTAN

ABU DHABI: Pakistan's Twenty20 captain Sarfraz Ahmed believes the clean sweep over the world champions is the first step towards building a formidable outfit for the future. Pakistan blanked West Indies 3-0 in the Twenty20 series with another dominating eight wicket win in the third and final match in Abu Dhabi on Tuesday.

They had won the first two matches by nine wickets and 16 runs in Dubai. Ahmed said the win will go a long way towards establishing a Twenty20 team, struggling after being ousted in the first round of the World Twenty20 held in India in March-April this year.

"That forced the then skipper Shahid Afridi to step down and Ahmed was handed over the leadership, who won all four matches—also beating England at Manchester earlier this month."

"Of course, this is the first step towards building a new team," said Ahmed. "If we want to become a good team then we have to bring consistency. Both junior and senior players are performing and contributing and that is the sign of a good team."

Left-arm spinner Imad Wasim, declared man of the series for his nine wickets in the

series, rocked the West Indies' top order with figures of 3-21. West Indies below par total of 103-5 was never a bother for Pakistan, who chased down the target in 15.1 overs for the loss of two wickets. All did not go well for the West Indies after winning the World Twenty20 title.

World Twenty20 winning captain Darren Sammy was replaced by Carlos Brathwaite while successful coach Phil Simmons was sacked.

Ahmed admitted a 3-0 win wasn't expected before the series. "We didn't estimate we would win 3-0," said Ahmed. "But I will give full credit to the boys for doing everything better than them and that's why we have won the series."

Ahmed said he was enjoying the captaincy. "It's nice to see senior and juniors cooperating and contributing. It's a combination of juniors and seniors and I am enjoying it as a leader." Pakistan and West Indies will now play three one-day internationals with the first game in Sharjah on Friday.

The one-day internationals will be followed by three Tests, the first a day-night game in Dubai from October 13. — AFP

INDIA'S TOP COURT SAYS BCCI 'ACTING LIKE LORDS'

NEW DELHI: India's top court slammed the country's powerful cricket board yesterday for failing to comply with stipulated reforms following corruption scandals, saying its officials were "behaving like lords".

The Supreme Court instructed the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) to "fall in line" with a retired judge's proposals for sweeping changes to the cash-rich organisation's structure and way of working. Former chief justice Rajendra Mal Lodha and his panel told the court that the BCCI's heads should be replaced as they were dragging their heels on the reforms, adding that a string of emails to officials had gone unanswered.

The BCCI, one of the most powerful organisations in world sport, has insisted it is not

"running away" from implementing the reforms after scandals including accusations of corruption and match-fixing in the glitzy Indian Premier League.

The court in New Delhi ordered the BCCI to comply with the recommendations, adding that the organisation was not above the law, the Press Trust of India news agency said. "If the BCCI thinks that they are a law unto themselves, then they are wrong. They have to comply with the directions of the court," the bench of judges headed by Chief Justice T S Thakur said.

"You (BCCI) are behaving like lords. Fall in line otherwise we will make you fall in line." The Lodha panel, appointed by the Supreme Court, proposed changes to the BCCI in

January to be introduced within six months. The reforms, most of which the court accepted, include new operating and governance rules that bar ministers and bureaucrats from holding BCCI posts, along with age and tenure restrictions for top officials. The Lodha panel was frustrated by the BCCI's decision to go ahead with making new appointments at its annual general meeting this month. The panel had warned against the move because the reforms had not yet been introduced, the court heard.

The panel last year announced two teams were being suspended from the IPL after top officials were caught illegally betting on matches involving their own teams in the Twenty20 competition. — AFP

MATCHFIXING A VITAL BATTLE TO WIN: UEFA INTEGRITY CHIEF

MANCHESTER: Combating match-fixing in football is absolutely crucial for the integrity of the sport, says Emilio Garcia UEFA's head of disciplinary and integrity matters.

However, he concedes that it is not an easy task with the mafia behind a lot of corruption. Garcia, who was speaking at the SoccerEx Global Football Convention, said it was crucial to get local authorities in different countries on board.

"The fight against matchfixing is vital," he said. "It is not easy because behind this we have the mafia and they are not normal guys. "We need collaboration from

the local authorities and co-operation with the police because that is the main way to tackle the problem.

"We don't have a problem with betting on football, there are several teams who have betting sponsors on their shirts. It is the illegal betting that we are concerned about and why we look at betting patterns." However, Ricardo de Buen, an arbitrator from the Court for Arbitration and Sport (CAS), said there was a quandary in the battle on one of the scourges of the sport as exemplified by Mexico for example. "It is important that in some cases the state intervenes," said De Buen, who has

worked as an arbitrator at CAS for over 14 years. "We have seen some ineffective punishments imposed by federations in matchfixing cases." However, on the other side of the equation say a case cropped up in Mexico, and I'm not saying it has happened, you cannot prosecute in a criminal way because it is not a criminal offence there," he added.

Former Swiss international Ramon Vega, who is now a successful figure in asset management and set up his own company, said he had experienced a few examples of pressure being put on players to fix matches in his time in Italy.

"Yes I experienced this or noticed this when I was playing in Italy," he said referring to the year he spent with Cagliari from 1996-97. The 46-year-old believes that just as in the financial services industry there should be more co-operation between those who oversee the industry and national law forces.

"It is what happens in the world I work in now and it should be the same for football, that there is total co-operation and sharing of information between the two."

Garcia for his part acknowledges that some countries law officers don't see battling matchfixing as a top priority, no mat-

ter if they have good intentions in tackling it. "We do need this co-operation from local authorities otherwise it is very difficult to obtain information," said Garcia. "In 2014 we signed a Memo of Understanding with Europol which is a good step.

"However, in some countries you go to it can be quite difficult because they have far more serious social problems than just matchfixing. "They will give you a sympathetic hearing but say well we have prostitution, street crime to deal with and matchfixing is not a crime. "We (UEFA) are doing our best and the battle will continue." — AFP

AFTER ALLARDYCE IMPLOSION, WHO IS NEXT FOR ENGLAND?

LONDON: England find themselves looking for a new manager again after Sam Allardyce's mere 67 days in charge came to a stunning end following controversial comments he made to undercover reporters. With England about to resume their 2018 World Cup qualifying campaign, Gareth Southgate has been put in caretaker charge but it is by no means certain that he will get the job on a full-time basis. Below AFP Sport looks at some of the contenders to take on the job.

GARETH SOUTHGATE

The man in possession, the former England international could yet become the team's next permanent manager. A former Middlesbrough manager, Southgate, 46, was brought into the England set-up to coach the under-21s in the hope he might ascend to the top job. Experienced disappointment at last year's European Under-21 Championship but guided the team to victory at the prestigious Toulon tournament this year. He now takes charge for England's next four matches, against Malta, Slovenia, Scotland and Spain, as the Football Association seeks a permanent successor. A safe pair of hands.

EDDIE HOWE

Highly regarded for his achievements and style of football at unfashionable Bournemouth, the 38-year-old has long been talked about as a future England manager and is close enough in age to have a good understanding of the current crop of players. But the question remains as to whether he has sufficient experience to take on what he calls the "ultimate" job right now. More likely one for the future.

ALAN PARDEW

Like Allardyce, Crystal Palace manager Pardeew, 55, is a former Newcastle boss. Led Palace to the FA Cup final last season and, after a rocky run stretching back to last term, has seen his stock rise again recently having overseen three straight Premier League victories for the London side. Questions remain however about his tem-

perament after a series of touchline flare-ups, including aiming a headbutt at an opposing player.

STEVE BRUCE

The former Manchester United defender, 55, was among those interviewed by the Football Association before they decided to appoint Allardyce as Roy Hodgson's successor after England's embarrassing exit from the European Championships at the hands of Iceland. Following his talks, Bruce—who played under Alex Ferguson at Old Trafford—quit his post at Hull. Currently out of work and a leading contender. A solid choice.

GLENN HODDLE

No England manager has ever been appointed to the job a second time on a permanent basis so Hoddle's chances of succeeding Allardyce would appear to be slim. One of the best English midfielders of his generation, Hoddle-in charge of the national side at the 1998 World Cup—was sacked in 1999 after suggesting that people with disabilities were being punished for their behaviour in a previous lifetime. The 58-year-old is still well regarded as a football tactician but the FA, reeling from one public relations disaster, may fear having to deal with another if they bring Hoddle back. An outside chance.

ARSENE WENGER

Now in his 20th year as Arsenal manager, the Frenchman's success with the north London club paved the way for the influx of overseas coaches at top Premier League teams. Has long been spoken of as a possible England manager, although foreign coaches who've held the role, such as Sven-Goran Eriksson and Fabio Capello, have been no more able to lead the side to a first major trophy since the 1966 World Cup than their homegrown counterparts. Well thought of at the FA, Wenger, 66, is out of contract with Arsenal at the end of the season and unlike most of the leading English candidates to replace Allardyce, he has experience of Champions League football. A popular choice. — AFP



TORONTO: Steven Stamkos #91 of Team Canada defends against Leon Draisaitl #29 and Nino Niederreiter #22 of Team Europe during the third period during Game One of the World Cup of Hockey final series at Air Canada Centre on Tuesday in Toronto, Canada. Team Canada defeated Team Europe 3-1. — AFP

CANADA BEAT TEAM EUROPE IN WORLD CUP FINAL OPENER

TORONTO: Brad Marchand celebrated his \$49 million eight-year deal with the Boston Bruins and helped power Canada to a 3-1 victory over Europe in the opening game of the World Cup of Hockey final series on Tuesday.

Marchand contributed a goal and an assist just a day after inking his contract extension with the Bruins to snuff out speculation of a possible move to the Pittsburgh Penguins.

Steven Stamkos and Patrice Bergeron scored Canada's other goals against a Europe side who dug deep and caused problems for the hosts.

"In the first, I thought that they were better than us for large stretches of the game at times," Canada coach Mike Babcock said.

"I thought they executed and played fast. I did-

n't think we moved the puck out of our zone at all tonight, went back and forth. We had guys out there that didn't talk to one another ... They looked quicker than they were and we probably looked slower than we were." Marchand fired Canada into the lead after just 2:33 of the opening period, stealing in behind the defense after darting out of the penalty box. It was Marchand's fourth goal in five games of the tournament. Stamkos then grabbed his first of the tournament, finishing off a pass from Ryan Getzlaf to put Canada up 2-0 at the end of the first period.

Canada were jolted though when Europe pulled a goal back midway through the second period. Detroit Redwings' left wing Tomas Tatar, whose over-time winner had fired Europe into

the final, made it 2-1 after seven minutes of the second period to put the underdogs within striking distance. Tatar's fellow Slovak Andrej Sekera almost leveled 2-2 just before the end of the second period but was denied with a superb block by Canada goalie Carey Price. But just as Europe began daring to dream of an upset, Marchand, Bergeron and Canada star Sidney Crosby turned on the style to make the game safe. Crosby set up a third for the hosts with some sublime play along the boards for Bergeron to finish from close range for 3-1. Europe finished the game with an empty net but Canada were unable to extend their lead in a frenzied closing spell. The Canadians can claim the World Cup crown with victory in Game Two today. — AFP



WUHAN: Petra Kvitova of the Czech Republic hits a return during her third round match against Angelique Kerber of Germany at the WTA Wuhan Open tennis tournament in Wuhan, in China's central Hubei province yesterday. — AFP

KVITOVA FORGETS RANKINGS, DISMISSES KERBER AT WUHAN

WUHAN: Double Wimbledon champion Petra Kvitova put aside thoughts of rankings to down newly crowned number one Angelique Kerber in an epic three sets at the Wuhan Open yesterday. The US and Australian Open champion, playing her first tournament since ascending to number one, took the first set after an aggressive 22-point tie break.

Kvitova took an early lead in the second set, going 5-3 up, before a surge from the German brought them level. But Kerber failed to capitalise on the gain, taking the two left-handers into a third set and a third hour of play. "I think that in the really important moments, I (made) two, three easy mistakes, which was the key in the second set," Kerber told reporters after the match.

The Olympic bronze medallist surged ahead in the final set, but Kerber denied her the first match point, pushing for another game-and five match points-before Kvitova was able to bag her place in the quarter finals. "When you're playing, you just don't really care about the rankings. But, of course, it's nice to beat world number one," the Czech told reporters after the match.

Next round Kvitova will face Briton Johanna Konta, who boosted her chances of qualifying for her first WTA Finals when she beat eighth ranked Carla Suarez Navarro in another tight dual. Konta won the epic, nearly hour-long first set, but the eighth-ranked Spaniard took an early lead in the second, pushing two breaks up.

But momentum was on Konta's side as she saved three set points to set up a tie break win. After dropping again at the beginning of the decider, she then romped through five consecutive points to win the match 7-5, 7-6 (8/6). "I was fully prepared to obviously play a third (set) if need be," Konta said.

"I really just tried to be brave and just play the way I wanted to play throughout the whole match, and those points as well."

The win takes her a step closer to being the first British woman in a generation to join the ranks of the top ten. She reached the Australian Open semi-final at the start of the year and won her maiden WTA title in July, which saw her rise to 13th in the world. In a veterans' third round matchup, former world number two Svetlana Kuznetsova beat seven time Grand Slam champion Venus Williams in straight sets 6-2, 6-2. The pair have more than three decades on the professional circuit between them but had not met on court for seven years. Kuznetsova will face Agnieszka Radwanska in the quarter finals, after the Pole ended former world number one Caroline Wozniacki's strong Asian run in straight sets.

Meanwhile at the other end of the age scale, teenager Daria Kasatkina of Russia fell to 21-year-old American Madison Keys.

Keys will meet fourth seed Simona Halep in the last eight after she defeated Kazakh Yaroslava Shvedova, despite being knocked dizzy and forced to retire from a doubles match a day earlier. — AFP

BLAST OF THE MOHICANS PUTS JEONBUK IN SIGHT OF FINAL

JEONJU: Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors' mohican-sporting strike force put them within sight of a third AFC Champions League final as they smashed FC Seoul 4-1 in their semi-final first leg yesterday.

A double from Leonardo and goals from Ricardo Lopes and Kim Shin-Wook—all of them with mohican haircuts—scalped Seoul as Jeonbuk seek their second Asian title after winning the competition in 2006.

Jeonbuk took charge of the all-Korean clash with three rapid-fire goals in the first half. After the break, Seoul hit back through Ju Se-Jong before Kim rounded off the scoring six minutes from time. It was a comprehensive victory for the runaway K-League leaders, who have now scored nine goals in their last two Champions League outings and must feel another trophy is due after they were runners-up in 2011.

"Of course, we have an advantage going into the second leg," said Jeonbuk's coach Choi Kang-Hee, according to the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) website. "Seoul need the win and will know what they have to do but we know what we have to do also."

"Our players have been impressive all season and I will continue to have faith in them. We have confidence for the second leg and after this game, we are feeling good."

At a raucous Jeonju World Cup Stadium, FC Seoul held the hosts until midway through the first half before Jeonbuk took a firm grip on the tie with three goals in 18 minutes.

Brazilian striker Leonardo calmly put Jeonbuk ahead from the penalty spot on 22 minutes after Kim was upended in the box.

Four minutes later, fellow Brazilian Lopes played a fine one-two off Kim's blonde-dyed mohican before nutmegging Seoul goalkeeper Yu Sang-Hun to make it 2-0. Lopes then turned provider, blasting a low cross which Leonardo stooped and headed for Jeonbuk's third-before celebrating by striking a taekwondo pose for the home fans. The party atmosphere was tempered one minute into the second half when Ju rifled the ball into the Jeonbuk net to hand FC Seoul a potential lifeline. FC Seoul's Adriano, seeking a record-equalling 13th goal of the competition, headed off-target and then swept a volley just wide as the visitors finally put the home side under pressure. But it was Jeonbuk who had the



JEONJU: South Korea's Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors forward Ricardo Lopes (C) celebrates his goal with teammates against South Korea's FC Seoul during their semi-final first leg football match of the AFC Champions League in Jeonju yesterday. — AFP

last word when the towering Kim galloped onto a through-ball and slid home Jeonbuk's fourth in the 84th minute.

FC Seoul host the second leg in three weeks'

time. In the final, the eventual winner will play UAE's Al Ain or El Jaish of Qatar, whose semi stands at 3-1 to the Emirati side after the first leg on Tuesday. — AFP

PLUCKY ROSTOV HELD 2-2 BY PSV EINDHOVEN

ROSTOV-ON-DON: On their home Champions League group phase debut Russia's Rostov were twice pegged back in an action-packed first-half as PSV Eindhoven grabbed a 2-2 draw yesterday. Dmitri Poloz put the Russian rookies ahead twice in the eighth and 37th minutes as they took the game to PSV, who on their own 100th Champions League appearance equalised

first through Davy Propper on 14 and then Luuk De Jong on the stroke of half time.

Propper could then have sealed the match on 57 minutes but 'keeper Soslan Dzhanayev saved his spot-kick after Cesar Navas had brought down de Jong in the area. These two sides both lost on matchday one, with Rostov being thumped 5-0 at Bayern Munich while PSV lost 1-0 at home to

Atletico Madrid. Originally a farm machinery factory side, Rostov are still playing in their modest 15,000 capacity stadium. Runners-up in Russia last season, Rostov however looked as impressive early on as when they beat PSV's Dutch foes Ajax 4-1 in the play-offs for a 5-2 aggregate win. Poloz scored Rostov's first ever goal at home in the competition proper, slotting home after being

well served by Aleksandr Erokhin in the eighth minute.

Propper's shot for the equaliser six minutes later took a deflection that left Dzhanayev wrong-footed and silenced the stadium. But after fine work in the air from 21-year-old Iranian striker Sardar Azmoun, Poloz hammered home his second after 37 minutes with a fine volley from the edge of

the penalty area. A close range de Jong header after the ball had hit the post in a goalmouth scramble then levelled the scores at 2-2 on the stroke of half-time.

PSV, the 1988 European Cup winners may be happy with a point but have not won on their travels in the Champions League proper since defeating CSKA Moscow in Russia in 2007/08. — AFP

NO HIGUAIN, NO PROBLEM AS NAPOLI BEAT BENFICA

NAPLES: Not missing Gonzalo Higuain in the least, Napoli tightened its grip on Group B of the Champions League with a convincing 4-2 win over Benfica yesterday. Captain Marek Hamsik opened the scoring with a header after 20 minutes, and Napoli opened the floodgates early in the second half with three goals - two of them from Dries Mertens - in the space of seven minutes.

Mertens scored his first with a beautiful free kick that floated over Benfica's wall before dipping down into the net. Arkadiusz Milik, the 22-year-old Poland center forward brought in to replace Higuain, converted a penalty before Mertens added another from close range after goalkeeper Julio Cesar made a miscalculation.

Substitutes Goncalo Guedes and Eduardo Salvio scored late for Benfica. Having opened with a come-from-behind 2-1 win at Dynamo Kiev, Napoli has six points from two games and looks improved despite Higuain's Italian-record transfer to domestic rival Juventus for 90 million euros (\$99 million). After two seasons without Champions League action, the scene at Napoli's San Paolo stadium was electric. Perhaps the only hindrance to the match being a sellout were expensive ticket prices, with the cheapest seats selling for 40 euros (\$45). In a protest against the high costs, a

banner hanging from the Curva B where Napoli's hard-core "ultra" fans sit proclaimed the area the "Settore popolare" - working class sector. Napoli controlled the game right from the start, with Milik set up by a long pass from Faouzi Ghoulam only to produce a weak shot on goal less than 20 seconds after kickoff.

Benfica came close a few minutes later when Nelson Semedo rolled a cross into the area, before defender Elseid Hysaj was able to clear the danger.

Also early on, Napoli lost key center back Raul Albiol to an apparent muscle strain. The Spaniard was replaced by Nikola Maksimovic, who made his Napoli debut with the poise of a veteran.

A minute before Hamsik's opener, Benfica defender Alex Grimaldo prevented a golden opportunity for the hosts with an acrobatic interception of a cross from Mertens that was heading directly for Jose Callejon in front of the goal.

Hamsik then beat his marker to meet a corner from Ghoulam and deliver a header inside the near post for his 101st goal in a Napoli shirt, placing him within 14 goals of Diego Maradona's club record. Benfica sorely missed injured striker Jonas, the Brazilian who scored 32 goals in 34 Portuguese league matches last season. — AP



LONDON: Arsenal's Spanish defender Hector Bellerin (R) is tackled by Basel's Colombian defender Eder Balanta during the UEFA Champions League Group A football match between Arsenal and FC Basel at The Emirates Stadium in London yesterday. — AFP

WALCOTT AT THE DOUBLE AS RAMPANT ARSENAL DOWN BASEL

LONDON: Arsenal showed why the Football Association can only dream of hiring Arsene Wenger to take charge of England as Theo Walcott's double inspired a swaggering 2-0 victory over Basel in the Champions League yesterday.

The FA's decision to part ways with disgraced England manager Sam Allardyce on Tuesday triggered reports that Gunners boss Wenger is the governing body's top choice to become the national team's next permanent coach. But Wenger admitted several years ago he had ignored the FA's overtures once before and, on the evidence of Arsenal's burgeoning revival this season, the poisoned chalice of managing England is extremely unlikely to be a tempting prospect.

Coming five days after a 3-0 defeat of Chelsea that Wenger described as almost perfect, another sublime display showed why the Arsenal fans who called for the Frenchman to quit during a turbulent last 18 months should be grateful he decided to stick around for a 20th year with the Gunners. Walcott netted twice in the first half at the Emirates Stadium to leave Arsenal, now unbeaten in their last eight matches in all competitions, with four points from their first two Group A matches. Yet those simple facts don't do justice to the total mastery Arsenal displayed in a spell-binding first half.

Wenger's team, told by UEFA to wear their

yellow away kit to avoid a colour clash with Basel's strip, could have been ahead in the opening moments when Nacho Monreal's stinging strike forced Basel goalkeeper Tomas Vaclik into action. It took only seven minutes for Arsenal to go ahead as they ripped through the Basel defence in a swaggering move that showed the confidence flowing through Wenger's men at present.

Santi Cazorla lofted a deft high pass towards Alexis Sanchez, who timed his run perfectly to escape Basel's offside trap and advanced into the penalty area before looking up to see Walcott arrowing towards goal. Sanchez's cross arrived with laser-guided precision and England winger Walcott, showing the renewed desire which has saved a career in danger of imploding, powered between two Basel defenders to bury his header past Vaclik from close-range.

PUT TO THE SWORD

When Arsenal are at their best, there are few teams in Europe who are such elegant assassins and it was a typically rapier thrust that inflicted the fatal wound on Basel.

Once again it was Sanchez and Walcott who put Basel to the sword, exchanging passes at dizzying speed.

Walcott picked out Sanchez, then raced onto his return ball and, from 12 yards out, drilled low

into the far corner for his fifth goal of the season. Arsenal were so dominant that every attack carried fresh menace for the Swiss side, who found themselves chasing their tails again when Hector Bellerin, Walcott and then Cazorla, with a sumptuous reverse pass, teed up Sanchez for a shot that lacked the power to beat Vaclik. Arsenal midfielder Granit Xhaka must have felt a pang of sympathy for his brother Taulant Xhaka, who was a bewildered bystander in Basel's defence as the Gunners swept forward time and again. The scoreline wouldn't have flattered Wenger's rampant side if they had been five goals ahead by half-time.

Bellerin saw his shot blocked by the over-worked Vaclik, who also denied Sanchez, while Mesut Ozil fired into the side-netting in an endless tidal wave of Arsenal pressure.

Alex Iwobi was narrowly off-target from the edge of the area early in the second half and, not long after, Sanchez should have done better than poke Walcott's inviting cross wide from a good position.

David Ospina, again preferred to Petr Cech as Arsenal's European goalkeeper, was finally called into action to tip over Birkir Bjarnason's long-range effort. But as Arsenal cruised to victory, Wenger was able to relax on the bench, with thoughts of filling Allardyce's shoes surely far from his mind. — AFP



NAPLES: Benfica's midfielder Pizzi (C) vies with Napoli's midfielder from Brazil Jorginho during the UEFA Champions League football match SSC Napoli vs SL Benfica yesterday at the San Paolo stadium in Naples. — AFP

SUBSTITUTES MAKE IMPACT IN BESIKTAS, DYNAMO STALEMATE

ISTANBUL: Dynamo Kiev substitutes Nikita Korzun and teenage star Viktor Tsygankov made crucial impacts as the Ukrainians battled to a 1-1 Champions League draw at Besiktas yesterday. Korzun gave away the free-kick that led to Besiktas's first-half opener in Istanbul before Tsygankov came off the bench in the second period to secure a point for Dynamo.

Besiktas, playing their first home tie in the group stage in seven years, went into the game having snatched a last-gasp 1-1 draw at Benfica in their opener.

Dynamo, meanwhile, slumped to a 2-1 defeat at home to Group B favourites Napoli. Goalkeeper Artur Rudko was handed a Champions League debut by Dynamo coach Serhiy Rebrov while Cameroon striker Vincent Aboubakar, who scored twice for Porto against the Ukrainians in the Champions League last season, was preferred to top-scorer Cenk Tosun in the Besiktas starting line-up. It was another ex-Porto man who opened the scoring for the Turks after 29 minutes when veteran winger Ricardo Quaresma drove a clever

free-kick past Rudko from 22 yards and into the top-left corner.

The foul was conceded by Korzun, who had only been on the pitch for five minutes as a replacement for the injured Vitaly Buyalskiy. The 33-year-old Quaresma almost had a second goal eight minutes from the interval but skewed a right-foot shot just wide of the upright after being put through by Andreas Beck.

It would have been a deserved goal for the Turks who had dominated the opening 45 minutes with their goalkeeper Fabri only called on once to punch away a free-kick by Mykola Morozuk.

Dynamo stepped on the gas in the early stages of the second half with skipper Andriy Yarmolenko and Domagoj Vida seeing attempts thwarted while Fabri pulled off a fine double save to keep out Denys Garmash. However, their pressure was rewarded after 67 minutes when Tsygankov levelled, three minutes after coming on as a substitute for Derlis Gonzalez.

It again came from a set-piece when Serhiy Rybalka's free-kick was met by 18-year-old Tsygankov at the far post. — AFP



ISTANBUL: Dynamo Kiev's Mykola Morozuk (R) heads the ball with Besiktas' Adriano Correia Claro (L) during the UEFA Champions League football match between Dynamo Kiev and Besiktas at the Vodafone Arena in Istanbul yesterday. — AFP

CAVANI GRABS BRACE AS PSG COAST IN BULGARIA

RAZGRAD: Paris Saint-Germain recovered from a slow start to canter to a 3-1 win at Ludogorets Razgrad in the Champions League yesterday night and keep pace with Arsenal at the top of Group A.

Edinson Cavani scored a brace after Blaise Matuidi had cancelled out Natanael Pimienta's surprise opener for the Bulgarians. But the French champions, who drew at home to Arsenal in their opening group encounter, dominated the second half and could easily have inflicted a much heavier defeat on the Bulgarian minnows, who are playing in the Champions League group stage for only the second time.

PSG could have been off to a dream start but Cavani's snap shot from just outside the area curled agonisingly beyond the corner of post and bar.

Ludogorets wasted a three-on-one counter-attack but nonetheless took the lead on the quarter hour as Natanael curled home a free-kick from a tight angle.

Alphonse Areola in the PSG goal was unsighted as his wall in front of him disintegrated, with Cavani the chief culprit. PSG were struggling to create anything, although Lucas dragged a shot wide from distance.

But five minutes before the break, inspirational midfielder Marco Verratti managed to unlock the Bulgarians' defence, threading the ball through for Matuidi-who had just about stayed onside-to stroke home the equaliser.

Cavani was having a typically industrious and wayward night and started the second half by screwing a shot well beyond the upright.

Moments later, Angel Di Maria spun on a six-pence on the edge of the box but fired just past the woodwork before then aiming a tame effort straight at goalkeeper Vladislav Stoyanov.

PSG were ratcheting up the pressure with chances aplenty testing the Ludogorets back line, but Di Maria proved wasteful again with a

cross-cum-shot that neither troubled Stoyanov nor gave Cavani a chance to convert at the back post. Yet those two did combine to give PSG the lead on 56 minutes with Cavani flicking home Di Maria's free-kick with his head.

Almost immediately, though, the Parisians gave away a penalty as Thiago Motta bizarrely threw himself in kamikaze NFL-style blocking fashion across Marcelinho to deny the Brazilian-

born player a clear goal-scoring chance.

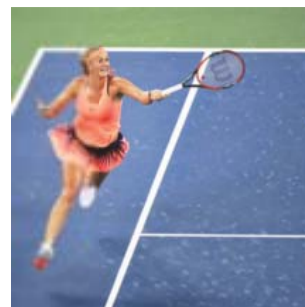
Areola made amends by saving Cosmin Moti's spot-kick. And PSG went straight up the other end where the livewire Cavani got across a ponderous Moti to convert Lucas's cross.

Cavani and Matuidi squandered good chances before Stoyanov made a sprawling save to beat out a Di Maria free-kick, but by then the match was long over as a contest. — AFP



SOFIA: Paris Saint-Germain's French midfielder Blaise Matuidi (R) kicks to score during the UEFA Champions League Group A football match between Ludogorets Razgrad and Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) at Vasil Levski National Stadium in Sofia yesterday. — AFP

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MADRID: Atletico's Antoine Griezmann, right, and Bayern's Javi Martinez jump for the ball during the Champions League group D soccer match between Atletico Madrid and Bayern Munich at the Vicente Calderon stadium in Madrid, yesterday — AP

ATLETICO INFLECT MORE PAIN ON BAYERN

MADRID: Atletico Madrid haunted Bayern Munich once more as Yannick Carrasco inflicted Carlo Ancelotti's first defeat as coach of the German giants with a 1-0 win at the Vicente Calderon in the Champions League yesterday.

The Spaniards eliminated Bayern on away goals in the semi-finals of last season's Champions League and there was to be no revenge for the five-time European champions as Carrasco drove the ball in off the inside of the post 10 minutes before half-time.

Thomas Mueller had Bayern's best effort, but was denied by a sensational save from Jan Oblak early on as the German champi-

ons failed to score on Spanish soil for the fourth consecutive trip.

And Atletico could even afford the luxury of missing a penalty seven minutes from time when Antoine Griezmann rattled the bar from the spot. Victory takes Atletico top of Group D with six points from their opening two games. Bayern remain second on three points with FC Rostov and PSV Eindhoven on one each after a 2-2 draw in Russia. Atletico coach Diego Simeone opted for Fernando Torres up front instead of Kevin Gameiro and the former Liverpool and Chelsea striker had an early claim for a penalty waved away when his shirt appeared to be

pulled as he cut inside Javi Martinez.

Bayern's first serious attempt on goal was their best as Mueller smashed a volley goalwards on 14 minutes that was brilliantly beaten away by Oblak. Not to be outdone, Bayern stopper Manuel Neuer produced a great save of his own as he got down low to his left to turn Carrasco's first effort of the night to safety.

Torres missed a glorious chance to open the scoring when he somehow turned Koke's corner against the post from point-blank range with the goal gaping. And the former Spanish international was off target with another decent chance moments later

as he fired into the side-netting from a narrow angle. However, Atletico finally went in front when Griezmann collected a loose ball and freed Carrasco on the left. The Belgian strode forward before unleashing a powerful effort in off the far post.

Bayern took a long time to muster a response as Ancelotti brought on Arjen Robben and the on-form Joshua Kimmich.

Neuer parried another powerful low effort from Carrasco to keep Bayern in the game midway through the second half.

The visitors finally began to threaten in the final 15 minutes as Robert Lewandowski's glancing header flew inches

wide of the far post. Robben then drove a shot just wide from the edge of the box. However, it was the hosts who had the best chance to extend their advantage when Arturo Vidal cynically chopped down Filipe Luis inside the area. Griezmann stepped up to take it, but just as in their Champions League final defeat to Real Madrid in May, he smashed his spot-kick against the bar to give Bayern a lifeline.

Ancelotti's men had one final chance to rescue a point, but Robben's header drifted harmlessly over as Atletico held on to secure another major European scalp under Simeone. — AFP

BARCELONA BATTLE FROM GOAL DOWN TO BEAT GLADBACH 2-1

MOENCHENGLADBACH: Barcelona battled back from a goal down and scored twice in the second half to beat hosts Borussia Moenchengladbach 2-1 in their Champions League Group C match yesterday despite the absence of the injured Lionel Messi.

Second-half goals from substitute Arda Turan and Gerard Pique gave the Spaniards their second win in two group matches to top the standings, after their opening 7-0 demolition of Celtic.

The hard-working Germans had taken a surprising lead, scoring against the run of play, with Thorgan Hazard slotting in to complete a quick break in the 34th minute.

Barcelona, who had Argentine Messi missing with a groin injury, dominated the game but were made to work hard for their second group win that put them on six points.

The hosts, who managed just one shot on target but gave the Spaniards a run for their money, have zero, having lost both matches so far and ended an 11-match winning streak at home in all competitions.

Barca coach Luis Enrique started with Andres Iniesta, Javier Mascherano, Jordi Alba and Ivan Rakitic, all of whom were rested in the 5-0 thrashing of Sporting Gijon at the weekend.

Despite the absence of Messi, replaced by youngster Paco Alcacer, it was the Spaniards who stamped their authority on the game early on and carved out the first chance with Neymar's shot from inside the box saved by keeper Yann Sommer after seven minutes.

Luis Suarez should have put them ahead three minutes later when he pounced on a defensive error but he saw his powerful left-footed shot sail narrowly wide.

The Uruguayan was also the recipient of a brilliant defence-splitting pass from Neymar



MOENCHENGLADBACH: Barcelona's Croatian midfielder Ivan Rakitic jumps over Borussia Moenchengladbach's German goalkeeper Marc-Andre Ter Stegen who caught the ball during the UEFA Champions League first-leg group C football match between Borussia Moenchengladbach and FC Barcelona at the Borussia Park in Moenchengladbach, western Germany yesterday. — AFP

but instead of rifling the ball home he tried a cutback to Alcacer that was cleared.

Gladbach gradually grew in confidence but struggled to get past a Spanish wall when they tried to venture forward.

They scored when forward Raffael, back from injury, gained possession in midfield and launched a quick break with Hazard tapping in from a Mahmoud Dahoud pass.

The Brazilian's injury in the 48th minute

and his substitution took out most of the Gladbach pace. The introduction of Turan on the hour brought instant results for the Spaniards, with the Turk picking up a Neymar assist in the 65th and drilling the ball into the roof of the net from a tight angle.

Pique then pounced on a weak clearance by Sommer from a Suarez shot to tap in from close range and hand Barcelona a hard-fought victory. — Reuters

DEMBELE AT DOUBLE AS CELTIC CHECK MAN CITY CHARGE

GLASGOW: Manchester City failed to win for the first time under Pep Guardiola as Mousa Dembele-inspired Celtic claimed a 3-3 draw in a pulsating Champions League encounter yesterday.

City had won their first 10 games of the season and were bidding to equal Tottenham Hotspur's English record of 11 successive victories at the start of a campaign from 1960.

But instead they had to come from behind three times at a raucous Celtic Park as Brendan Rodgers's side partially atoned for their 7-0 battering by Barcelona with a superbly committed display. Dembele's close-range opener put the Scottish champions ahead in the third minute and after Fernandinho swiftly levelled, Raheem Sterling's own goal restored the hosts' advantage.

Sterling, Rodgers's former protege at Liverpool, equalised and although Dembele's smart volley put Celtic in front again, Nolito earned Guardiola's men a share of the spoils.

City fall two points below Group C leaders Barcelona ahead of their double-header with Guardiola's former club starting next month, while Celtic are a point above bottom club Borussia Moenchengladbach.

After their humbling by Barcelona, Rodgers had vowed Celtic would be less "passive" than at Camp Nou and his players heeded his call with an all-out assault on the City rearguard.

Swirling rain and the roars of the Celtic faithful turned Parkhead into a cauldron and within three minutes of kick-off the bewildered visitors were behind.

Ex-City winger Scott Sinclair's free-kick was volleyed across goal by the unmarked James Forrest and centre-back Erik Sviatchenko's flying header struck Dembele's chest and bounced into the net.

Dembele, the 20-year-old French striker signed from Fulham in June, looked to have been offside, but the goal stood and City were behind for the first time this season. After Claudio Bravo had been obliged to parry a close-range Dembele effort, City levelled in the 12th minute when Fernandinho brilliantly controlled Aleksandar Kolarov's shot and found the bottom-right corner.

The teams exchanged chances, Celtic midfielder Tom Rogic bending a free-kick just wide and Nolito curling a shot straight at Craig Gordon, before the home side retook the lead. Driving at City's retreating back four, Rogic found overlapping left-back Kieran Tierney, whose cross was deflected in at the near post by the sliding Sterling's own goal restored the hosts' advantage.

But back came City again and after Sergio Aguero had seen a header bounce across the face of goal, Sterling atoned with a stylish 28th-minute equaliser.

After robbing Scott Brown, David Silva had the ball knocked back to him by Aguero and freed Sterling, whose feint sent Gordon to ground and allowed him to tuck the ball away with his right foot.

Belatedly, City were in the ascendancy and twice before half-time they went close to going ahead through Nicolas Otamendi and Ilkay Gundogan. Celtic, however, needed just two minutes to move in front again in the second half.

Kolarov completely miscued his attempt to clear Tierney's cross and Dembele neatly controlled the ball on his thigh before hooking home an acrobatic volley for his 19th goal of 2016.

But after Nolito and Gundogan had been denied by Gordon, City drew level again eight minutes later, Nolito tucking the ball in after Aguero, released by Silva, had been thwarted by Gordon. — AFP



Zain crowned 'Best Telecom Brand'



ALGIERS: Participants gather in the lobby ahead of an informal meeting between members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, OPEC, in the Algerian capital Algiers, yesterday. —AFP

SAUDI UNVEILS PAINFUL AUSTERITY MEASURES

MINISTERS' PAY CUT 20%, STATE EMPLOYEE BENEFITS TRIMMED

RIYADH/DUBAI: A decision to slash ministerial pay by a fifth reflects Saudi Arabia's resolve to nudge its citizens into tolerating a fall in living standards at a time of low oil prices. Along with reductions unveiled on Monday that will affect all public sector workers, the cuts also flag to financial markets before a debut sovereign bond issue that the oil exporter is committed to budget discipline.

The measures appear largely to formalize savings introduced ad hoc in parts of the state apparatus since last year, but their announcement on state media, which gave an official start date of Oct 1, is not without political risk. In a country that has no elections and where political legitimacy rests partly on distribution of oil revenue, the ability of citizens to adapt to reforms aimed at reducing oil dependence and improving self-reliance is crucial for stability.

Some Saudis appeared prepared to accept austerity following the signal that ministers would share the pain. "Most of my colleagues are furious, but I see it as normal at such times," said Fahad, 27, a post office worker, who said his monthly take-home pay, including benefits, would fall to 4,800 riyals (\$1,280) from 6,000. "The country has given us a lot in the past and

it is our duty to show solidarity now."

However, with about two thirds of working Saudis employed by the state, skepticism surfaced on social media. "The beginning of the end!" tweeted a writer using the name Nashat Haider. "Not a rise in efficiency, it's a rise in poverty" wrote Alsheikhah Madawi.

The ruling Al Saud family has often hesitated to enact reforms that may stir unrest among Saudis, but with oil prices stubbornly low, it is now pushing changes to revitalize the private sector, slim the state, and get more Saudis into work. A lack of taxes, a big public sector, subsidized fuel and abundant government spending are benefits that officials have long cautioned are unaffordable, yet are seen as a right by many citizens because of the kingdom's high oil output.

But energy prices have plummeted since mid-2014, causing steep declines in income and putting economic growth at risk. It was unclear how far the steps will trim a budget deficit that reached a record \$98 billion last year.

In any case the wage cuts for ministers and others "of ministerial rank", while unlikely to win big savings by themselves, appear specifically aimed at deflecting public anger by tar-

getting those at the apex of society, economists said. The foreign exchange, credit default swap and international bond markets were little moved by the news. But initial reaction on regional stock markets was negative, as traders concluded the cuts would curb consumers' disposable income. Saudi Arabia's main stock index closed down 3.8 percent.

"LISTEN AND OBEY"

Others on Twitter expressed their acceptance of the cuts to wages and other financial benefits that can form a large part of Saudi's overall income. The hashtag "We are all today King Salman's sons" was trending, and the message "Listen and Obey", as the main duty of citizens towards their rulers, was widely shared.

Abdulaziz Al-Askar, a legal adviser, tweeted that Saudis' ancestors swore allegiance to the Al Saud based on Islam and not on the basis of "allowances and bonuses".

Nawaf Al-Otaibi, 42, who does civilian work for the Ministry of Defence, said the cuts would help to address long-term economic pressures and ease further sweeping reforms, which include the partial privatization of oil

giant Saudi Aramco. Reduced benefits would result in belt-tightening, he suggested.

"I get about 20 to 30 percent of my total income from these extras, so I'll have to cut back on spending - maybe put off some plans for the future but mostly just cut back on daily spending for the family, on the kids, things like this," he said. From an international perspective, the measures constitute an attempt to convey the government's seriousness about tackling the budget deficit, economists say.

Apostolos Bantis, head of emerging market corporate credit research at Commerzbank, said the payroll and benefit cuts were "trying to send a signal to investors that the government is serious about reforms and that it's ready to even touch something sensitive and political".

"The government is trying to give a signal to the local population that they need to tighten their belts and that this is starting from the top."

NOTHING OFF LIMITS

Monica Malik, chief economist at Abu Dhabi Commercial Bank, said she estimated that savings from the cuts would amount to

less than 1.5 percent of gross domestic product (GDP). But she added that the message was stronger than the anticipated savings. "Nothing is off bounds for potential fiscal reforms and it shows ongoing momentum to narrow the fiscal deficit. This is especially ahead of the expected international bond issuance," she said.

NCB Capital estimated allowances accounted for about a quarter of the government's total salary bill last year, which was 38 percent of its overall budget of about \$260 billion. But it is not known how far the latest measures will curb government spending on allowances, which Saudis say are many and varied. More substantial ways of plugging the budget gap include a \$10 billion loan obtained from international banks in May and Saudi Arabia's debut international bond issue expected in October. Bankers expect it to be worth a minimum of \$10 billion.

The central bank said on Sunday it had decided to inject around 20 billion riyals in time deposits into the banking system and introduced two new maturity periods for repurchase agreements, aiming to help boost financial stability in the local market. —Reuters

SAUDI LEADS REGION DOWN ON WEAK OIL, AUSTERITY STEPS

MIDEAST STOCKS

DUBAI: Saudi Arabia's stock market fell sharply for a second straight day yesterday, leading the entire region down, in response to weak oil prices and government austerity measures.

The Saudi equities index, which had retreated 3.8 percent on Tuesday, sank a further 3.4 percent to 5,534 points, its lowest finish since Jan. 21. It has tumbled 19.5 percent from a peak in April.

Trading volume climbed to a two-month high as the index fell below technical support on the February low of 5,551 points, though it closed off its intra-day low. It has stronger support at the January low of 5,349 points. Brent oil futures had fallen about 3 percent to around \$46 a barrel on Tuesday after Iran rejected an offer from Saudi Arabia to limit its oil output in exchange for Riyadh cutting supply. This hit petrochemical stocks,

with Saudi Basic Industries sliding 4.0 percent yesterday. PetroRabigh outperformed the sector, dropping only 2.1 percent, after saying it would proceed eventually with a rights issue that has been delayed since 2015.

The Saudi insurance sector also suffered after the government said this week that it would reduce bonuses and perks for public sector workers; insurance stocks are favored by local retail investors, who will have less disposable income because of the austerity drive. "In Saudi Arabia it is very common to see an average public sector employee trading in the stock market, because someone from his family once made a fat profit - but those days are long gone now. They simply won't have the financial flexibility with these austerity moves," said a Jeddah-based broker.

Among other stocks directly

exposed to consumer sentiment, travel agent Al-Tayyar plunged 8.2 percent. Some telecommunications firms and utilities, seen as defensive shares, performed relatively well and Zain Saudi was one of only four rising stocks, gaining 3.1 percent.

Elsewhere in the Gulf, Dubai's index fell 0.4 percent in thin trade as Emaar Properties lost 1.0 percent. Abu Dhabi dropped 0.5 percent with another real estate firm, Aldar Properties, falling 1.5 percent. Qatar edged down only 0.1 percent, supported by a 1.2 percent gain by Industries Qatar.

In Egypt, the index dropped 0.5 percent in a broad-based decline. But textile producer Kabo jumped 10 percent in its highest trading volume since January after posting a 14 percent rise in net profit for the year to June 30. —Reuters

IMF CHIEF WARNS OF WEAK GROWTH

CHICAGO: The head of the IMF yesterday renewed warnings against protectionism and trade restrictions, saying that the global economy risked prolonged low growth and that advanced economies faced painful inequality. Christine Lagarde, the International Monetary Fund's managing director, said the current global recovery was still fragile following the Great Recession of 2008-2009 and that populist political currents rising in the developed world threatened to undo the progress made.

"For the past several years, the global recovery has been weak and fragile and this continues to be the case today," Lagarde said in prepared remarks delivered at Northwestern University, near Chicago. "Especially for advanced economies-while there are some good signs-the overall growth outlook remains subdued."

"We continue to face the problem of global growth being too low for too long, benefiting too few," she said. Lagarde spoke ahead of next week's annual meetings of the IMF and World

Bank, at which development bankers gather to discuss global efforts at poverty reduction. The topics she raised were likely to be front and center at the conclave.

Her words also echoed the IMF's message in recent weeks. Ahead of the Group of 20 summit in China earlier this month, Lagarde warned that high debt, weak demand, eroding work forces and labor skills were weakening incentives for investment and slowing productivity, threatening to create what she called a "low growth trap."

Lagarde cited some reasons for optimism, such as strengthening labor markets and falling poverty in the United States, efforts by China and India to achieve more sustainable growth, as well as signs of improvement in Brazil and Russia. But she said that falling commodity prices had hit the Middle East and poor countries in Sub-Saharan Africa particularly hard.

The IMF has also signaled it expects to downgrade its forecasts for US growth due to sub-par per-

formance in the first half 2016. Citing an increase in protectionist measures around the globe since 2012, Lagarde referred to raised trade barriers as being among the "failed recipes of the past."

Both US presidential nominees have said they oppose the US government's Pacific Rim trade pact, the Trans-Pacific Partnership, and voters in Britain this year chose to secede from the European Union, creating new barriers to trade between the two sides.

"If we turn our backs on trade now, we would be choking off a key driver of growth at a point when the global economy is still in need of every bit of good news it can get," Lagarde said.

"Restricting trade is a clear case of economic malpractice," Lagarde also called on governments to fight economic inequality, by investing in the education of girls—a proven, high-return investment—as well as offering vocational training to workers displaced by off-shoring, outsourcing and new technologies. —AFP

AL-RUWAYEH & PARTNERS CO-SPONSOR EUROMONEY CONFERENCE

KUWAIT: Al-Ruwayeh and Partners (ASAR), Kuwait's leading and most prominent corporate law firm and one of the region's top tier firms, co-sponsored and participated at the yearly Euromoney conference that took place at Kuwait City on September 27. The platform included the participation of senior government officials, market experts and businessmen, discussing the challenges and opportunities facing the Kuwaiti economy in an era of global uncertainty.

The central theme of 'Meeting the Challenge of Financial Innovation and Reform', discussing Kuwait's fiscal, monetary and economic diversification strategy included topics such as Digitalization, Innovation and the future of Kuwaiti business, finance and governance. There was also a strong underlying theme in the program to explore the role of Kuwait in the international financial system. The event was a unique opportunity for Euromoney and the audience to interact with senior government officials in an informal setting.

From ASAR's part, Ahmed Barakat, Managing Partner at ASAR, addressed the conference on the recent legislative developments in Kuwait and

how they are affecting businesses in the country.

Barakat said: "Recently in 2016, Kuwait has announced significant reforms, designed to balance the national economy and diversify the nation's sources of income. These reforms include plans to boost non-oil revenues and reduce public spending, as well as financial sector reforms, changes to the public sector's role in the economy, and incentives to empower citizens to launch their own businesses. For this reason, we at ASAR are tackling these issues through raising and addressing the necessary legal changes for implementing this reform plan."

Barakat also commented on the gradual implementation of the Basel III capital adequacy standard and the introduction of comprehensive Capital market Bylaws as part of the major developments in the banking and Capital market sectors, let alone the recent enhancement and beefing up of the legal frameworks dealing with private/public partnership projects and foreign direct investment in Kuwait.

In closing, Barakat added: "As experienced corporate lawyers, we applaud the government and parliament for taking proactive and positive mea-

ures to fill in the legislative gaps in such a challenging market like Kuwait."

With dedicated offices in Kuwait and Bahrain coupled with its associated offices and relationships, ASAR provides clients across an extensive range of industry sectors with comprehensive legal advice and support for their business activities in Kuwait, across the GCC and beyond.

The firm has been consistently rated as the leading corporate and commercial law firm in Kuwait by reputable legal guides such as the Chambers Global Guide, International Financial Law Review (IFLR) and the Legal 500. In 2015, ASAR was awarded with the IFLR National Law Firm of the Year Award; an award which ASAR has been delighted to receive for the 7th consecutive year. The firm also won the "Best Restructuring Deal in the Middle East" award by IFLR in 2014. Further, the firm won the prestigious "2014 Commercial Litigation Law Firm of the Year" and the "2014 Best Banking and Finance Legal Team -Kuwait" awards from Acquisition International Magazine in 2014. ASAR lawyers have also received multiple awards under different categories in the Fourth Edition of 'Best Lawyers' in Kuwait.



Ahmed Barakat, Managing Partner at ASAR.



BANKING SECTOR CONTRIBUTES TO DEVELOPMENT OF ECONOMY: ABK

EUROMONEY CONFERENCE 2016

KUWAIT: Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) announced yesterday the successful conclusion of its participation in the 8th Annual Euromoney Kuwait Conference as co-sponsor, which was held on 27 September 2016 at the JW Marriott Hotel in Kuwait.

The theme of this year's conference was

"Meeting the Challenge of Financial Innovation and Reform" and it addressed the challenges and opportunities facing the Kuwaiti economy in an era of global uncertainties. The opening session of the conference featured keynote speakers Dr Mohammad Yousef Al-Hashel, Governor of the Central Bank of Kuwait, and on behalf of Dr

Nayef Al-Hajraf, Chairman of the Capital Markets Authority Muthanna Al-Saleh, Head of Markets Sector, and Sheikh Dr Meshaal Jaber Al-Sabah, Director-General of the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority, who addressed themes including innovation, reform and financial stability.

ABK's CEO, Michel Accad participated in the Macro-Economic Outlook, Financial Sector Outlook and Reform panel discussion, where he stressed the importance of creating job opportunities in the Private Sector considering the current economic situation in Kuwait and across the region. Accad underlined the need to act on both government revenue and expenditure to address the challenge of prolonged depressed oil prices. He also emphasized the pivotal role played by the banking sector in contributing to the development of the economy through strategic investments that create more opportunities not only for the company itself but for the country as a whole.

ABK also showcased its products with a dedicated booth at the event. During 2016 ABK won the Euromoney Best Bank Transformation Award for initiatives undertaken through the year including the acquisition of Piraeus Bank in Egypt and the implementation of the Bank's strategy on 'Simpler Banking'.

Euromoney is the world's leading organizer of conferences for cross-border investment and capital markets for portfolio and direct investors, financial intermediaries, corporations, governments, banks and financial institutions. Since the late 1970s, Euromoney Conferences has run events in more than 60 countries.



ABK's CEO Michel Accad

EU PROBES DEUTSCHE BOERSE-LSE MEGAMERGER

BRUSSELS: The EU yesterday launched an in-depth investigation into whether the blockbuster attempt by the Frankfurt stock exchange to merge with its London exchange rival harms competition.

The LSE and Deutsche Boerse tie-up would create a financial markets behemoth competing with the likes of the Chicago exchange and ICE in the United States as well as the Hong Kong stock exchange in Asia. The EU team, led by the hardened Competition Commissioner Margrethe Vestager, has 90 days to assess the merger which has already hit turbulence after the shock decision by Britain to quit the European Union.

"Financial markets provide an essential function for the European economy," Vestager said in a statement announcing the wide-ranging probe.

"We must ensure that market participants continue to have access to financial market infrastructure on competitive terms," she added. The merger would ring up one of the globe's biggest groups for stock listings and market data, tying the Frankfurt-dominated eurozone to a post-Brexit London. Crucially, it would also handle more super risky derivatives trades than any other venue in the world, becoming a hub for what is sometimes called shadow banking.

The proposed deal has drawn sharp rebukes from France, Belgium, Portugal and the Netherlands, fearful that their own stock exchanges, owned by Euronext, will get buried in the aftermath.

In addition to the London market, LSE also operates the Milan stock exchange and the LCH Clearnet clearing house, where hundreds of billions of euros in foreign currency trades and risky derivatives are processed, outside the eye of banking regulators. Deutsche Boerse operates the Frankfurt exchange, as well as the Luxembourg-based clearing house Clearstream and the derivatives platform Eurex.

In a brief statement, Deutsche Boerse said it simply took note of the probe. LSE meanwhile proposed the sale of the French division of its LCH clearinghouse as a "pro-active" concession to EU concerns. Clearing houses are an increasingly vital part of financial markets, insuring buyers and sellers against their counterparts pulling out of a deal in exchange for cash guarantees.

London hosts roughly 1.3 trillion euros (\$1.44 trillion) of euro clearing transactions every year, a status that is now in danger with the British vote to leave the EU. Originally, the new company was to be headquartered in London and run by the current CEO of Deutsche Boerse, Carsten Kengeter. — AFP

SAUDI EXPECTS SOLUTION FOR STALLED GERMAN GUN EXPORTS

BERLIN: Saudi Arabia will work with Germany to resolve a dispute over stalled exports of gun parts by arms maker Heckler & Koch, and the issue will not damage relations, a senior Saudi military official said yesterday. A German court in June ordered the government to decide whether to allow Heckler & Koch to export parts to Saudi Arabia, after the company sued the government for dragging its feet for over two years in licensing the exports of parts needed to manufacture its G36 assault rifle in Saudi Arabia.

Germany had approved a lucrative licensing deal in 2008 allowing Saudi Arabia to produce the G36, but changed its approach in 2013 following media criticism of Saudi Arabia's use of the death penalty.

Exports have yet to resume, and Germany's Economy Ministry had no immediate comment yesterday on when a decision could be expected. Saudi Brigadier General Ahmed Al-Asseri told reporters during a visit to Germany that it was "not very acceptable" to change course after signing a

contract, but he played down the seriousness of the issue. "We will not make a case of this because the relationship with Germany is more valuable than a small contract regarding machine guns," Al-Asseri said. "We will find a solution which satisfies both sides." Saudi Arabia has defended its human rights record by saying its legal system is based on Islam, its judiciary is independent and it does not use torture.

Al-Asseri said Saudi Arabia buys few weapons from Germany, focusing mainly on rifles and machine guns. He said arms purchases were a way to strengthen alliances because they facilitated training and closer personal relationships.

The contract in question was "very minor," he said. German Economy Minister Sigmar Gabriel has said he remains critical of exports to Saudi Arabia and in February spoke out against approval of the license.

Heckler & Koch's G36 is standard issue for many armies around the globe and its HK416 assault rifle is said to have been used in the US special forces operation to kill Osama bin Laden in 2011. — Reuters

EXCHANGE RATES

AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

ASIAN COUNTRIES

Japanese Yen	2.993
Indian Rupees	4.542
Pakistani Rupees	2.885
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.072
Nepali Rupees	2.839
Singapore Dollar	224.200
Hongkong Dollar	38.971
Bangladesh Taka	3.853
Philippine Peso	6.310
Thai Baht	8.742

GCC COUNTRIES

Saudi Riyal	80.643
Qatari Riyal	83.070
ani Riyal	785.473
Bahraini Dinar	803.110
UAE Dirham	82.335

ARAB COUNTRIES

Egyptian Pound - Cash	29.050
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	34.423
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.214
Tunisian Dinar	137.760
Jordanian Dinar	426.640
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.015
Syrian Lira	2.0155
Morocco Dirham	31.484

EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES

US Dollar Transfer	302.250
Euro	341.090
Sterling Pound	395.340

Canadian dollar	231.430
Turkish lira	103.160
Swiss Franc	314.840
Australian Dollar	233.640
US Dollar Buying	301.050

GOLD

20 Gram	268.710
10 Gram	137.270
5 Gram	69.480

DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

Rate for Transfer Selling Rate

US Dollar	302.450
Canadian Dinar	229.805
Sterling Pound	392.985
Euro	340.530
Swiss Frank	294.247
Bahrain Dinar	799.545
UAE Dirhams	82.575
Qatari Riyals	83.785
Saudi Riyals	81.375
Jordanian Dinar	426.180
Egyptian Pound	33.962
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.071
Indian Rupees	4.527
Pakistani Rupees	2.881
Bangladesh Taka	3.848
Philippines Peso	6.270
Cyprus pound	159.409
Japanese Yen	3.985
Syrian Pound	2.410

Nepalese Rupees	3.830
Malaysian Ringgit	73.990
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	45.695
Thai Bhat	9.700
Turkish Lira	102.000

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
Europe		
British Pound	0.385950	0.395950
Czech Korune	0.004555	0.016555
Danish Krone	0.041469	0.046469
Euro	0.0333735	0.0342735
Norwegian Krone	0.033267	0.038467
Romanian Leu	0.083750	0.083750
Slovakia	0.008997	0.018997
Swedish Krona	0.031355	0.036355
Swiss Franc	0.305467	0.316467
Turkish Lira	0.097808	0.108108
Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.222798	0.234798
New Zealand Dollar	0.213191	0.222691
America		
Canadian Dollar	0.224365	0.233365
Georgina Lari	0.136487	0.136487
US Dollars	0.298100	0.302800
US Dollars Mint	0.298600	0.302800
Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003299	0.003883
Chinese Yuan	0.043770	0.047270

Hong Kong Dollar	0.036891	0.039641
Indian Rupee	0.004253	0.004642
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000019	0.000025
Japanese Yen	0.002916	0.003096
Kenyan Shilling	0.003108	0.003108
Korean Won	0.000264	0.000279
Malaysian Ringgit	0.070079	0.076079
Nepalese Rupee	0.002804	0.002974
Pakistan Rupee	0.002740	0.003030
Philippine Peso	0.006237	0.006537
Sierra Leone	0.000067	0.000073
Singapore Dollar	0.217526	0.227526
South African Rand	0.016285	0.024785
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001654	0.002234
Taiwan	0.009493	0.009673
Thai Baht	0.008374	0.008921

Arab

Bahraini Dinar	0.075023	0.803523
Egyptian Pound	0.024009	0.029127
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000085
Iraqi Dinar	0.000182	0.000242
Jordanian Dinar	0.422075	0.431075
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000146	0.000246
Moroccan Dirhams	0.019737	0.043737
Nigerian Naira	0.001245	0.001880
Omani Riyal	0.778515	0.784195
Qatar Riyal	0.082196	0.083645
Saudi Riyal	0.079500	0.080800
Syrian Pound	0.001280	0.001500
Tunisian Dinar	0.133780	0.141780
Turkish Lira	0.097808	0.108108
UAE Dirhams	0.080853	0.082553
Yemeni Riyal	0.001366	0.001446



BERLIN: (Front from left), the chairman of the Committee on the Affairs of the European Union of the German federal parliament Gunther Krichbaum, the President of the European Central Bank Mario Draghi and the President of the German Federal Parliament Bundestag Norbert Lammert, arrive for a meeting with members of the parliament in Berlin yesterday.—AP

DRAGHI DEFENDS ULTRA-LOOSE POLICY

BERLIN/FRANKFURT: European Central Bank President Mario Draghi rejected German criticism of the bank's super-loose monetary policy yesterday, calling sub-zero rates a necessity and urging governments including Germany's to share more of the burden.

Facing a grilling from German lawmakers who say the bank's monetary policy has damaged the euro zone and fuelled the rise of the populist right, Draghi said Germans were net beneficiaries of the ECB's policies and action from governments, including Berlin, were a precondition for rates to rise.

After repeated clashes in recent years, a tentative truce between the bank and Europe's biggest economy is showing signs of cracking as the ECB contemplates even more stimulus despite vocal objections from the German establishment. "On balance, savers, employees, entrepreneurs, pensioners and taxpayers across the euro area, including in Germany, are better off because of our actions - today and tomorrow," Draghi told the Bundestag's European Affairs committee, a day before he was due to hold talks with Chancellor Angela Merkel. "What we need now is to allow our measures to develop their full impact," Draghi said. Facing lacklustre growth and the threat of deflation, the ECB has cut interest rates deep into negative territory and bought more than a trillion euros' worth of government bonds so far to cut borrowing costs and revive spending by firms and households.

With the economy responding to stimulus more slowly than expected, the ECB is now looking at fresh options to keep its 80 billion euro per month asset purchases running and markets are pricing in a six-month extension, much to the ire of Germans.

Many in financially prudent Germany argue that sub-zero rates upset financial stability, consume household savings, destabilise banks and reward financial mismanagement by eurozone governments.

"In fact, evidence shows that between 2008 and 2015 interest payments by households in Germany, as a percentage of gross disposable income, fell more sharply than interest earnings," Draghi said. "Of course, low interest rates for a long period might carry the risk of overvaluation in asset markets as a result of the search for yield. But at the moment we are not seeing any overheating in the euro area or the German economy as a whole."

GERMAN IRRITATION

The ECB's calls for more government spending also annoys Germany, where balancing the budget is a national obsession and a cornerstone of Wolfgang Schäuble's economic strategy. The heart of the problem is that German households prefer uncomplicated savings products that now yield nothing, eating into the retirement prospects of millions and endangering hundreds if not thousands of small savings banks.

Political analysts argue that much of the criticism may also be a way of deflecting attention from Merkel's increasingly unpopular refugee policy and the poor showing of her Christian Democrats (CDU) in regional elections. With a national election just a year away, Merkel is facing growing discontent, even from her coalition ally, raising doubts over whether she can lead her conservatives to a fourth election victory in a row. Draghi struck a somewhat conciliatory tone earlier on Wednesday, admitting that the ECB did not yet fully understand the consequences of all of its actions, given that it was using novel and untested tools, so scrutiny was fair and welcome.

"Little is known to date of the distributional consequences of the unconventional tools we have used, either in respect of their impact or over the medium term," Draghi said.

In uncharted waters, closer cooperation is needed between fiscal and monetary policy to minimize side-effects, he added. The ECB argues that Germany relies too much on exports, neglecting its internal market and running up huge trade surpluses without recognising that its economic good fortune may not last. More spending at home would balance the German economy and trickle down to the rest of the euro zone, helping the entire bloc, it argues.

Underlining a lack of policy coherence among the euro zone's top economies, however, Italy hiked its budget deficit target for the second time in five months on Tuesday, a move that could set up a clash between Rome and Brussels. — Reuters

FRENCH GOVT PLANS TAX CUTS IN ITS 2017 BUDGET

PARIS: The French government has presented a 2017 budget plan that includes 1 billion euros (\$1.1 billion) in tax cuts expected to benefit 5 million low and middle-income households. The budget detailed at a Cabinet meeting Wednesday is based on expected economic growth of 1.5 percent both this year and next. The International Monetary Fund forecasts a more modest 1.2 percent growth next year.

Finance minister Michel Sapin stressed Britain's decision to leave the European Union in June has "unclear" consequences on France's economic situation. The government vows to bring the deficit to 2.7 percent of gross domestic product, which would be within the EU limit of 3 percent for the first time since 2007.

President Francois Hollande said this goal is "credible and serious," in comments reported by government spokesman Stephane Le Foll. The EU has already granted France a delay of two years twice - in 2013 and 2015 - to reach its deficit target.

The government is also trying to be more business-friendly through 5 billion euros in company tax cuts aimed, in the hope of boosting hiring. The economy is expected to be a major concern for French voters ahead of the presidential election in April-May 2017. Unemployment has been hovering around 10 percent for years. The budget will be debated this autumn in parliament. Several candidates in the presidential electoral campaign have claimed they would reconsider the budget if elected. — AP

DEBT ISSUE COULD PUT A POSITIVE SPIN ON KUWAIT ECONOMY: EXPERT

EUROMONEY CONFERENCE WEIGHS MECHANISM FOR BORROWING

By Sajeev K Peter

KUWAIT: A debt issue currently being contemplated by Kuwait government could put a positive spin on its economy as the country is financially very healthy and has large foreign reserves in the shape of the future generations fund and the sovereign wealth fund, said a financial expert on Tuesday.

"Borrowing money when you have good financial health and a budget deficit actually is a positive thing, because you can borrow advantageously at lower interest rates than countries that are actually stretched financially, instead of using reserve capital. You have a sovereign wealth fund which by some measures could be up to half a trillion dollars in size. The market should also be very eager to lend to a country like Kuwait, which has very little budgetary deficit compared to the size of its financial reserves," said Firas Mallah, Managing Director, MENA at Bank of Montreal Global Asset Management, Abu Dhabi.

Speaking with Kuwait Times on the sidelines of the Euromoney Conference at JW Marriott, Mallah said, the conference contemplated measures the government would take while issuing the debt and the right mechanism to control it. It is expected that the government would set up a debt management office for closely monitoring the level of debt.

The other beneficial impact is that it will create a reference for pricing. "If Kuwait as a government issues debt, then we will have a floor to measure debt, therefore any private sector company wants to issue debt can price more efficiently because it has a risk-free reference rate. It will render the market a lot more efficiency in pricing non-government debt risk," he pointed out.

The Euromoney Conference sought to send a message to the market that the government is seriously considering issuing debt, but it will not be excessive, he said. However, he is of the opinion that there needs to be more communication and clarity on the debt issue and borrowing in order to allay misgivings in the market, if any.

Most Gulf countries are either borrow-



KUWAIT: Firas Mallah during an interview with Kuwait Times.

ing or starting to look at it. The UAE, Bahrain and Qatar have issued some bonds and Saudi Arabia has issued some bonds in local currency. Currently, the kingdom is considering an international issue. "And now it is time for Kuwait to look at it and I think the first issue might not exceed \$10 billion," he said.

Rationale

Giving the rationale behind the proposed government move to issue debt, Mallah said, "when you have a budgetary deficit, there are basically four levers you can use to tackle deficit. First, you can cut your expenditures, you can always try to increase your revenues or plough into your reserves. Next option, possibly a better one will be to borrow money to plug that deficit," Mallah, who is very knowledgeable in the areas of government debt, bonds, sukuk and wider emerging market debt, added: "I think what the Kuwait government is trying to do now is to use all these four levers together in an optimized manner. Increase in revenue can happen by

increasing production volume, but that is already high. The other part which can increase is obviously the price of oil, but this is not going to happen unless by some pragmatic or dramatic change in the oil market scenario brought about either by an OPEC agreement or a surge in demand or a consensus to reduce production to a level to make higher oil prices sustainable. However, a consensus on production freeze looks hard and one government alone cannot do it. Tapping the reserves is usually a temporary measure and not a sustainable measure as it will deplete the reserves."

Cost-cutting

Cost-cutting makes more sense as it provides a good opportunity when you have a low income to make your costs a lot leaner. "All the governments in the Gulf have currently undertaken a sort of health exercise in terms of reducing the fat and making sure they trim their unnecessary burden on budgets, he said. The government may look at the possibility of issuing debt as a way to alleviate any possible

budget deficit and generate money from investor demand on regional debt," Mallah explained.

It is never really a good idea to dramatically cut costs because many sectors such as construction, healthcare and education are dependent on government spending. "The government is cutting expenditure on things they think are non-critical in a temporary manner. However the government is not slashing spending on key infrastructure projects such as roads and ports which are necessary for the growth of the economy. Spending on ongoing projects will continue while it is expected that new commitments will be held off until there is more clarity on government finances. It shows there is more vision and foresight in terms of budgetary planning," he pointed out.

Oil price scenario

"There is one aspect of oil price that we cannot avoid and that's its cyclicality. Certain seasons will see more demand than others. Therefore, we will see fluctuations in oil price. At the same time, there is also an equilibrium price and we think that it is around where it should be right now like mid-\$40 per barrel or high \$40s. Levels above that will be a bit optimistic," Mallah commented, adding that there is a temporary cut in production from shale oil producers, but it is offset by Libya and Iran who increased their capacity. He forecast that oil production will continue and supply will increase next year.

"This year the developed world will grow at close to 1 percent to 1.5 percent at best. There are hardly any figures that will prompt us to believe that there will be an increase in oil consumption. But China will continue to grow albeit at a slower pace than it used to due to internal corrections. China could be a game-changer and we don't have any reason to believe that a change in the growth rate will be positive next year. It will continue to be more or less at the same rate as it is today. Given all these factors into consideration, oil price must hover around the current levels for the next two years. However, an OPEC agreement could change that of course," added Mallah.



ATHENS: Protesters take part in a demonstration against pension and tax reforms outside the Health Ministry in Athens yesterday. — AFP

GREEK LAWMAKERS PASS FRESH REFORMS SOUGHT BY CREDITORS

ATHENS: The Greek parliament yesterday adopted fresh austerity measures sought by its international creditors, including expediting privatization of utility companies. The reforms were passed by 152 of the 293 parliamentary deputies present, deputy speaker Yorgos Varamenos announced after the debate.

The vote opens the way for 2.8 billion euros (\$3.1 billion) in loans, which have been blocked since June as Greece negotiated with its creditors. Outside parliament more than 500 people protested against the "selling off" of public companies.

The new law foresees the reorganization of the electricity market, the acceleration of privatization programs and management of non-performing loans. Among the bodies being eyed for privatization are the DEI electricity company and the water company.

These will initially be transferred to the new EDIS privatization fund. The new reforms were adopted by emergency procedure as have the majority of the austerity laws passed in recent years by cash-strapped Greece. Earlier this month Greece's creditors resumed an audit of the country's finances after Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras said an EU-IMF rift was delaying progress on attempts to unlock the 2.8 billion euros of bailout loans.

Last week the International Monetary Fund called on the European Union to grant Greece additional debt relief and soften its demands for budgetary efforts.

Even if Athens fully respects a pre-scribed program of austerity and reforms, the IMF said in an annual report on the Greek economy, the government will still require a reduction of its debt mountain. The IMF has held off from participating in the third,

European Union-led 86 billion euro (\$95.3 billion) rescue program for Greece, insisting both that creditors cut the country's massive debt burden but also that the government press forward with reforms especially to its pension system. — AFP

CBS LOOSEN PURSE STRINGS 200 TIMES IN LESS THAN TWO YEARS

LONDON: Armenia does not often take the global financial spotlight but a routine rate cut by the tiny former Soviet republic this week marked a global milestone - the 200th case of policy easing worldwide since the start of last year. Fifty seven central banks have cut rates or pumped stimulus into their economies since January 1, 2015, to boost growth, raise inflation or both, highlighting the continued fragility of the global economy eight years after the financial crisis. And even as the financial crash of 2008 and subsequent Great Recession recede further in the rear view mirror, the level of easing activity by central banks is increasing, not decreasing.

With three months of 2016 still to run, there have already been 99 policy actions this year, making it almost inevitable that last year's total of 101 will be surpassed. Armenia's rate cut on Tuesday was its ninth in little over a year, a period

that has seen the refinancing rate reduced to 6.75 percent from 10.5 percent, placing the South Caucasus nation's central bank among the world's serial easers. Only Argentina has eased policy more often, its central bank slashing the key reference rate on short-term bonds 17 times and by more than 1,000 basis points to 27.25 percent since May this year. At the other end of the spectrum, 18 central banks have eased policy just once.

They include the Bank of England, Nigeria's central bank, which has subsequently raised rates twice, and Uzbekistan's, which got the ball rolling on the first day of January last year. Of the 57 central banks to take action, 47 have been emerging or frontier market authorities, and 10 from developed economies. In terms of scale and impact, the stimulus measures of the European Central Bank and the Bank of Japan have packed the biggest punch. — Reuters

GERMANY, DEUTSCHE BANK RUSH TO QUASH RUMORS

BERLIN: The German government and Deutsche Bank were at pains yesterday quash speculation of a rescue plan for the troubled lender, in an effort to reassure investors spooked by a potentially massive US fine. The denials came after Deutsche's share price sank to a record low this week on reports that Germany's biggest bank had asked Berlin for help after US authorities demanded an unaffordable \$14-billion fine over the subprime mortgage crisis. State aid "is not on the table", chief executive John Cryan told Germany's biggest-selling newspaper Bild.

But investors were further rattled when news weekly Die Zeit yesterday reported that German and EU officials were working on an emergency plan for Deutsche "if the worst comes to the worst". Germany's finance ministry swiftly shot down any talk of such a bailout. "The report is wrong. The government is not preparing rescue plans. There are no grounds for such speculation," the ministry said in a statement. The rapid-fire developments saw Deutsche shares rise more than 2.6 percent in late afternoon trading to 10.83 euros, making up some of the ground lost earlier this week, while Frankfurt's DAX 30 index was showing a gain of 0.8 percent. Uncertainty over the bank's financial health had seen shares hit a record low on Monday, dropping 7.54 percent to close at 10.55 euros (\$11.80) and ending at the same level on Tuesday.

Offloading assets

Deutsche has been dominating business headlines ever since the US Department of Justice (DoJ) made its demand for the eye-watering fine earlier this month. If Deutsche is unable to negotiate the sum down to less than the \$5.5 billion it has set aside for legal costs and fines, it could be forced to raise fresh capital on the markets, diluting the value of its shares, or weakening its balance sheet.

"We expect the DoJ will treat us just as fairly as the American banks" that have settled for much less in similar cases, Cryan insisted to Bild. Eager to show investors it was working to clean up its balance sheet, Deutsche on Wednesday announced it had agreed to offload its British insurance company Abbey Life to life insurer Phoenix Group for 1.1 billion euros, which will provide a slight boost to its capital buffer.

'At no point' asked for help

Cryan insisted to Bild that he had "at no point" asked Chancellor Angela Merkel for a rescue. But Die Zeit is to report today on plans by Berlin "if the worst comes to the worst" to sell off parts of Deutsche to other financial institutions, and possibly buy a 25-percent stake. Some voices in the government favour involving the European Single Resolution Mechanism, set up in the wake of the financial crisis to prevent taxpayer bailouts of failing banks, the newspaper said. In that case, creditors and customers would bear a share of the rescue costs-potentially creating fresh chaos on the financial markets. German officials believe attempting to intercede with the US authorities could be "potentially counterproductive", Die Zeit said in an extract sent out yesterday. Deutsche faces further looming problems in the shape of an investigation by New York regulators into alleged money laundering at its Russian branch. The two cases are among the most pressing of some 8,000 weighing on Deutsche, and CEO Cryan has promised to resolve them by the end of the year. The lender's woes come as European banks complain of a harsh business environment, confronting low interest rates cutting into their profit margins, anaemic economic growth, fierce competition and high requirements on the amount of capital they must hold as a buffer against future crises. — AFP

DEUTSCHE HELPS LIFT STOCKS BEFORE YELLEN, DRAGHI

LONDON: A recovery in Deutsche Bank shares helped push European stocks higher yesterday, easing concerns over Germany's financial sector that had hit equities in Asia and drove investors into safe-haven government bonds and the dollar.

Beyond banking sector worries, markets were looking ahead to separate appearances by US Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen and European Central Bank President Mario Draghi as well as a meeting of oil producers in Algiers. Reflecting investor caution, Wall Street looked set to open around flat. S&P 500 e-mini futures were flat while equivalents on the Dow Jones were up less than 0.1 percent.

However, after a torrid couple of days, there was some good news for holders of shares in Deutsche Bank.

Germany's biggest lender said it sold its British insurance business Abbey Life to Phoenix Group for 935 billion pounds (\$1.2 billion). And Deutsche Chief Executive John Cryan told German daily Bild he had not sought state aid after a report the lender had asked for help to deal with a \$14 billion demand from the US Department of Justice over claims it mis-sold mortgage-backed securities.

Deutsche shares were last up 2.7 percent, having hit a record low on Tuesday and lost

about half their value this year. This helped push the pan-European STOXX 600 index up 0.9 percent, with an index of banks up 1.3 percent.

German two-year government bonds, however, held near Tuesday's record low of minus 0.711 percent and last traded just above minus 0.7 percent. Germany sold a tranche of the bonds at a record low yield at auction of minus 0.7 percent. Asian shares spent much of the trading session in negative territory, on investor concern about the state of the European banking sector and lower oil prices.

MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific

shares outside Japan moved in and out of negative territory and last stood less than 0.1 percent higher on the day. Japanese shares fell, with the Nikkei 225 index falling 1.3 percent by the close. Oil prices were slightly higher, partially reversing Tuesday's fall of some 3 percent on diminished expectations that oil producers meeting in Algiers this week would reach an agreement to ease a global glut of crude.

Members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) are due to meet at 1400 GMT. Some in the market say the Algiers talks could lay the groundwork for an agreement at OPEC's formal policy meeting in Vienna on Nov. 30, said Yvonne Lai, oil analyst at National Australia Bank in Melbourne. "I think OPEC producers realise they can't continue to expand production indefinitely - OPEC producers are close to maximum capacity - so there could be room for a deal (in November)," Lai said. Brent crude, the international benchmark, last traded at \$46.51 a barrel, up 54 cents on the day on data showing a surprise drawdown in US inventories.

Yellen speaks

The dollar was up 0.1 percent against a basket of currencies. Fed chief Yellen testifies before the House Financial Services Committee on regulation but may face questions on the interest rate outlook and the economy. The Fed left rates on hold last week but strongly signalled they could rise in December.

Draghi speaks in Berlin

The euro was flat at \$1.1210. "While we admit that near-term downside risks to the euro have increased due to financial stability concerns we think that any setback into the \$1.11 handle offers a buying opportunity," Hans Redeker, head of currency strategy at Morgan Stanley said. The yen weakened 0.2 percent to 100.65 per dollar and sterling dipped 0.1 percent to \$1.3014. Asia stocks retreat

Tokyo stocks led a broad retreat in Asian markets yesterday as the yen recovered, while regional energy firms struggled with crude prices on concern about the chances of success at an upcoming producers' meeting.

In Tokyo the Nikkei index closed down 1.3 percent, with a stronger yen dampening buying appetite. The dollar bought 100.62 yen in Asian trade, slightly up from 100.36 yen in New York but it was still struggling after falling from the 100.88 yen seen earlier Tuesday in Asia. Shanghai lost 0.3 percent by the close, Seoul shed 0.5 percent and Singapore dipped 0.1 percent in the afternoon, while there were also losses in Bangkok and Jakarta.

But Hong Kong staged a late burst to end 0.2 percent up and Sydney also closed slightly higher. In Hong Kong the Postal Savings Bank of China was flat as it began trading after the world's biggest initial public offering for two years. PSBC, China's fifth largest lender, raised \$7.4 billion in the IPO, the biggest since Alibaba's \$25 billion New York listing in 2014. — Agencies

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report. Wednesday 28 September 2016. Table with columns: Index, Change, Closing, Last Closing, High, Low, Volume, Value (KWD), Number of Trades. Includes sub-tables for Oil & Gas, Consumer Goods, Health Care, Banks, Insurance, and Parallel Market.

National Bank of Kuwait Financial Markets Daily Report. Table with columns: Index, Previous Close, Last Price, Change, Daily Performance %, Yearly Performance %. Includes sub-tables: Global Stock Indices, MENA Stock Indices, Global Currencies Exchange Rate, MENA Currencies Exchange Rate, Global Interest Rates, Global Bond Yields, and Commodities.



MODERN ELEGANCE AND CRAFTSMANSHIP PERMEATE THE FIRST-EVER CADILLAC XT5

KUWAIT: Yusuf A Alghanim & Sons Automotive, the exclusive distributor of Cadillac vehicles in Kuwait, is proud to elevate its customers' standards of luxury with the first-ever 2017 Cadillac XT5. Developed, designed and engineered to provide customers with more luxury, space, technology and efficiency, the XT5 is the next phase in elevating the Cadillac brand: it is bold, ultra-modern and sophisticated thanks to superb driving dynamics, cutting-edge technologies and a new chassis system - all of which work together to ensure fuel efficiency.

Thanks to Cadillac's expertise for light-weight and agile driving dynamics, the new XT5 is 278 pounds (126 kg) lighter than the current SRX, featuring rear-seat legroom increase of 3.2 in. (8.1 cm) as well. Additionally, the rear seat reclines and slides fore and aft. This was achieved using many of the techniques applied on the Cadillac CTS and ATS sport sedans - the lightest cars in their respective segments. This includes the use of laser welding, ultra high-strength steel and advanced analytics that ensure a stronger structure, and excellent crash performance with less overall bulk.

The XT5 also brings a new level of sophistication to showcase Cadillac's evolving design language, sporting a strong visual presence with proportions that convey the driving experience and the lightweight construction underneath the surface. There is a lean, taut, liquid quality to the surfaces with flowing, uninterrupted lines separated by crisp edges.

The XT5's interior is based on a philosophy of clean, modern elegance and craftsmanship, evident by the interior surfaces inside the XT5, which are wider and more horizontal in orientation, emphasizing efficient use of space. Like all Cadillac models, the interior is assembled with cut-and-sewn wrapped panels, rather than molded surfaces typical of mainstream vehicles.

Efficiency and dynamics

Meanwhile, advanced powertrains add to efficiency and dynamics; with SAE-certified peak output of 310-horsepower and 271 lb-ft of torque, the new V6 uses variable valve timing for strong response and smooth power delivery. Cadillac's new Stop/Start technology automatically stop and start the engine when the vehicle is at rest in traffic stops, saving fuel and reducing emissions, while enhancing the quietness expected of a luxury vehicle. A new 8-speed automatic transmission is standard for the XT5, which also debuts Electronic Precision Shift - the first electronically controlled transmission shifter for a Cadillac, which reduces noise and vibration, and allows further use of the cabin space with a storage space beneath the center console. In addition, the advanced "twin clutch" all-wheel drive system continuously and automatically delivers excellent traction across a variety of conditions, such as providing enhanced stability in dry weather.

The first-ever XT5 proudly includes Cadillac's latest production systems for con-



nectivity and safety. Featuring Cadillac's patented new industry-leading Rear Camera Mirror system, which enhances the driver's rear vision by 300 percent, using a video display applied over the conventional inside rearview mirror. A high dynamic range camera records wider images behind the car, streams the image to video processing software which "removes" obstacles such as the roof, rear pillars and rear seat passengers, projecting an

unobstructed view to a Liquid Crystal Display. In addition, XT5 features Cadillac's Driver Awareness and Driver Assist packages to aid vision and collision avoidance. These include automatic front and rear braking for low-speed conditions, Lane Keeping Assist, Rear Cross Traffic Alert, Side Blind Zone Alert, full-speed range Adaptive Cruise Control and Automatic Parking Assist.

The Cadillac CUE system for connectivity

and control is upgraded for the XT5. A faster and more powerful processor provides best-ever response and accuracy. The XT5 features an integrated wireless charger for mobile devices, with a slot designed into the center console. Like all Cadillac models in 2016, XT5 features 4G-wireless connectivity with a standard integrated Wi-Fi hotspot and standard Apple CarPlay and Android Auto for simpler in-car phone integration. An optional color reconfigurable Heads-Up Display is available. Cadillac's signature LED light pipes are standard inside and out, while full LED headlights are optional. A Surround Vision feature enables a "bird's eye" view of the perimeter around the car to assist in parking.

Premium Care Program

Yusuf Ahmed Alghanim & Sons Automotive furthers Cadillac's superiority by showcasing the company's commitment to enhance customers' unique Cadillac experience by offering customers peace of mind with a comprehensive insurance program. In addition, all Cadillac owners will enjoy service and maintenance for four years or 100,000 km, warranty for 4 years or 100,000 km, 24-hour roadside assistance anywhere in the Middle East for four years (unlimited miles) plus a courtesy transportation and a replacement vehicle upon availability. Customers are invited to discover and enjoy an engaging test-drive experience of the first-ever Cadillac XT5 by visiting the Cadillac showroom at Safat Alghanim in Al-Rai today.

TURKEY TO DRAW LESSONS FROM MOODY'S CUTS

ANKARA: Turkey will draw lessons from its credit downgrade to "junk" by Moody's but is already tackling some of the challenges highlighted by the agency, including structural reform and improving the quality of its institutions, Finance Minister Naci Agbal told Reuters. In his first interview since Moody's cut Turkey's sovereign debt to non-investment grade late on Friday, Agbal acknowledged that a failed coup in July had taken a toll and said Turkey's economic growth was likely to be below 4 percent this year, missing the government's 4.5 percent target.

But he forecast that the \$720 billion economy would pick up again in 2017 and took a sanguine view of the rating agency's downgrade, saying the issues it raised were already on the government's agenda. "The need for structural reform, an increase in potential growth, and an improvement in institutional quality and our competitive position ... are all true," Agbal said in an interview in his office in Ankara. "We, as the government, are aware of this ... The points raised by Moody's are important to us, too, and we won't lose time in taking measures to tackle these issues," the former career bureaucrat, who spent six years as finance ministry undersecretary before entering politics last year, told Reuters.

A series of suicide bombings blamed on Islamic State and Kurdish militants had hit Turkey's tourism industry and knocked domestic confidence even before the coup attempt, in which rogue soldiers commandeered tanks and fighter jets, bombing parliament and killing more than 240 people. The aftermath has done little to reassure. About 100,000 people have been sacked or suspended from the civil service, military and police in purges, prompting fears among Western allies that President Tayyip Erdogan is using the events as a pretext to stifle dissent, weakening Turkey's institutions. Moody's cited worries about the rule of law, as well as risks from a slowing economy, as reasons for its downgrade. But the government says such fears are unfounded and that measures to root out the followers of U.S.-based cleric Fethullah Gulen, whom it blames for orchestrating the coup, will restore order and strengthen, not weaken, Turkish democracy. "Turkey's long-term growth can only be achieved through an emphasis on structural reform. And at the start of that are democracy, democratic reforms, and the strengthening of the rule of law," Agbal said. Gulen denies the government's charges.

LIMITED FALL-OUT

Turkey's annual economic growth dipped to 3.1 percent in the second quarter from 4.7 percent in the first and is expected to slow further due partly to the fallout from the coup attempt. Agbal said the 4.5 percent growth target set for 2016 in the government's medium-term economic program, its rolling three-year policy plan, no longer seemed attainable and a new program would be announced in early October. "Our revised expectation appears to be below 4 percent."

We will announce a realistic path for both 2016 and 2017," he said, adding that growth would be stronger next year than this. Turkey depends on investment to fund its current account deficit - one of the biggest in the G20 - and longer seemed attainable and a new program would be announced in early October. "Our revised expectation appears to be below 4 percent."

The market fall-out was, in the event, relatively short-lived. By late on Monday, the first trading day after the downgrade, the lira had recovered much of its losses and investors paid more than expected in three bond auctions, showing strong demand for the very debt Moody's now classifies as sub-investment grade.

"There may be some increases in banks' foreign borrowing costs. But the increase will be limited to 25-50 basis points, which is not very significant," said Hakan Binbasgil, the chief executive of Akbank, one of Turkey's biggest lenders.

"The banking sector will not have a major problem with foreign borrowing," he told reporters yesterday. Agbal vowed Turkey would focus on boosting growth, fighting inflation and tackling the current account deficit in the next three years and would take decisive steps against high food prices, one of its most stubborn economic problems.

He also said a privatization program would be widened and accelerated, with the proceeds - as well as the sale of equity stakes in public infrastructure projects - used partly to finance a planned sovereign wealth fund. Some investors have questioned how such a plan can work. Most of the biggest sovereign wealth funds around the world are built on energy earnings, but unlike the likes of Norway and Gulf countries, Turkey imports almost all of its energy needs. Agbal said he wanted to finalize the privatization of Turkey's national lottery by the end of the year, after two failed attempts last year. — Reuters

REFERENDUM FEARS FOR EU AS ITALY CUTS GROWTH FORECAST

ROME: Italy has slashed its growth forecasts for this year and next, nine weeks before a referendum shaping up as make-or-break vote on the centre-left government's record that could send shockwaves across Europe. Speaking late Tuesday after a cabinet meeting on updated budget plans for 2017, Prime Minister Matteo Renzi said he was now making a "prudent" prediction of growth of 0.8 percent for this year and one percent for 2017.

That compares with figures of 1.2 percent and 1.4 percent forecast by the government in April. The downward revisions follow a gloomy summer in which it became clear that an economy that had been growing slowly ground to a virtual standstill in the first half of this year. The latest economic data, published on Wednesday, offered mixed signals with consumer confidence falling in September compared with the previous month, while companies were marginally more optimistic about the future, according to the national statistics body Istat.

Pricey pizza

Independent economists say Italy will struggle to hit even the revised targets given weak domestic demand, the crisis facing the country's debt-laden banks and the fallout from Britain's "Brexit" vote to leave the EU. Italy's economy has barely grown since the country became a founding member of the eurozone in 1999. That stagnation has hammered the purchasing power of working and middle class voters.

As salaries have trodden water, the cost of a pizza in Rome has trebled. The rise of energy prices has been sharper, hitting pensioners on fixed incomes particularly hard. That is the backdrop against which fed-up Italians will vote on December 4 on a package of constitutional reforms designed to make the country easier to govern. Renzi has gambled his personal future on the outcome of a vote on abolishing the second-chamber Senate and revising the electoral system to ensure election winners of workable parliamentary majorities.

The bullish premier's stance has hugely raised the stakes involved in the vote because of the realistic possibility that fresh elections will bring the populist Five Star Movement to power on a mandate to organise a Brexit-style referendum on Italy's future within the euro single currency zone. The 41-year-old premier has admitted he made a mistake in making it all about him. Polls suggest the referendum outcome is too close to call. But even if Renzi carries it, Five Star could still triumph in elections in 2018 with the help of a new winner-takes-all electoral system. Among the sceptics about Italy's new

growth predictions are economists at the OECD club of industrialised countries. They are predicting 0.8 percent growth for both this year and next. Renzi said Italy's budget deficit would fall to 2.4 percent of GDP this year, from 2.6 percent in 2015, and a maximum of 2.0 percent next year. The latter figure is slightly above the 1.8 percent target Italy has been set by the European Commission, which is urging Rome to cut year-on-year spending faster to reduce a debt mountain equivalent to more than 132 percent of the entire economy.

A bridge to Sicily

Renzi said Italy would be seeking leeway on the interpretation of EU budget rules-equivalent to a maximum 0.4 percent of GDP-to cover the exceptional costs of the ongoing migration crisis and rebuilding after a deadly earthquake in August. Overall, Renzi's budget plans are less

confrontational vis-a-vis Brussels than the more expansionary plans trailed in the Italian media last month.

But he could not resist another swipe at the EU's Stability Pact rules, saying he was bored of talking about them. "There are rules, that I don't agree with but respect," he told the RTL 102.5 radio station yesterday. "The (the government's spending plans) observe the rules, which Italy always does but other countries don't." Renzi has until mid-October to finalise his 2017 budget and he has indicated that it will include funds to initiate, restart or refinance a string of major public works. In the latest move on that front, he this week issued a green light for a resumption of work on a long-delayed project to build a bridge between the toe of Italy's boot and Messina, Sicily. Perhaps not totally unrelated to the move, Messina is one of the birthplaces of the modern EU. — AFP



MONACO: 26th edition of the International Monaco Yacht Show at the Hercules Port in Monaco yesterday. The Monaco Yacht Show, running from September 28 until October 1, is considered the most prestigious pleasure boat show in the world with the exhibition of 500 major companies in luxury yachting and over a hundred super and megayachts afloat. — AFP

ZAIN CROWNED 'BEST TELECOM BRAND'

KUWAIT: Zain Group, a leading mobile telecom innovator in eight markets across the Middle East and Africa, is proud to announce that its brand has been identified as the 'Best Brand' for telecom in 2016 at the prestigious Telecoms World Middle East Awards gala event in Dubai earlier this week. Additionally, Zain's operation in Saudi Arabia was presented with the 'Best Customer Experience' service award, while Zain Jordan and Zain Iraq jointly received an award for 'Best Consumer Service' for their life-enhancing 'Zain Cash' mobile money offering, which has brought the benefits of banking to millions of unbanked people across the two countries.

Impressively, for a third consecutive year the honor of the 'Best Brand' was bestowed on Zain Group by a panel of judges assembled by Terrapinn, the organizers of the annual Telecoms World Middle East Conference and Awards. The awards recognize outstanding performance in key areas throughout the Middle East telecom industry and shine a spotlight on key players that have contributed to making the sector one of the most dynamic globally.

Zain has been a recipient of the 'Best Brand' award on numerous previous occasions since the introduction of its inspiring brand in 2007. This year's success has been driven by the tangible developments occurring within the company, where heavy investment in network upgrades, and technology innovation is positively impacting customer experience. Additionally, Zain's Corporate Sustainability programs and eye-catching marketing and widespread social media campaigns have captured the imagination of the whole region, reflecting the company's aspirations.

Commenting on the award of the latest accolades, Zain Group CEO Scott Gegenheimer said, "We are always appreciative to receive positive confirmation from our industry on the work we are undertaking. Our brand represents a promise that we always strive to offer the best, life-enriching mobile solutions to our customers and are looking to deal with all of our various stakeholders in a professional and highly positive manner."

Innovation

Gegenheimer continued, "The range of the prizes we have been awarded this year across several of our operations signifies that we are not just innovating for innovation's sake, but that the services and initiatives we are



developing are really impacting people's lives for the better."

Zain Saudi Arabia was singled out for the 'Best Customer Experience'

award for the year as a mark of the company's innovative and engaging customer experience strategy, which has been executed with impressive

results. The strategy engaged Zain Saudi personnel across the organization as active participants in the attainment of Customer Experience Excellence, achieving success via combining the adoption of the latest trends in customer retention programs with employee passion, achieving highly positive results.

Zain Jordan and Zain Iraq were jointly recognized at the Awards for their efforts to expand access to financial services, aimed at providing a mobile wallet to millions of unbanked people across the two countries. Earlier this year, Zain operations in the two countries relaunched their mobile banking services under the brand "Zain Cash", featuring a richer portfolio, and a more integrated ecosystem including more secure and convenient transactions within a comprehensive network. The life-enhancing mobile service was launched in partnership with eServGlobal.

These awards highlight the scope of success Zain Group operations continue to garner, as they follow a strategy to deliver a raft of digital lifestyle products and services to customers, while helping uplift communities and economic development across the region.

KUWAIT AIRWAYS INAUGURATES CAIRO INT'L AIRPORT'S NEW TERMINAL 2

KUWAIT: Kuwait Airways, the national carrier of the State of Kuwait, has announced that it has become the first airline to arrive and inaugurate Cairo International Airport's (CAI) new Terminal 2.

Symbolizing the ever increasing bilateral ties between the two Arab nations, Kuwait Airways' (KAC) long legacy as an aviation pioneer was continued today with the arrival of flight KAC 1541, representing both the ongoing and growing relationship between Kuwait and Egypt.

According to airport sources, the new Terminal 2 (T2) facility will boost the CAI's annual passenger capacity handling by 7.5 million, per year, and increase the airport's total passenger handling capacity to 30 million. Commenting on the arrival of Kuwait Airways' (KAC) inaugural arrival at CAI's Terminal 2, Chairperson of KAC, Rasha Al-Roumi, said:

"Kuwait Airways is delighted to be the first airline to arrive at Cairo International Airport's impressive new Terminal 2 facility. Today's event further highlights the strong historic and commercial bond our two nations share and one we are committed to deepening, going forward. I would personally like to extend my thanks to the Egyptian Civil Aviation Authority [ECAA] for their cooperation and assistance on making this inaugural arrival at Cairo International Airport's Terminal 2 possible."

"Kuwait Airways plays a significant role in the regional tourism industry, into Egypt, and the new capacity terminal is an indication of the growth we are seeing in passenger numbers along key routes, such as the Egyptian market," Rasha added.

50 VIP passengers, from Kuwait, travelled on the inaugural flight into CAI's "T2" and were greeted by representatives of Kuwait Airways' Cairo Office, Cairo International Airport's senior management and local media. The national carrier of Kuwait currently operates 14 flights per week to Cairo; one of 34 destinations on its international network.

With increased frequencies, new time schedules and new routes all part of the airline's strategic growth over the next five years, the introduction of CAI's new capacity Terminal 2 is one of many clear indications of the expected growth in passenger traffic, both within the region and with Kuwait Airways specifically.



ETIHAD DEPLOYS BOEING 787 DREAMLINER ON ABU DHABI-RIYADH ROUTE

RIYADH: Etihad Airways is to deploy a Boeing 787 Dreamliner on one of its twice-daily scheduled flights between Abu Dhabi and Riyadh, with effect from 30 October 2016. The upgrade from a single aisle Airbus A321 aircraft will cater to strong demand to and from the capital of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, offering guests more seats on a wide-body aircraft. Together with the other daily Riyadh service operated by a Boeing 777, Etihad Airways will have more than 8,700 weekly seats on the route.

Flight EY317 will be operated with a B787, departing Abu Dhabi at 10:15 hrs, arriving in Riyadh at 11:15 hrs. The return flight EY318 departs Riyadh at 16:25 hrs, arriving in Abu Dhabi at 19:10 hrs. The flights will provide optimal timings for guests in Abu Dhabi and Riyadh, and convenient connections to and from destinations across key markets in Europe, Indian subcontinent, Asia and Australia.

The 299-seat aircraft, configured in two classes, offers award-winning cabin interiors with 28 seats in Business and 271 in Economy. Guests will be able to experience the airline's renowned Business Studio on board. The seat, which provides guests with direct aisle access, is also equipped with an in-seat massage and air cushion control system. Business Class guests using the service can choose from three main courses, with further dine-on-demand options available. There are also specialised services onboard, including a Food & Beverage Manager in the premium cabin, multi-national cabin crew and Flying Nannies, who are able to provide support to parents travelling with young children.

For B787 Economy Class passengers, the airline's commitment to providing the best guest experiences is showcased by its 'Smart Seats'. They have been designed to provide additional comfort through simple design features such as a 'fixed wing' headrest, extra seat width and individual

TV monitors. Etihad Airways currently operates the latest Panasonic eX3 IFE equipment for its B787 inflight entertainment system. Mobile connectivity with access to onboard Wi-Fi and seven satellite channels of live TV are also available.

Kevin Knight, Etihad Airways Chief Strategy and Planning Officer, said: "The Boeing 787 is playing a key role in Etihad Airways' fleet expansion with routes carefully selected on which to deploy this unique aircraft. We are delighted that Riyadh will soon join our 787 cities giving guests a different experience to and from Abu Dhabi, and with convenient connections to destinations across our diverse worldwide network.

"The aircraft also provides significantly more cargo capacity to facilitate the movement of a greater number of goods to and from the Saudi capital. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is a very important market for Etihad Airways, supporting our global expansion since the launch of services 13 years ago. Our commitment to the Saudi market has grown since we began flying to Riyadh in 2004, steadily increasing our presence to the current 63 flights each week to and from four Saudi cities."

On the Riyadh route alone, Etihad Airways has flown more than 2.5 million guests since 2004.

Etihad Airways' flights to Riyadh, Jeddah, Madinah and Dammam are complemented by Saudi codeshare partner flynas, whose dedicated services between Abu Dhabi and both Riyadh and Jeddah provide travellers with even more choice.

Riyadh becomes Etihad Airways' newest B787 destination this year following the induction of the aircraft on flights to Perth, Dusseldorf and Shanghai, with Abu Dhabi - Johannesburg set to become a Dreamliner route on 1 November. Etihad Airways' current fleet of nine B787s also operates to Singapore, Washington DC, Brisbane and Zurich.

DUBAI'S SERVICE EXCELLENCE BODY HONORS JOYALUKKAS

DUBAI: As we enter the last quarter of 2016, it is already apparent that the year will go down in the history of Joyalukkas Group as a landmark year of achievements, recognition and success. At the close of the third quarter, the Dubai Department of Economic Development, under the auspices of the Dubai Service Excellence Scheme (DSES), has honoured Joyalukkas Jewellery showroom in Lulu, Al Qusais with the Best Performance Outlet Award. The same award-giving authority had already recognized the global jewellery retail chain earlier in May for outstanding customer service.

John Paul Alukkas, Executive Director, Joyalukkas Group & Mrs. Sonia Alukkas, Director, Joyalukkas Group received the Best Service Performance Outlet award for Joyalukkas Jewellery Showroom in Lulu, Al Qusais from Sami Al Qamzi, Director General, Department of Economic Development and Dr Aisha Bin Bishr, Director General of Smart Dubai Office.

Joyalukkas is indeed earning its moniker as the world's favourite jeweller, and has broken records, set new standards, and changed the jewellery retail landscape for good. It is the first retail chain to be awarded both ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 certification and to receive Superbrand status 7 years in a row. Today its name stands worldwide for quality, best value offerings and the award-winning customer service.

John Paul Alukkas, Executive Director, Joyalukkas Group says "all of us at the Joyalukkas Group come to work with the determination and commitment to do one thing: make our customers happy and enhance their lifestyles. This



shapes everything we do, from the way we select only the finest jewellery from the best sources around the world, to thinking up meaningful promotions and offers, to the locations we choose for our showrooms, and most importantly, in our day to day interaction with them to be recognised for our efforts in achieving this goal is a great honour indeed, and one that would not have been possible without the support of our loyal customers. I also share this award with

the over 7,000 men and women of our on-ground staff who endeavor to give our patrons the most satisfying shopping experience with us every day."

In May 2016, Joyalukkas received the DSES award for outstanding customer service on a ground-breaking day that also saw Joyalukkas Group Chairman & MD Joy Alukkas recognized as one of the top Indian Leaders in the Arab World by Forbes Magazine.

BLACKBERRY TO OUTSOURCE HANDSETS, WILL HALT PRODUCTION

OTTAWA: BlackBerry announced yesterday it would halt in-house production of smartphones, marking the end of an era for the on-dominant Canadian tech firm. Ontario-based BlackBerry said it had reached a deal to outsource production of its phones to an Indonesian partner, and would instead concentrate on software and services.

Handsets with the BlackBerry name will be produced under license by PT Tiphone Mobile Indonesia Tbk, a statement by the firms said. BlackBerry, which a decade ago was among the

world's largest smartphone makers, has seen its global market share slip to less than one percent as Apple and Android devices have dominated.

As the market shifted, BlackBerry has sought to refocus on software, including security applications, and the latest announcement takes the company out of the handset market entirely. "We are reaching an inflection point with our strategy. Our financial foundation is strong, and our pivot to software is taking hold," said chief executive John Chen, pointing to a doubling of software

revenue in the last fiscal year.

"The company plans to end all internal hardware development and will outsource that function to partners. This allows us to reduce capital requirements and enhance return on invested capital."

The Waterloo, Ontario-based company has made several efforts in recent years to find new customer niches as its smartphone handset sales continued to stagnate in the face of competition. It had hoped its first Android-operating smartphone launched last year would help restore the company to its former glory. But sales

were lackluster. Earlier this year, BlackBerry announced it was killing off its Classic smartphone with a physical keyboard-once the workhorse of the smartphone market-as part of a modernization of its lineup.

But the company has continued to bleed red, posting on Wednesday a US\$372 million loss in its second quarter ending August 31. Revenues also fell to US\$334 million, from US\$490 million during the same period last year. The company did not report details on its smartphone shipments. —AFP

GULF BANK'S TRIO DRAW TAKES PLACE TODAY

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank has announced that its Trio Quarterly draw is scheduled to take place today at 1pm on Marina FM's Diwaniya Show. 3 Draws will take place at the same time and location. The Al Danah draw will be for cash prize of KD500,000. While the Salary & Red Account draws include a brand new Cadillac CTS and cash prizes up to KD1,000. 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 KD1,000 prizes, which are drawn each working day.



Furthermore, new Red Account or Salary Account customers who open an account and transfer their student allowance or salary will also be eligible to enter the monthly cash draws for a chance to also win up to KD 1,000. In addition, the quarterly car draw will be for 1 lucky winner who will have a chance to win a new Cadillac CTS.

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.

CANON LAUNCHES RENEWED GLOBAL WEBSITE

COMPANY TO USE NEW '.CANON' TOP-LEVEL DOMAIN NAME

DUBAI: Canon, world leader in imaging solutions, announced that the company has gone live with a renewed global website employing a web address that departs from the traditional location-specific "www.canon.com" to the new "global.canon" proprietary domain name. The launch marks Canon's first use of the ".canon" top-level domain (TLD) since acquiring it in February 2015.

Canon's global site web address employing the new ".canon" top-level domain.

Because ".canon" can only be used by Canon Group companies and services, visitors to sites that use the new TLD can easily confirm their authenticity and be assured that the information they contain is reliable. Additionally, by leveraging the simplicity of the TLD, which is easy to remember and easy to understand, Canon aims to enhance the Company's

Welcome to global.canon



global brand value. **Canon begins using new ".canon" top-level domain.**

The TLD ".canon," which makes use of Canon's company name in the right-most side of the web address, is based on the new generic Top Level

Domain (gTLD) Program. With the launch today of the "global.canon" website, Canon is providing information to a global audience with a new online presence.

Canon renews global website

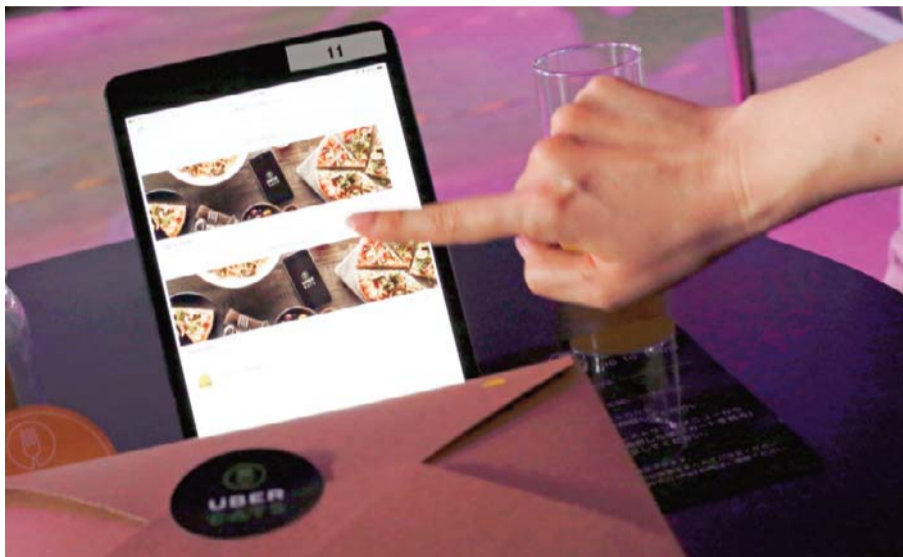
Canon conducts business activities around the world, providing information and services over the internet to not only the company's customers, business partners and shareholders, but to all stakeholders in countries and regions across the globe. In addition to the English-language version of the "global.canon" website launched today, Canon will introduce other languages to the site in the future to share brand messages and other information globally.

A top-level domain (TLD) is the string of charac-

ters immediately following the final dot at the end of an Internet address or email address, such as ".com" or ".net."

The introduction of new generic top-level domains (gTLDs) followed the approval in 2008 by ICANN (Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers), the non-profit organization that maintains and regulates the Internet's addressing system, of the relaxation and liberalization of new gTLD system adoption rules. Canon began efforts aimed at acquiring the TLD ".canon" in March 2010 and completed the process in February 2015 following a review by ICANN.

As of May 16, 2016, the Canon Global website is available in English only. Plans call for other languages to be added in the future with Japanese to be included by the end of the year.



Tokyo: A guest tries out the demo UberEats software application to order food during a press conference for the launching of UberEats in Tokyo yesterday. — AP

UBER TO MOVE FREIGHT, TARGET TRUCKING FOR THE LONG HAUL

SAN FRANCISCO: With its recent acquisition of self-driving truck startup Otto, Uber Technologies Inc. is plotting its entry into the long-haul trucking business, aiming to establish itself as a freight hauler and a technology partner for the industry. Otto plans to expand its fleet of trucks from six to about 15 and is forging partnerships with independent truckers, Otto co-founder Lior Ron told Reuters in an interview. Starting next year, Otto-branded trucks and others equipped with Otto technology will begin hauling freight bound for warehouses and stores, he said.

Uber has already started pitching services to shippers, truck fleets and independent drivers, and the services go well beyond Otto's initially stated goal of outfitting trucks with self-driving technology. It also plans to compete with the brokers who connect truck fleets and shippers.

Fully autonomous trucks remain years away - some trucking industry experts estimate two decades - and the Otto vehicles are currently manned by a driver and an engineer. But the Uber-Otto efforts include a host of other technologies involving navigation, mapping and tracking, which can be deployed even as work continues on self-driving systems.

An executive at one company told Reuters he had already been approached by Uber about hauling his goods, noting that Uber touted recent hires and advances in trucking technology.

Uber aims to ultimately transform the competitive and fragmented \$700 billion-a-year trucking industry, which is notorious for low margins. The company is challenging a host of established players, ranging from publicly traded companies, such as third-party logistics firms CH Robinson and XPO Logistics, to countless mom-and-pop trucking businesses. Otto has had motor carrier permits with the US Department of Transportation and California Department of Motor Vehicles to move cargo since earlier this year. Eleven days after the close of the Uber acquisition last month, Otto filed for a new permit to haul freight, noting it would expand its fleet to 15 trucks.

Ron told Reuters that Otto also aims to partner with the industry, and that "thou-

sands" of owner-operator truck drivers have reached out to the company. "We are talking with everyone," he said. "We don't want to develop technology just for the sake of technology."

Uber - the dominant ride-hailing firm and the world's most valuable venture-backed startup, at \$68 billion - last month bought Otto in a \$680 million deal. Otto, with about 100 employees, had just launched in January.

While Uber's brand and financial backing could supercharge Otto's prospects, industry experts remain skeptical that a Silicon Valley startup with little experience can shake up long-haul trucking.

"The transportation industry is a relationship-backed business," said Kevin Abbott, a vice president at C H Robinson. "There's a lot more to it than just finding a piece of equipment."

Abbott noted that Uber is just the latest in a long line of companies that have tried to take the place of brokers, who typically match loads with vehicles. Uber and Otto also face competition from a growing crop of startups eyeing the industry. Companies such as Transfix, Convoy and Cargo Chief are aiming to unseat traditional brokers by matching shippers with carriers using complex algorithms, while Trucker Path has built a popular navigation app for truckers.

BRAND ADVANTAGE?

One indication of Otto's ambitions is its recent hiring of Bill Driegert, a logistics veteran who helped found Coyote, a leading freight broker, and served as its chief innovation officer, according to his LinkedIn profile. Uber and Otto are working to build a freight network to connect shippers and carriers, much like Uber matches passengers and drivers.

The trucking push is partly a gambit to leverage the mapping and logistics expertise Uber has gained ferrying passengers and food in cities. "This is really about connecting the dots, connecting the shippers and the carriers," Ron said. "We are building that on the long-haul piece. Uber, through UberRush and UberEats, built that on the urban piece," referring to the company's on-demand delivery services. — Reuters

TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY HAS MOST EMPLOYEE DATA LEAKS IN ME

GLOBAL STUDY BY DIGITAL SHADOWS

KUWAIT: Digital Shadows, a provider of cyber situational awareness, released its Compromised Credentials research paper which analyzed the largest 1,000 companies listed on the Forbes Global 2000. The report found that 97 percent of those companies, spanning all businesses sectors and geographical regions, had leaked credentials publicly available online, many of them from third-party breaches. Credentials for over 5.5 million employees of the world's largest companies have been found online, as large-scale data leaks become the norm according to the report. The top breaches were from social media platforms with LinkedIn, MySpace and Tumblr breaches being responsible for a respective 30 percent, 21 percent and 8 percent of the total credentials.

The report revealed that the most affected country in the Middle East - with over 15,000 leaked credentials was the UAE. Saudi Arabia (3360), Kuwait (203) followed by Qatar (99) made up the rest of the list. This figure is relatively

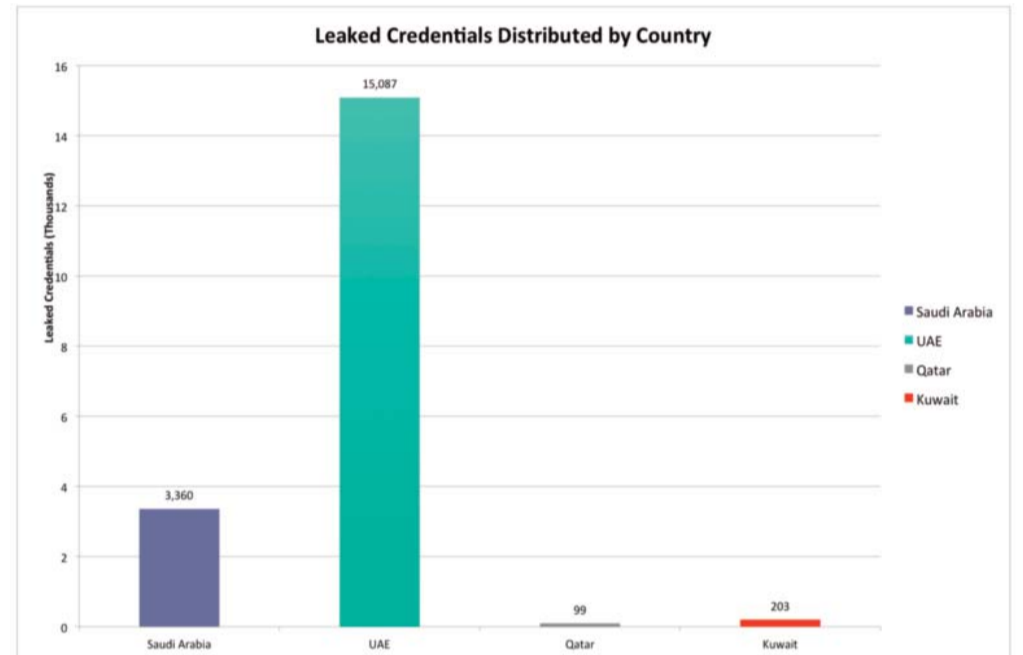


Chris Brown, Digital Shadows VP EMEA and APJ

small as compared to the global figure due to the lower percentage of organizations that reside in the Middle East.

In the Middle East, organizations in the Technology industry were far more exposed than any other, dwarfing Financial Services, Oil & Gas and Chemicals.

"The world used to be about your perimeters and your network. Recently there have been shifts as a result of social media, cloud and mobile. Which means that quite often, when information is getting online, it's not from the company; it's from a third party like a contractor somewhere in the company's supply chain. Data breaches are no longer an aberration; they are the norm. With credentials for over 5.5 million employees of the world's largest companies having been found online and with 97 percent of the top 1,000 companies suffering from credential compromise, it is clear that, irrespective of



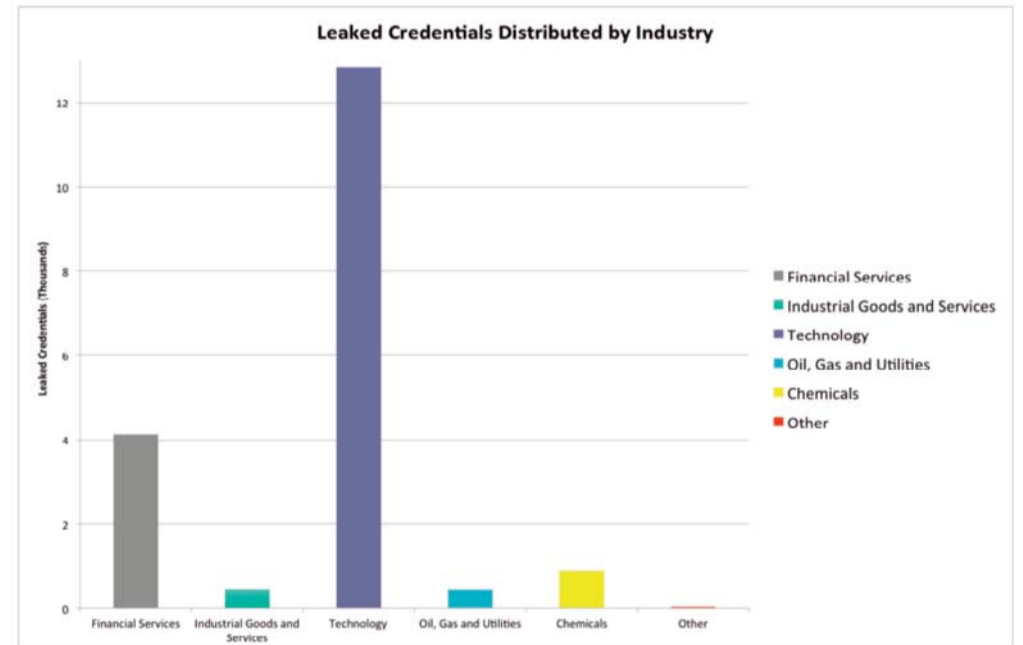
size, industry or geography, the vast majority of organizations have credentials exposed online. Compromised credentials hold significant value for cybercriminals as the information can be used for botnet spam lists, extortion attempts, spear-phishing and account takeover," said Chris Brown, Digital Shadows VP EMEA and APJ.

The report also revealed that it is not quite as simple as organizations just resetting their passwords. Password resets can cause a lot of friction for organizations and so it's necessary for IT departments first need to figure out whether the information stolen from a breach is unique, reposted, or outdated information. 10 per cent of the 5 million leaked credentials in the report were actually duplicates which can cause even more confusion for an organization that has suffered a breach. In order for organizations to prepare themselves for the inevitable data breach they need to first understand the impact of a breach and what they can do to prepare their

employees and business for credential compromise.

About Digital Shadows

Digital Shadows provides cyber situational awareness that helps organizations protect against cyber attacks, loss of intellectual property, and loss of brand and reputational integrity. Its flagship solution, Digital Shadows SearchLight(tm), is a scalable and easy-to-use data analysis platform that provides a view of an organization's digital footprint and the profile of its attackers. It is complemented with intelligence operations analyst expertise to ensure extensive coverage, relevant intelligence and frictionless deployment. SearchLight continually monitors the visible, deep and dark web and other online sources to create an up-to-the minute view of an organization and the risks requiring mitigation. The company is jointly headquartered in London and San Francisco.



SAN FRANCISCO: "Pokemon Go" players begin a group walk along the Embarcadero in San Francisco. "Pokemon Go" was an instant hit when it debuted in July, as millions of people discovered augmented reality and joined stampedes from Central Park to Sydney capturing Pokemon via their phones. But as the hype subsides, what's next for the game? — AP

'POKEMON GO' FERVOR HAS COOLED, BUT THE GAME ISN'T DEAD YET

NEW YORK: Does "Pokemon Go" have a second act? The mobile phone app was an instant hit when it debuted in July. Crowds stampeded after a Vaporeon in Central Park and people fell off cliffs playing it in California. At an Apple event on Sept 7, Niantic CEO John Hanke said 500 million people had downloaded the game in just two months. It was the first mobile game to go mainstream in a big way since "Candy Crush" in 2014 or "Angry Birds" in 2012. It was also the first to incorporate augmented reality, a blending of the real and virtual worlds.

But the buzz has decidedly cooled. Last Tuesday, the game ended its reign as the top-grossing U.S. iPhone app after 74 days on top, replaced by "Clash Royale," a popular battling game, according to research firm Sensor Tower. Twitter mentions of the game peaked at 1.7 million on July 11, five days after its launch, according to Adobe Digital Insights. That number had fallen by 98 percent, to 131,000, by Sept. 7, when Apple featured it.

Was it all a summer fever dream? While experts say the game is likely to remain popular for a while, it needs to

evolve to have real staying power - just like its namesake digital creatures. "Almost anything of this sort is a fad," says Steve Jones, a communications professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago. "I think we've seen the tapering off."

DOWN BUT NOT OUT

Of course, an enormous number of people still play the game. Research firm App Annie estimates 1 in 10 smartphone owners in the US are playing; in Japan, that number is 1 in 4. Those US figures are half what App Annie saw the week after the game launched - but to put them in perspective, they still reflect roughly the same user interest as Twitter or Pinterest. "Pokemon Go" has also been good at keeping people playing after signing up. Its 30-day retention rate is the second best on the Google Play store - behind "Words with Friends," but ahead of other popular games such as "Clash of Clans" and "Clash Royale."

"For a gaming app to be as big as a social network is unprecedented," said Fabien-Pierre Nicolas, a spokesman at App Annie. "Right now, yes, they're losing a million players every week. But

they get a million new players every week." The longer users interact with the game, the more time a company has to figure out how to get money from them, Nicolas said. It took a year for some successful games like "Clash of Clans," "Puzzle" and "Dragon" to earn revenue of \$1 billion, but "Pokemon Go" has already made more than \$500 million in revenue in two months alone, according to App Annie. The game is free, but lets users purchase items in the game.

"POKEMON GO" EVOLUTION

But with social chatter dying down and a new smartphone game based on a beloved 1990s character - "Super Mario Run" - hitting app stores in December, Pokemon will have to reinvent itself.

Kari Amarosso, a public relations manager at Arizona State University, started playing "Pokemon Go" with her 19-year-old son as a fun mother-son summer activity sparked by 1990s Pokemon-card nostalgia. They'd go to the mall or to meetups like one in Tempe, Arizona, where thousands of people walked around Tempe Town Lake capturing digital monsters. — AP

WORLD'S FIRST BABY BORN FROM 3-PARENT TECHNIQUE

MIAMI: The world's first baby has been born using a controversial new technique by US scientists to include DNA from three parents in the embryo, said a report Tuesday. The baby boy was born five months ago in Mexico to Jordanian parents, and is healthy and doing well, said the report in *New Scientist* magazine, described as an "exclusive." The boy's mother carried genes for a disorder known as Leigh Syndrome, a fatal nervous system disorder which she had passed on to her two previous children who both died of the disease. She had also suffered four miscarriages. The woman, whose identity was withheld by *New Scientist*, and her husband sought the help of John Zhang, a doctor from the New Hope Fertility Center in New York City to have a baby that would be genetically related to them but would not carry the inherited disease.

The United States has not approved any three-parent method for fertility purposes, so Zhang went to

Mexico where he was quoted by *New Scientist* as saying "there are no rules." One method that has been approved in the United Kingdom, called pronuclear transfer, was deemed unacceptable to the couple because it would involve the destruction of two embryos, said the report. Since the mother carried the genes for the disease in her mitochondria, or DNA that is passed down from the maternal side, Zhang used her nuclear DNA and combined it with mitochondria from an egg donor, in a technique known as spindle nuclear transfer. "He removed the nucleus from one of the mother's eggs and inserted it into a donor egg that had had its own nucleus removed," said the report. "The resulting egg-with nuclear DNA from the mother and mitochondrial DNA from a donor-was then fertilized with the father's sperm."

Presentation next month

Zhang and his team are expected to describe

their method at the American Society for Reproductive Medicine meeting in Salt Lake City, Utah, next month. An abstract describing the research has been published in the journal *Fertility and Sterility*, but outside experts said much more remains to be understood about the research. "As this technology is controversial and a world first, I think the investigators should have submitted a manuscript for full peer review instead of announcing these outcomes in this manner," said Justin St John, professor and Director of the Centre for Genetic Diseases at Monash University.

Attempts began in the 1990s to create a baby by injecting mitochondrial DNA from a donor into the mother's egg, and adding sperm from her partner. "Some of the babies went on to develop genetic disorders, and the technique was banned," said the *New Scientist* report. "The problem may have arisen from the babies having mitochondria from two

sources." Another outside expert, David Clancy, a lecturer at Lancaster University, recalled that experiments in monkeys have shown that maternal mitochondrial DNA can expand from low levels to significantly higher levels, "which would allow disease to again be transmitted, so we must expect the possibility in humans."

For now, Zhang and his team said the boy's mitochondria has been tested and "they found that less than 1 percent carry the mutation," said the report. "Hopefully, this is too low to cause any problems; generally it is thought to take around 18 per cent of mitochondria to be affected before problems start." In addition, his being a boy ensures that he could not pass down any inherited mitochondrial DNA. "While we should remain vigilant about this technique as new information and research accumulates, let us hope this child grows up and has a long healthy life," said Clancy.—AFP

WALKING IS MEDICINE? IT HELPED HIGH-RISK SENIORS STAY MOBILE

'ONCE YOU LOSE THAT MOBILITY PIECE OF YOUR LIFE, YOU LOSE INDEPENDENCE'

WASHINGTON: It's not too late to get moving: Simple physical activity - mostly walking - helped high-risk seniors stay mobile after disability-inducing ailments even if, at 70 and beyond, they'd long been couch potatoes. One health policy specialist said the study released Monday suggests prescribing exercise may be just as important as prescribing medications. "Once you lose that mobility piece of your life, then you really lose independence," said Patricia Katz of the University of California, San Francisco, who wasn't part of the new research but said physicians need to put the findings to use.

Katz called it striking that among the walkers, "if you start to have problems, you have a greater ability to recover and get your functioning back." Older adults often shift back and forth between independence and conditions that can

be disabling at least temporarily - a broken bone, an operation or a hospitalization from illness that requires time and rehab if they're to get back on their feet. Monday's research examined whether regular physical activity could help even the oldest seniors stay mobile for longer despite other health conditions.

The study enrolled more than 1,600 adults between the ages of 70 and 89 considered at high risk for disability because they were sedentary and had various chronic health problems, such as heart disease or diabetes. More than 2 in 5 were 80 or older. To enroll, they had to be able to walk a quarter of a mile in 15 minutes - a long time, and some needed every minute. "We were targeting folks who potentially had the most to gain," said Dr Thomas Gill, a Yale University geriatrician who led the work.

The study compared seniors assigned to a

regular walking program, plus a little strength and balance exercise, with a control group given health education. Over 31/2 years, the walking program reduced the amount of time seniors spent suffering from a major mobility problem by 25 percent, the researchers reported in *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

The walkers were less likely to experience a mobility-robbing condition in the first place, more likely to recover if they did and less likely to suffer another one, Gill said. While the walking didn't replace any necessary physical therapy, too often seniors "leave the hospital more debilitated than when they entered," Gill said. The goal was to get them walking again as soon as possible.

Physically active

Only half of US adults of all ages get the amount of physical activity recommended for good health. And if they weren't active during middle age, older adults often are especially wary of getting started. Maybe they have arthritic pain, or are worried if it's safe given other illnesses, or fear they'll fall. Gill said the study shows many sedentary seniors can start walking safely, no gym membership needed - just a safe place such as a sidewalk or shopping mall. Those who were physically active were less likely to be injured in a fall, he noted.

There were six more deaths among the walkers over the course of the study, a difference that wasn't statistically significant, he said. "A lot of people probably don't know where to start," said UCSF's Katz, who co-authored an editorial in Monday's *Annals* that said an actual prescription from the doctor could help, maybe more than a medication prescription. No one expects a sedentary senior to suddenly speed-walk. The goal is to build up gradually to meet federal health guidelines that say even older adults should get 21/2 hours a week of moderate-intensity exercise. Essentially, that means enough to increase your heart rate - not breathless, but breathing a little hard. Seniors "should be more scared of not doing something," Katz said. "It's not too late. It gives you some resilience."—AP



EASTON CITY, Pennsylvania: In this file photo, an elderly couple walks down a hall in Easton, Pa.—AP

HOW TATTOOS CAN HELP PATIENTS WITH SKIN GRAFTS AND SCARS

NETHERLAND: Patients who get tattoos to cover facial skin grafts and scars may feel happier with both their appearance and quality of life, a Dutch study suggests. The practice of using tattoos to cover damaged skin isn't that new. Doctors even have a term for it: dermatography. These medical tattoos are not butterflies or lightning bolts; rather doctors use subtle coloration to make discolored areas match surrounding skin more closely.

While it doesn't cure disease, cosmetic changes made by tattoo needles can still have lasting health benefits, said one of the study's authors, Dr Rick van de Langenberg. "Scar and skin graft color abnormalities can result in impaired physical, psychological, and social well-being, especially in the facial area that is constantly visible to the patient and others," van de Langenberg, a researcher at Diaconessen Hospital in Utrecht, said by email. For the study, researchers focused on 76 patients who received medical tattoos to cover scars and skin grafts left on the head and neck after cancer treatment. Most of the patients were female, and the participants ranged in age from 19 to 86. Many of the participants had skin cancer or melanoma, though some had oral or thyroid tumors or other types of malignancies. Researchers asked patients to rate how their scar or graft looked on a 10-point scale, with zero as "very ugly" and 10 as "very nice," before and after they got tattoos. After the tattoos, average scores increased by 4 points to 7.8.

In addition, researchers asked patients to assess their level of concern about the scar or graft contributing to a worse appearance or quality of life on a 5-point scale with one indicating "not at all" and 5 indicating "very much or often" concerned. This questionnaire had

nine questions and after patients received tattoos the average score for each one of the questions increased by around one point. One limitation of the study is that it only included patients who decided to get tattoos, who may have had more concerns about their appearance or quality of life than people who opted not to do these procedures to modify scars or grafts, the authors note.

Facial Plastic Surgery

Because researchers asked people after they received tattoos to rate their feelings about the results compared to how they felt before the procedures, it's also possible that patients who benefited the most were more likely to join the study, the researchers also point out in *JAMA Facial Plastic Surgery*. Even so, the findings add to a growing body of evidence suggesting that improving the appearance of scarred skin can profoundly impact patients' quality of life, said Dr Jill Waibel of Miami Dermatology and Laser Institute. "Scars are usually a reminder to a patient of a negative life event - car accident, cancer surgery, fire, explosion, war related injury," Waibel, who wasn't involved in the study, said by email.

Medical tattoos are most often done to create nipples for women after breast reconstruction following surgery to remove cancer, and this may be covered by insurance in the US when reconstructive surgeons offer the service, Waibel said. Overall, though, insurance coverage for tattoos and other types of scar revision treatment can be difficult, said Dr Tina Alster, a dermatology researcher at Georgetown University Hospital in Washington, DC, who wasn't involved in the study. There are also risks to consider. Like the ink done by tattoo artists, work done by doctors still carries a risk of infection and scarring as well as challenges for doing

certain medical imaging techniques on the site in the future, Alster added by email.

Whether tattoos or other techniques such as laser procedures are used, altering the contrast between the color of scars or grafts and surrounding skin can have a big impact on how people perceive their appearance, said Dr Chad Hivnor, a private practice dermatologist in San Antonio, Texas, who wasn't involved in the study. "Color is one of the first things other people will notice, and thus social confidence will be improved with a closer color match," Hivnor said by email. "Our eyes pick up sharp lines quicker than softer lines and so that stark contrast in color between the two types of skin will be minimized."—Reuters

MUSIC THERAPY MAY HELP KIDS COPE WITH IMMUNIZATION SHOTS

NEW YORK: When little kids need to get a painful injection, music therapy can help them get through the procedure, a new study suggests. Children who received music therapy during a routine immunization visit were less stressed and better able to cope with the procedure than those who didn't receive music therapy, and their parents were less stressed, too, the study found.

"Although it certainly won't eliminate a child's pain or distress, using music to distract them could help them focus less on the pain, which can improve their perception of getting shots," said Olivia Yinger, the study's author and a music therapist from the University of Kentucky in Lexington. Past research has found that music significantly reduces pain and anxiety during medical procedures. The new study, conducted at three healthcare facilities in 2011 and 2012, involved 58 kids, ages 4 to 6 years, along with 62 parents and 19 nurses who administered the shots.

Yinger randomly assigned 29 children and their parents to have a music therapist present for the immunization, while the kids and parents in the other group received traditional care, according to the report in the *Journal of Music Therapy*. At the start of the visit, during the procedure, and afterward, kids and their parents were encouraged to join the music therapist in singing along to children's songs and playing instruments that were provided. After the visit, each parent rated their child's level of pain and distress and gave their overall perception of live music therapy. In addition, researchers watched a video recording to rate the child's distress and coping behavior, and the parents' and nurses' distress and coping behavior.

No distress

On average, children in the music group showed almost twice the level of coping behavior before and during the procedure compared to those in the non-music group, but not after the procedure. Kids in the music group also showed less distress - on average, less than half the level of distress exhibited by the non-music group - before, during and after the procedure. — Reuters



HITRA BAY, West of Trondheim: This photo taken on September 22, 2016 shows salmon in their open sea circular nets farming area at Norwegian seafood supplier Leroy's aquaculture plant in Hitra Bay, west of Trondheim.—AFP photos

TAKING THE ENVIRONMENTAL BITE OUT OF SALMON FARMING

HITRA: In a peaceful bay off Norway's Hitra island, massive nets teem with salmon destined for dinner tables worldwide—an export boon for the Nordic nation that comes with a long list of environmental side-effects. As an industry, the ocean-farming of salmon is only about 40 years old. But the harm it causes has been widely documented, ranging from spreading parasites to pesticide pollution, and escaped fish muddying the wild salmon gene pool. "It cannot be said that with a million tons of fish produced in this country there is no impact," admitted Henri Lapeyriere, a French representative of Norwegian aquaculture giant Leroy Seafood Group, on a visit to Hitra.

But things are slowly changing. The Hitra plant, for example, cultivated salmon are fed a diet that is two-thirds plant-derived and one third fish meal and fish oil—a reversal of the previous ratio, in a bid to limit depletion of marine resources. To combat disease in the animals, "thanks to the vaccines we administer to each salmon, we hardly need to use any antibiotics any more," Lapeyriere added. And instead of using the anti-lice pesticide diflubenzuron banned by the European Union but allowed by Norway—the farm uses tiny, parasite-eating fish instead.

These steps follow guidelines set by the Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC), a non-governmental body created in 2010 to encourage responsible seafood farming with as little impact as possible on water quality and wildlife. The council dispenses labels for responsibly-farmed fish, a crucial source of abundant and healthy food for a human population expected to grow from about 7.5 billion today to 11.2 billion by the turn of the next century. Leroy's Hitra facility alone raises more than a million salmon at any one time. It is one of more than 300 fish farms around the world vetted by the ASC—covering about a million out of 66 million tons of seafood farmed every year.

Some way to go

Once a luxury food, demand for salmon rich in supposedly heart-healthy Omega 3 fats has exploded since the 1980s, especially in the United States, Russia, Europe and Japan, according to conservation group WWF. Fish farming, or aquaculture, supplies about two-thirds of all salmon that land on

dinner plates today. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the practice of raising Atlantic salmon in freshwater for release into the wild started in 19th century Britain, a bid to boost stocks for anglers. Sea cage culture was first used in the 1960s in Norway to bring Atlantic salmon to marketable size, a practice which fast spread elsewhere.

In nature, the fish hatch and spend their first year or so in freshwater before moving seaward to feed and grow. Once mature, they return to rivers and swim upstream to spawn. Farmed fish are hatched in freshwater tanks before being moved to large cages or nets in the ocean to fatten up before being harvested. Some 2.3 million tons of the most popular type, Atlantic salmon or *Salmo salar*, are farmed every year—about 1.2 million tons by Norway, which exports 95 percent of its production, according to Karoline Andaur of WWF Norway.

That tonnage doubled between 2005 and 2014, even as national and global efforts to limit the environmental impact have scaled up. Salmon farms spread parasites such as sea lice, while pesticides threaten other ocean creatures and plants. Antibiotics, used to keep disease at bay, leach into the surrounding environment. This boosts the risk of drug resistance and can give rise to so-called super-bacteria.

Stocks of wild fish harvested to feed salmon risk being depleted, and salmon excretions can smother life on the sea floor. While welcoming the Leroy farm's efforts to limit the damage off Hitra, WWF sustainable fishing spokesman Selim Azzi said more must be done to "prevent the impacts of salmon escapes, persisting sea lice and damage to the ocean floor." For Andaur, salmon production should not be allowed to expand until certain practices are vastly improved. She also highlighted sea lice, which can attack juvenile wild salmon before their scales are fully developed and kill them.

"Producers still have a way to go," she said. About 30 percent of Norwegian salmon farmed today is certified by the ASC, council representative Barbara Janker told AFP. Outside of Norway, the other major producers of Atlantic salmon are Chile, Scotland and Canada, all of which confront similar problems.—AFP



HITRA BAY, West of Trondheim: This photo shows aquaculture fertilization tanks at Norwegian seafood supplier Leroy's aquaculture plant in Hitra Bay, west of Trondheim.

ADHD DRUGS NO HELP WITH HOMEWORK

NEW YORK: Giving stimulants to kids with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) may not help them complete homework or get better grades, a small study suggests. Researchers tested the effectiveness of medication against behavioral interventions in 75 children that attended a summer school program with classes each weekday from 8 am to 5 pm for eight weeks. They randomly assigned children to receive either behavioral treatment that included daily report cards for kids and coaching parents to help with homework or a long-acting stimulant.

"Long-acting stimulant medications haven't been shown to help with homework performance despite companies advertising their utility for homework time," said lead study author Brittany Merrill, a researcher at the Center for Children and Families at Florida International University in Miami. "Behavioral interventions are more effective than long-acting stimulant medications in improving homework performance among children with ADHD, and stimulant medication did not add to the effectiveness of the behavioral intervention," Merrill added by email.

Researchers tested these two approaches in children who were around 8 years old on average, but ranged from 5 to 12. All of the kids had an ADHD diagnosis with symptoms observed by parents or teachers. Children were excluded from the study if they had a diagnosis of autism, mental health disorders or medical issues that made them unable to tolerate treatment with stimulants.

In the group assigned to receive medication, doctors worked with kids over two weeks to assess the correct dose of drugs to give them. After that kids received either a stimulant or a placebo for three weeks, then switched, so researchers could see how drugs impacted each child's homework performance. For the group assigned to behavioral therapy, clinicians led a series of six 2-hour group sessions over the first two weeks, followed by an individual half hour session during each of the next two weeks.

Academic abilities

Medication had no significant effects on homework completion or accuracy, compared with a placebo, researchers report in the Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology. But with behavioral treatment, children got 10 percent to 13 percent more homework problems finished and completed 8 percent more problems accurately than they did without the treatment. This translates into the difference between getting an average passing grade of C with behavioral help, compared with an average failing grade of F without intervention, the authors conclude.

One limitation of the study is the potential for differences in the children's home or school environments to influence how much taking medication might improve their homework performance, researchers point out. It's also possible that children might see improvements associated with stimulants if they took a higher dose or used the medication for a longer period of time, the authors also concede. Even though researchers tailored the amount of homework and the difficulty to each child's grade level and academic abilities, it's still possible that the study results might not be easy to replicate for every child with ADHD, the authors note as well.

It's also possible that even with long-acting drugs, the effects might wear off for kids who took medication first thing in the morning then didn't do homework until that night, said Dr Tumaini Rucker Coker, a pediatrics researcher at Seattle Children's Hospital and the University of Washington who wasn't involved in the study. "Since the homework performance was measured so many hours after the medication was given, it is not surprising that there was no medication effect," Coker said by email. "It doesn't suggest that the child does not need the medication - it may suggest, however, that by evening hours when the effect of the medication has dissipated, behavioral interventions will be even more important to help the child get through evening homework time," Coker added.—Reuters



KIMANA, Kenya: Maasai "Morans" (warriors) relay the GPS coordinates of the location of two young lionesses they have been tracking on foot in the surrounding scrub, on September 11, 2016, at the Selenkay community conservancy. —AFP photos



KIMANA, Kenya: A lion cub, the third generation of a pride that started with a meager number a decade prior, but now starting to thrive at the Selenkay community conservancy.

IN KENYA, LION HUNTERS BECOME DEFENDERS

'EVERYTHING WE DO IS ABOUT THE COMMUNITY'

SELENKAY RESERVE, Kenya: In the Maasai heartland of southern Kenya, some young men have swapped their ancestral role as lion-hunters to instead protect the big cats under a conservation scheme that also aims to help their community. Among them is Leiyio Lengete, a "Moran"—or warrior—who wears a scarlet blanket over his shoulders, a blue one around his hips, and a multitude of fine multicolored beaded bracelets on his forearms, ankles and neck. Large half-moon shaped metal earrings and a beaded headband set off his long elaborately braided hair, but instead of a traditional spear, he clasps a GPS receiver.

The organization behind the scheme Lengete works with, "Lion Guardians", has set up camp in Selenkay Reserve, not far from Mount Kilimanjaro, Africa's highest mountain in neighboring Tanzania which is hidden by clouds on this warm September day. Today the Maasai "guardians" have headed off into the bush on foot in search of three lionesses that sneaked into the camp the previous evening. Their tracks are hard to find in the dry, potholed savannah brush although the men eventually establish the cats have separated in three directions to hunt for food. But two hours later, one of the four silently calls a half-the three lionesses are less than 100 yards away.

Lost livestock, lost children

In a previous life, the men would have killed the animals as part of a Maasai rite known as "olamajyo" which is traditionally seen as the highest act of courage, winning prestige and praise for the hunter. Lions also were hunted in reprisal for attacks on the community's livestock herd. But for Lengete and the other young Morans, those days are over: once the lionesses have been found and their GPS location sent to camp, a vehicle arrives carrying the scientific head and co-founder of the scheme, Stephanie Dolrenry. Coupling age-old Maasai know-how with contemporary science, she inventories, photographs and studies the behavior of the lions that are now returning to the 3,684 square kilometers (1,040 square miles) under surveillance by the project. "The whole program is not just based on lions. Everything we do is about the community," Dolrenry told AFP. "The guardians spend a lot of their time finding livestock, finding lost herders, even little children who got lost in the bush. The guardians are there, they are able to go tracking, they know



KIMANA, Kenya: Kenyan Maasai "Morans" (warrior) track lions on foot through a patch of scrub, at the Selenkay community conservancy.

the bush," said the 37-year-old American. Around a million dollars' worth of lost livestock was returned by the guardians to their owners last year, she said. The work boosted the Morans' status within their community while their almost daily contact with the lions maintained their traditional aura. When a cow is killed, for instance, they step in to dissuade cattle-owners from punitive raids against the lions, arguing that their own jobs recovering lost cattle are at stake as well as those of the Maasai community who make up almost all the staff of the two lodges in the wildlife reserve. The project has been beneficial for local lion numbers, which have increased fourfold between 2007 and 2016 to around 150, Dolrenry said.

From hunter to guardian

Other wildlife has also benefited, with buffalo reappearing in the reserve recently after years of absence, elephants moving in herds and the presence in the area of animals hard to find elsewhere in Kenya—such as the Cape eland or the giraffe gazelle.

"Lion Guardians", which also has programs in Tanzania, Rwanda and Zimbabwe, works with private funding, most of it from the US. The Selenkay project runs on less than \$300,000 (269,000 euros) a year. It kicked off with a mere five guardians but now employs more than 40, each of them paid the minimum monthly

Kenyan wage of \$120 (108 euros). One of the most recent recruits is Mitiaki Kitasho, who asked for a job as a guardian a year ago after twice serving a month behind bars for illegally killing first an elephant, then a lion. — AFP



KIMANA, Kenya: Lion cubs, the third generation of a pride that started with a meager number a decade prior, but now starting to thrive, at the Selenkay community conservancy.

CHILD TB DEATHS SET TO FALL AS KENYA LAUNCHES NEW DRUGS

NAIROBI: More children are likely to survive tuberculosis, the leading infectious disease killer, after Kenya introduces child-friendly medicines on Oct 1 - the first country in the world to do so. Some 155,000 children with TB are set to benefit across 18 countries that have already ordered the new medicines and are preparing to roll them out, starting with Kenya, according to the TB Alliance campaign group that oversaw their development. "Now, with the appropriate treatments, we can make rapid progress in finding and treating children with TB so we can achieve a TB free generation," Kenya's health minister Cleopa Mailu said in a statement yesterday.

The improved formulations come in the correct doses for children, are fruit-flavored and dissolve in water, making them easier for children to take. Previously, caregivers had to cut or crush multiple, bitter-tasting pills to give children the correct dose every day for six months, contributing to treatment failure and death. TB killed 140,000 children and 1.37 million adults in 2014 and infected a further one million children, World Health Organization (WHO) data shows, but a lack of market incentives hindered

the development of drugs for children, the TB Alliance said.

TB is spread by bacteria when someone with untreated TB, often a family member, coughs or sneezes. Children who survive can become blind, deaf, paralyzed or mentally disabled. The child-friendly drugs are the first products to meet the WHO's 2010 guidelines for childhood TB treatment, with funding from UNITAID, which is hosted by the WHO.

"No child should die of TB, yet for too long, we have not had the medicines to mount a sustainable response against childhood TB," UNITAID's director of operations, Robert Matiru, said in the statement. Kenya is a high burden TB country, with nearly 7,000 cases reported in infants and children in 2015. Children under five have the greatest risk of severe infection and death. When TB patients do not complete their treatment, they fall ill again, often with hard-to-treat drug-resistant "superbug" strains that are rapidly gaining a foothold globally. TB testing and treatment is free in Kenyan public health facilities but it is often underdiagnosed or confused with other pediatric illnesses.—Reuters

CLINIC PAGE



Kuwait Times
248 33 199

Dr. Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem
مؤيد علي المخيزيم

استشاري أطفال
M.B. Bch. FRCPC. FAAP. PEM

Al-Jabriya - Block 1A - St. 1 - Mazaya Building - 15th Floor - Clinic B - Tel.: 22269369 - Fax: 22269368



AMITABH TRIBUTE CONCERT ENRAPTURES AUDIENCE

Indian Youth Society (IYS), a leading company for quality event planning, staged a concert titled 'Amitabh Aur Main', on 23 September at the American International School, Maidan Hawally. The festive holiday spirit of Eid provided a perfect backdrop for the highly anticipated tribute concert held in honor of legendary Bollywood star Amitabh Bachchan. Hindi music fans packed the auditorium to be regaled by well-known Bollywood playback singer Sudesh Bhosale and his talented troupe as they presented a memorable musical ode to the celebrated actor.

Commenting on the success of

Indian Youth Society' latest project, Shabbir Qamar, President, remarked: "Amitabh Aur Main effectively brought 2016 to a close with a resounding bang, and we are grateful to our sponsors and patrons, as well as the huge numbers of music-lovers - Kuwaiti and expatriate alike - who have made possible the successful delivery of a fantastic line-up of shows in last few years." He further added: "Going into 2017, we are looking forward to bringing to Kuwait an exciting calendar of events catering to the diverse musical and entertainment tastes of our target audiences."

Presented by IYS and sponsored by

Eternity International Travels & Tourism, the roughly three-and-a-half hour concert had the Bollywood-smitten audience treated to full-blooded Bachchan-centric entertainment. Sudesh Bhosale, hailed at the 'Voice of Amitabh', was joined by his co-singer, Amol Yadav, on stage along with female singer Arpita Thakkar. Together, they performed a selection of songs made iconic by Bachchan in his movies. Film dialogues delivered in the actor's signature style drew rapturous applause from the fans. Adding much pizzazz to the evening were dazzling dance performances combined with the lavish use of audio-

visuals and light effects.

Dr John Arts, a fan of the celebrity, presented Sudesh Bhosale with a hand-drawn caricature painting as a token of affection. On behalf of IYS, the Indian Ambassador to Kuwait H.E. Sunil Jain and his wife Dr. Gargi Jain presented the memento to Sudesh Bhosale and his wife Hema Bhosale. In his address, the Indian Ambassador expressed his gratitude of thanks. IYS showed appreciation to their sponsors by releasing a magazine and also by playing their TVC and clippings live on screen at regular intervals. They also presented mementos to their main sponsors.

Platinum sponsor for the event was Eternity travels & tourism, diamond sponsor was Advance Technology Company, golden sponsors are Taal Indian Cuisine, Daawat Restaurants, Biryani& Kebabi Restaurants and silver sponsors are Tik Tok Watches & kamiliant. Bronze sponsor is Grand Hypermarket, Co-sponsors are Kuwait Swedish cleaning services co, City Centre, Sahara Air conditioning, Aidah Life sciences, WWICS & SAAZ technologies.

The event printing & packaging partner is German Press Company. StarBiryani Restaurant is the F&B Partner whereas Hotel Holiday Inn -

Salmiya is the hospitality Partner. Event Engineering was done by Camco Global Event Management co Indian Youth Society of Kuwait (IYS), is a non-profit organization registered with the Indian Embassy of Kuwait by the initiative of a like-minded young Indians with the vision of honoring, encouraging, supporting and celebrating the Indian social & cultural values amongst the people of Kuwait. IYS has been successful in gaining popularity and remains a strong and fast growing organization in Kuwait led by its founder members. IYS welcomes all individuals to join and serve the community.



A TRUE AUTHENTIC CUBAN NIGHT AT MARINA HOTEL

Marina Hotel Kuwait will be hosting an Authentic 'Cuban Night' for the first time in Kuwait on Tuesday and Wednesday, 4th and 5th of October 2016 (8: 00 PM). The distinctive Cuban cuisine will be revealed by well-renowned Chef Ciro Eddy Fernandez Monte, President of the Federation of Culinary Association of the Republic of Cuba, and Chef Odalvin M Castellanos, who together with the Marina hotel Culinary team will feature a variety of Cuban classic and modern Cuisine. For more information and reservations please call 22230030 or visit website www.marinahotel.com

WHAT'S ON - SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

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

Please send them to news@kuwaittimes.net



ONAM-EID CELEBRATIONS AT INDIA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

India International School, Mangaf observed Onam and Eid celebrations on 1st and 8th September respectively. A floral carpet was made to keep the tradition of Onam celebration followed by 'Thiruvathirakali', Onam songs and the traditional Onam Sadya. The festivity of Eid was made remarkable by the participation of the tiny tots of kinder-

garten in their cheerful faces and bright attires. Various activities were conducted for the students of classes I & II. A special assembly was organized by III - V section.

Eid message was given by Muneer in a program arranged for the staff, highlighting the human qualities of brotherhood, love and sacrifice. It was followed by a

melodious treat by the music department. The occasions were graced by the presence of the school Director Malayil Moosa Koya, Principal FM Basheer Ahmed, Sr Vice Principal Narinder Kaur, Vice Principals Saleem, Sophy John, Sapna Raof and Indulekha, and the KG Head Nilofer Qazi.



A general view taken from Kuwait City's Kipco Tower shows the skyline of Kuwait. —Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

BEAUTIFUL GAME GIVES KISS OF LIFE TO 'DUST OF LIFE'

Brazilian World Cup winner Gilberto Silva knows what it is like to grow up without money, but admits he cried when he heard first hand the harrowing story of one homeless child. "I came from a poor background but at least I had my family around me," said the 39-year-old, a former midfielder who won the World Cup in 2002 and was also a key member of the Arsenal side known as the "Invincibles" that went through a season unbeaten in the Premier League.

"Of course there were challenges, but nothing compared to the children I met. One chat with an Indian youngster reduced me to tears." Silva, who is now technical director at Greek side Panathinaikos, met the children at the Street Child World Cup, an initiative that hopes to forever banish any stigma attached to children living on the streets. John Wroe, of Street Child United, is preparing for the charity's third world cup, in Russia in 2018, and said homeless children gained feelings

of self-worth through football.

"We can through our world cup help break down barriers," he said at the SoccerEx Global Football Convention in Manchester. "It allows their voices to be heard on a level-playing field. Instead of being referred to in Colombia as 'the plague' or in Vietnam as the 'dust of life', they become people when they play football. "Playing football, they can say, 'I am somebody.'" Wroe, who says the UN estimate of 150 million children living on the streets globally would make them the ninth-largest country in the world, believes children need three basic rights.

"They want protection from violence, which was shockingly reflected at the 2014 World Cup in Brazil when 14-year-old Rodrigo Celton was murdered a fortnight before the final," he said. "The right to have their births registered-if you don't officially exist, how can you be protected? And access to education-some want to be nurses, lawyers etc., but how can they if they are



Brazil's midfielder Gilberto Silva

barred from receiving an education?" Wroe said his world cup-in the same year as the real thing-gives street children a rare global platform.

"The 2014 world cup had an audience of 200 million globally and it sparked really positive messages," he said. "We had people

like Prince William and Pope Francis sending us messages." Wroe cited the example of Tanzanian youngster Sadaq as an instance of the Street Child World Cup "opening doors that would otherwise remain closed". "He met with the minister of sport ahead of the 2014 world cup and he told Sadaq, 'I'm giving you a national flag because you are representing our country, you achieved this.' "They went on to win the tournament (beating Burundi 3-1) and you know what? They returned home and were given an open-top bus ride and welcomed into the parliament, this in a country that rarely qualifies for the Africa Cup of Nations."

'Boys with Kalashnikovs'

The Brazilian Silva saw the charitable side of football when he was at Arsenal, which is renowned for its work in its community in north London and has engaged with Save the Children on several projects abroad-in a refugee camp in Iraq and an education proj-

ect in Beijing. But he says the Street Child World Cup offers something different through football. "The world cup showed the power a simple ball can have. It can transform lives. I could see that with the kids. People paid them attention," he said.

Wroe cited one example of the dangerous challenges facing children-and how they are being slowly overcome. "One of the Brazilian girls who lifted the 2014 world cup, Drika, created a 'Safe Space' for a pitch in the midst of a favela," he said. "The surrounding walls were littered with bullet holes. When some of the boys turned up to play they came armed with Kalashnikovs. "They were told, 'No, you cannot bring those onto the pitch, leave them behind'. They played and you should have seen the stack of various guns piled up behind the goal! "But Drika, who has impressed many people with her project and was invited to Dallas by (the Olympic great) Michael Johnson this year, is using football to protect her community."—AFP



Director of the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) Dr Ahmed Al-Athari recently inaugurated the new library at PAAET's commercial studies college.

OSN MOVIES HD

- ACTION
09:15 Last Knights
14:30 Hidalgo
14:30 Taken 3

BBC FIRST

- 09:25 Orphan Black
10:15 Doctors
10:45 Eastenders

crime & investigation network

- 09:00 Celebrity Ghost Stories
10:00 My Haunted House
11:00 Who Was I? My Past Lives

COMEDY CENTRAL

- 09:00 Lip Sync Battle
09:25 Catch A Contractor
09:50 Ridiculousness

- 16:20 Mythbusters
17:10 Animal Airport
17:35 Animal Airport

IDx

- 09:00 Hostage: Deadly Demands
09:48 I Almost Got Away With It
10:36 On The Case With Paula Zahn

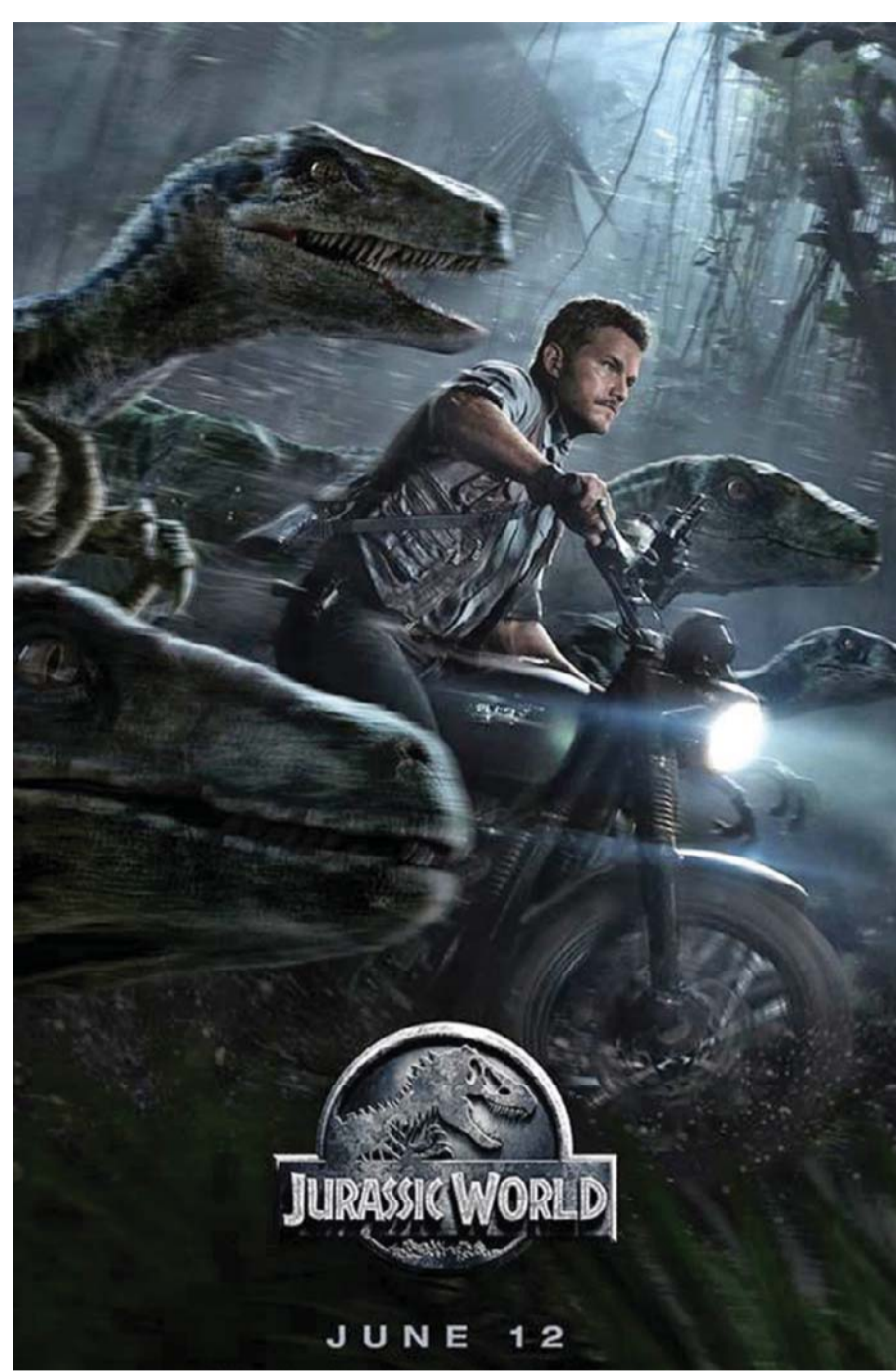
Disney Channel HD

- 09:15 The Hive
09:20 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
09:45 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch

- 14:30 Goldie & Bear
14:40 PJ Masks
14:55 Jake And The Never Land Pirates

XD

- 12:00 Boyster
12:10 Super Matrak
12:35 Super Matrak



JURASSIC WORLD ON OSN MOVIES HD

EHD

- 10:35 WAGs
11:30 Fashion Bloggers
12:00 Botched

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CHANNEL HD

- 02:00 Tales From The Bush Larder
02:25 Raw Travel
02:50 Raw Travel

nick jr.

- 09:01 Paw Patrol
09:24 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
09:35 Dora The Explorer



TAKEN 3 ON OSN MOVIES ACTION HD

- 17:25 MLE Chowdown: The Turkey Bowl
18:15 Key And Peele
18:40 Key And Peele

- 18:40 Hank Zipzer
19:05 Star Darlings
19:10 Austin & Ally

- 02:55 K.C. Undercover
03:20 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything

Discovery Channel HD

- 09:15 Magic Of Science
09:40 Fast N' Loud
10:30 Garage Gold

NAT GEO people HD

- 09:05 Great Escapes
09:30 Tales From The Bush Larder
09:55 Tales From The Bush Larder

nickelodeon HD

- 09:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
09:24 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
09:48 Henry Danger

- 15:45 Little Charmers
15:57 Bubble Guppies
16:20 Fresh Beat Band Of Spies

- 03:00 The Simpsons
03:30 The Simpsons
04:00 Getting On

OSN FIRST HD

- 09:00 Better Call Saul
10:00 Good Morning America
10:00 C.S.I. Cyber

OSN MOVIES HD

- 09:30 Ricki And The Flash
11:15 The Age Of Adaline
13:15 The End Of The Tour

OSN MOVIES HD COMEDY

- 10:00 Nitro Circus: The Movie
12:00 A Lot Like Love
14:00 The Single Moms Club

OSN MOVIES FESTIVAL

- 10:00 Hitting The Apex
12:30 Foxcatcher
15:00 Escobar: Paradise Lost

OSN MOVIES HD KIDS

- 10:15 Marco Macaco
12:00 Pim And Pom: The Big Adventure

OSN MOVIES PREMIERE

- 09:45 Avengers: Age Of Ultron
12:15 Perfect Match
14:00 Make Your Move

OSN MOVIES HD FAMILY

- 09:00 The Game Plan
11:00 Pocahontas
13:00 Dunston Checks In

OSN MOVIES HD DRAMA

- 09:00 Lullaby
11:30 Experimenter
12:45 Mood Indigo

OSN FIRST HD COMEDY

- 09:00 Dr. Ken
09:30 Last Man Standing
10:00 Living With Fran

OSN MOVIES HD KIDS

- 09:01 Paw Patrol
09:24 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
09:35 Dora The Explorer



PLAYING IT COOL ON OSN MOVIES COMEDY HD



CROSSWORD 1385



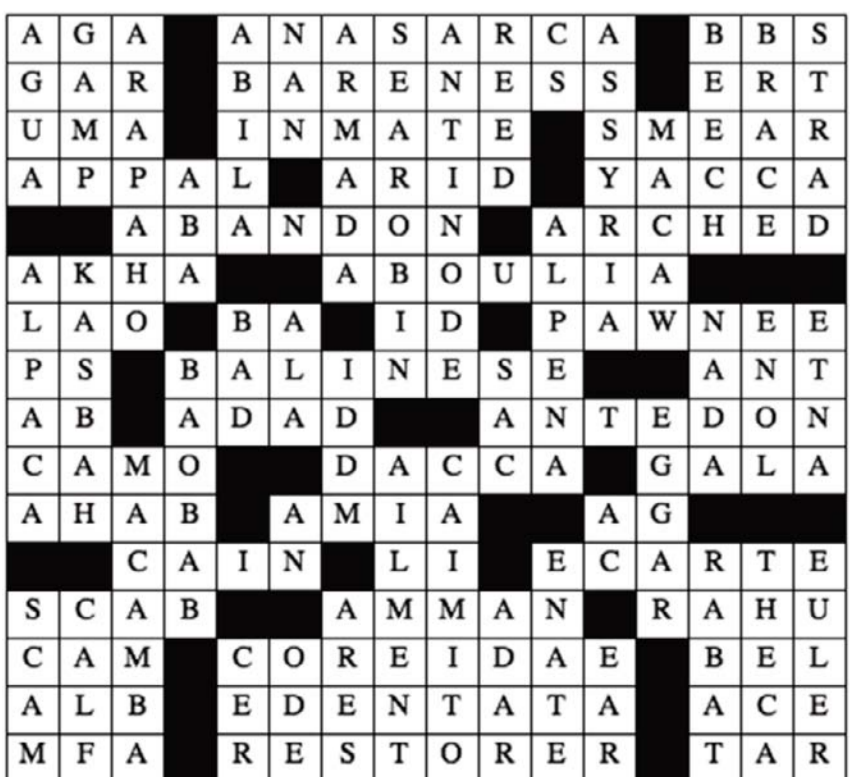
ACROSS

1. A person's brother or sister.
4. Sayings of Jesus not recorded in the canonical Gospels.
11. An ancient Assyrian city on the River Tigris and traditional capital of Assyria.
15. Used of a single unit or thing.
16. United States writer and social critic (1817-1862).
17. Very light colored.
18. A federal agency established to regulate the release of new foods and health-related products.
19. Not divided into zones.
20. A republic in West Africa on the Gulf of Guinea.
21. 100 aunar equal 1 krona.
23. A system of solmization using the solfa syllables.
25. (botany) Of or relating to the axil.
26. A draft for the amount of a dishonored draft plus the costs and charges of drafting again.
27. An emblem (a small piece of plastic or cloth or metal) that signifies your status (rank or membership or affiliation etc.).
28. An edge tool with a heavy bladed head mounted across a handle.
33. The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.
37. Cud-chewing mammal used as a draft or saddle animal in desert regions.
39. An informal term for a father.
42. A shape that says.
43. A port city in southwestern Iran.
45. A silvery malleable metallic element that resists corrosion.
49. A tricycle (usually propelled by pedalling).
51. Paralysis of the vocal cords resulting in an inability to speak.
54. 30 to 300 kilohertz.
56. (Mexican) Corn and corneal dough stuffed with a meat mixture then wrapped in corn husks and steamed.
60. (linguistics) Conforming to the established language usage of educated native speakers.
64. Any of numerous venomous fanged snakes of warmer parts of both hemispheres.
65. (commerce) The period of time permitted by commercial usage for the payment of a bill of exchange (especially a foreign bill of exchange).
66. The sixth month of the civil year.
69. (Babylonian) God of wisdom and agriculture and patron of scribes and schools.
70. The language of the nomadic Lapp people in northern Scandinavia and the Kola Peninsula.
71. (Babylonian) Earth goddess.
74. Counting the number of white and red blood cells and the number of platelets in 1 cubic millimeter of blood.
75. A member of the Athapaskan people of the Trinity River valley in California.
76. Pertaining to filberts or hazelnuts.
77. The organ of sight ('peeper' is an informal term for 'eye').

DOWN

1. The second month of the Moslem calendar.
2. Give qualities or abilities to.
3. The hair growing on the lower part of a man's face.
4. A drug (trade names Atarax and Vistaril) used as a tranquilizer to treat anxiety and motion sickness.
5. 1,000,000,000 periods per second.
6. A shelter with perches for fowl or other birds.
7. A river in central Italy rising in the Apennines and flowing through Florence and Pisa to the Ligurian Sea.
8. A deep prolonged sound (as of thunder or large bells).
9. Tropical and subtropical marine and freshwater fishes having an elongated body and long protruding lower jaw.
10. A soft yellow malleable ductile (trivalent and univalent) metallic element.
11. Loss of the ability to swallow.
12. A river that rises in central Germany and flows north to join the Elbe River.
13. The inner and longer of the two bones of the human forearm.
14. Located in or toward the back or rear.
22. Any of various strong liquors distilled from the fermented sap of toddy palms or from fermented molasses.
24. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
29. Slanting diagonally across the grain of a fabric.
30. Goddess of spring and wife of Bragi.
31. Relating to or resembling or made of or adorned with pearls or mother-of-pearl.
32. Primitive chlorophyll-containing mainly aquatic eukaryotic organisms lacking true stems and roots and leaves.
34. A confusion of voices and other sounds.
35. The capital and largest city of Yemen.
36. A public promotion of some product or service.
38. One thousandth of a second.
40. An informal term for a father.
41. Promoting peace.
44. Any of several evergreen trees or shrubs of the genus Dillenia grown for their foliage and nodding flowers resembling magnolias which are followed by fruit that is used in curries and jellies and preserves.
46. A sac or cavity containing fluid especially lymph or cerebrospinal fluid.
47. Of or relating to or involving an area.
48. An insane person.
50. A chronic progressive nervous disorder involving loss of myelin sheath around certain nerve fibers.
52. Title used for a married Frenchwoman.
53. A radioactive element of the actinide series.
55. A chronic inflammatory collagen disease affecting connective tissue (skin or joints).
57. With rapid movements.
58. United States chemist who developed a method of radiocarbon dating (1908-1980).
59. Deduce (a principle) or construe (a meaning).
61. (Old Testament) The eldest son of Isaac who would have inherited the Covenant that God made with Abraham and that Abraham passed on to Isaac.
62. Providing sophisticated amusement by virtue of having artificially (and vulgarly) mannered or banal or sentimental qualities.
63. Any of the Hindu sacred writing.
67. A metric unit of volume or capacity equal to 10 liters.
68. Aromatic bulb used as seasoning.
72. The eleventh month of the civil year.
73. An associate degree in nursing.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You look for ways to advance your job status. A supervisor may give you suggestions as well. This is a perfect time for new ideas-breakthroughs in thinking-a novel approach. Law, politics, education, travel or religion, among other things, may take part in this search for advancement. Lectures and self-help literature seem to attract your attention. You enjoy working with your mind and your sharp perceptions make finding new solutions easy. You bring an unexpected twist to whatever you set your mind to accomplish. You are able to teach or help others to be more original when it comes to the words or thoughts they use. Your laser-like mind makes conversations fast-paced and illuminating. You share hugs tonight.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

A drive to question situations may find you working through some strong internal changes. Push too hard and you could be too dominating, even oppressive, to yourself and others. When it comes to business and career, you have a mind that just cannot help but take care of business. This is where most of your energies and concerns will be this day. Your thoughts and ideas are nothing if not practical and your clear-sightedness makes some form of management or supervision almost unavoidable. You love large-scale organization and your career or business will always be close to your heart. Your sense of discrimination, when it comes to practical issues, is excellent and you value clearheaded thinking in others. Romance is possible tonight.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You will be pleased with what you accomplish this day. In difficult situations you perform very well. You know just what to do and can act without haste. You are asked to make use of your natural talents. This may mean you have a special way with clients, customers or patients. You may not have realized that anyone noticed your special ways of dealing with people. There are future opportunities for you to grow in this company if you want. There are also options for you to grow within your own scope of expertise by going into business for yourself. All of this can be something you take a little time to think about and do a bit of research before making any decision-it is something about which you might contemplate.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Today may be the day you make a big change of some sort. You or a partner has made preliminary preparations so you should have an easy adjustment. You are fortunate to have plenty of help if you need help. You prosper through new insights, inventions and an independent point of view-do not push. In most cases, you will find it easy to take charge and show off your enterprising nature. You have plans to increase a business situation and this afternoon would be a good time to present your plans or your ideas. Clarify your ideas on paper first. You could feel great support from those around you. You draw emotional sustenance from friends this evening. A social engagement will create many friendly smiles.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

You may be busy doing extra preparation in connection with your job. Try not to become involved in the frivolous conversations that tend to happen in a small office. You have a lot to offer a new company, especially if they allow you free rein to submit your creative suggestions. This is a good time to buckle down and concentrate on your career. Your organizational abilities and sense of responsibility will be what guides you and proves successful-as well as your fine talent. Your career could assume a much more determined and firm direction. This is a time of getting your name known. You will find others appreciate your hard work. You can expect a little boost now, some sort of extra support or recognition from those around you.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

The workflow for today is fast moving and easily accomplished. You find success through your ability to follow through on important instructions and put together packages of information. You could work with or as a photographer or artist. At the very least, you could enjoy some form of art as a hobby. Off work early this afternoon the contents of a store window may catch your eye. This is a time when you may be concentrating on decorating a room or furnishing a new home or apartment. If you remain as careful as usual, you will do well in your choice of purchases. This evening is a good time to enjoy the company of a loved one, read a romantic book or take in a movie. This is also a happy day for relationships and matters of the heart.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

This is one of your best days this month. There is a definite change in your perspective between personal and professional, business and your home life now. You might even say there is a move in the direction of balance. You work well with ideas and bringing a focus around to wherever you are: workplace, or at home. You are driven and passionate in your pursuit of inner growth. You search for opportunities to find a higher truth to life and life situations. Someone you have not seen in a long time will pleasantly surprise you later this afternoon. Perhaps this is a gift of a sailing class or some other thrilling adventure. Whatever the surprise you will be very pleased that you are cared for so very much. Smiles and hugs are plentiful.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

A puzzle appears today and you spare no time in getting down to finding the answer. Others will be amazed at how well you uncover or find the solution to an old problem. With research to support your theories, you will be able to help make some much needed changes. You feel things passionately and you don't mind letting authorities or publishers know what you think. You can be quite loyal, if sometimes possessive, so you will need to be careful and attentive or aware to those areas of your life. You have a sense for power, wealth and passion and will have no problem reaching certain goals. If you support a family with children, this evening would be a good time to help them learn about goals and create opportunities to encourage them.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 19)

You meet with new moneymaking ideas this morning and may spend the majority of the day creating the avenue with which you will proceed. All of this may be a very good idea but you will be able to make a better decision if you could find a person that took the big moneymaking step that you might want to take. You will either be encouraged or have the opportunity to do a bit more research. It's as if ambition and authority are answers in themselves, rather than only a means to an ideal objective. Bide your time. Secrets, conspiracies and the hidden links that unite all things take on less importance in your life now. You have learned the importance of leaving the negative situations of the past, in the past. Help others to think in positive, healing ways.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

You are a born leader, so others find it easy to use your instructions and follow your example. You enjoy helping others solve their personal or technical problems. This is a very lucky day for making plans or decisions and finding your way through just about any problem you may discover. You feel successful and able to handle difficult situations. Perhaps some family member or friend has a new computer; you are helping him or her learn the particulars. Perhaps you are putting in a sprinkler system yourself and someone will be helping you. You are quick on the learning curve and whether you are teaching or taking on a new skill, you are having fun and turning the day into a successful one for everyone involved. You may get lucky in money.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

You could be seen by others as just the person to be put in charge of some project requiring a conservative mind-a day for thinking. You enjoy conversations about philosophy or even a little religion. If you pay attention, you may find ways that these discussions move into a new understanding for everyone. Lasting ethics will guide you now, opening up avenues that have remained blocked. Generally, this is a fruitful period for real-estate investments. You may feel like talking a bit more than usual, exploring new ideas or getting happily lost in a conversation. Perhaps a short trip or a special phone call is in order. Family, home and the other roots in your life give you a sense of mission. Conversations with loved ones are positive.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You have a great desire and drive to be thorough and responsible down to the smallest details. Improved powers of concentration insure that you will get a lot accomplished today. You always know what is essential and what is not. You love the routine. You tend neither to spend much time in fantasizing about the future nor reminiscing about the past. You like to be in the moment of the day. Obtaining and exchanging information takes on more significance for you. Being more involved with neighbors or siblings satisfies a deep emotional need to be needed and included. You enjoy helping others and in being privileged to know their heart. This evening may find you visiting and exchanging ideas with loved ones.

WORD SEARCH

Soccer

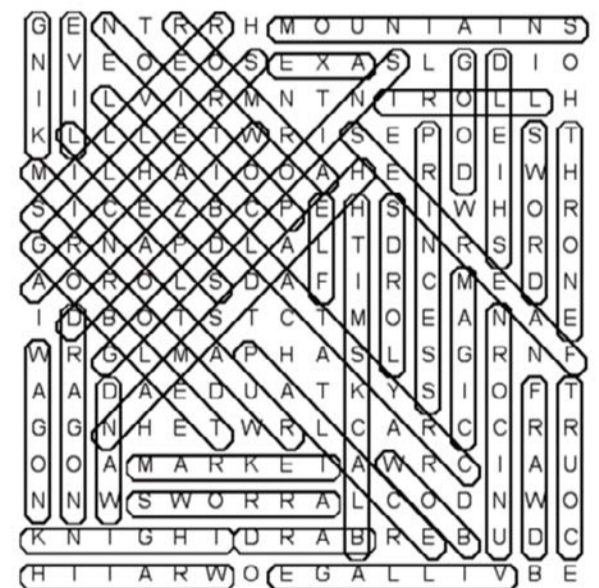
Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining 37 letters spell a secret message.



- | | | | |
|-------------|-----------|--------------|---------------|
| ASSIST | FORMATION | MATCH | SLIDE TACKLE |
| BALL | FORWARD | OFFENSE | SOCKS |
| CAPTAIN | FOWL | OFFSIDE | SPORT |
| CHEERING | GAME | PENALTY KICK | STOPPAGE TIME |
| CLEATS | GOALIE | POSITION | STRIKERS |
| CLUB | GOALS | PRACTICE | SUBSTITUTE |
| COACH | GRASS | RED CARD | SWEEPER |
| COIN TOSS | HALVES | REFEREE | THROW-IN |
| CORNER KICK | HAT TRICK | SCORE | TOUCHLINE |
| DEFENSE | HEADING | SHIN GUARD | WALL |
| FANS | JERSEY | SHOOT-OUT | WORLD CUP |
| FIELD | JUGGLING | SHORTS | YELLOW CARD |
| FIFA | KICK-OFF | SHOT | |

Yesterday Solution

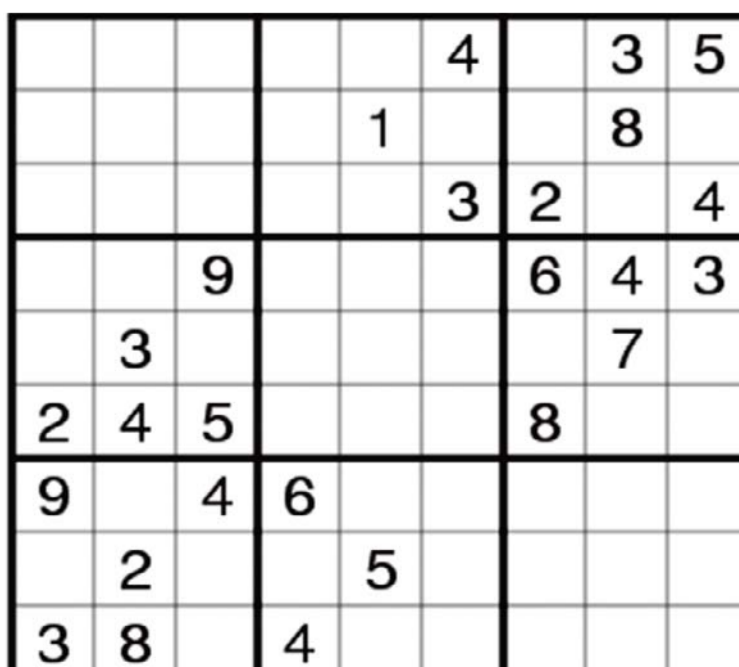
Fantasy World 2



- | | | | |
|--------------|------------|-----------|---------|
| ARCHERS | DWARF | LORDS | SPELL |
| ARMOR | ELF | MAGIC | SWORD |
| ARROWS | EVIL | MARKET | THRONE |
| AXE | FAERIES | MINOTAUR | TROLL |
| BARD | GOBLET | MOUNTAINS | UNICORN |
| BLACKSMITH | GOLD COINS | PALACE | VILLAGE |
| BOW | GOOD | POTION | WAGON |
| COURT | HEADSMAN | PRINCESS | WAND |
| CRYSTAL BALL | KING | SHIELD | WIZARD |
| DRAGON | KNIGHT | SILVER | WRAITH |

The hidden message is: THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE

Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution



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
Khalidiya	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 Abu Halaifa Danat Al-Sultan	Fahaeel Makka St Abu Halaifa-Coastal Rd Mahboula Block 1, Coastal Rd	23915883 23715414 23726558
Jahra	Modern Jahra Madina Munawara	Jahra-Block 3 Lot 1 Jahra-Block 92	24575518 24566622
Capital	Ahlam Khalidiya Coop	Fahad Al-Salem St Khalidiya Coop	22436184 24833967
Farwaniya	New Shifa Ferdous Coop Modern Safwan	Farwaniya Block 40 Ferdous Coop Old Kheitan Block 11	24734000 24881201 24726638
Hawally	Tariq Hana Ikhlas Hawally & Rawdha Ghadeer Kindy Ibn Al-Nafis Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Salmiya-Amman St Hawally-Beirut St Hawally & Rawdha Coop Jabriya-Block 1A Jabriya-Block 3B Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	25726265 25647075 22625999 22564549 25340559 25326554 25721264 25380581 25628241

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	Niger	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 Tome	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		

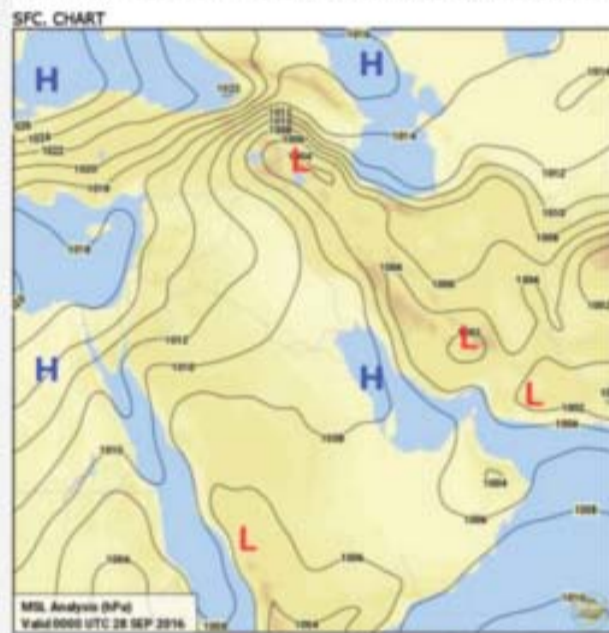
STATE OF KUWAIT DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



Tel: (+965) 161 Ext: 2627 - 2630
Fax: (+965) 24348714
www.met.gov.kw

Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

Issued 28/09/2016-07:00 LT UTC +3hr
Max Temperature 43 °C
By Day : Hot with variable wind changing to light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 06 - 26 km/h.
By Night : Fair with light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 12 - 35 km/h.



Four-Day Forecast

	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Expected Weather	Hot + raising dust over open areas	Hot + chance for raising dust over open areas	Hot	Hot
Min Temp °C	24	23	20	19
Max Temp °C	39	37	36	37
Wind Direction	north westerly	north westerly	north westerly	variable
Wind Speed km/h	20 - 45	22 - 42	15 - 38	06 - 22

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		40	
KUWAIT AIRPORT	25		43	
ABDALY	26		42	
BUBYAN	25		38	
JAHRA	28		42	
FAILAKA ISLAND	26		40	
SALMIYAH	30		37	
AHMADI	30		37	
JAL ALIYAH	26		43	
QAROH ISLAND	31		35	
UMH AL-MARADEM	30		36	
NUWASIB	24		40	
WAFRA	22		42	
MANAGISH	26		42	
SALMY	26		42	
MUTRIBA	25		43	

Recorded Yesterday at Kuwait Airport

Max Temp (°C)	42
Min Temp (°C)	23
Max Rel Hum (%)	30
Min Rel Hum (%)	11
Max Wind Speed (km/h) and Direction	25 SE
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR	0 mm
Sunrise	05:40
Sunset	17:39

Prayer Times

Fajr	04:20
Sunrise	05:40
Zuhr	11:39
Aar	15:04
Sunset	17:39
Isha	18:55



PRIVATE CLINICS

Ophthalmologists	Plastic Surgeons	Paediatricians	Endocrinologist
Dr. Abdallah Al-Mansoor	Dr. Mohammad Al-Khalaf	Dr. Khaled Hamadi	Dr. Abd Al-Naser Al-Othman
Dr. Samy Al-Rabea	Dr. Abdal-Redha Lari	Dr. Abd Al-Aziz Al-Rashed	Dr. Ahmad Al-Ansari
Dr. Masoma Habeeb	Dr. Abdel Quttainah	Dr. Zahra Qabazard	Dr. Kamal Al-Shomr
Dr. Mubarak Al-Ajmy	Family Doctor	Dr. Sohail Qamar	Physiotherapists & VD
Dr. Mohsen Abel	Dr Divya Damodar	Dr. Snaa Maarroof	Dr. Deyaa Shehab
Dr. Adnan Hasan Alwayl	Psychiatrists	Dr. Pradip Gujare	Dr. Mused Faraj Khamees
Dr. Abdallah Al-Baghly	Dr. Esam Al-Ansari	Dr. Zacharias Mathew	Rheumatologists:
Ear, Nose & Throat (ENT)	Dr. Eisa M. Al-Balhan	Dermatology	Dr. Adel Al-Awadi
Dr. Ahmed Fouad Mouner	Gynaecologists & Obstetricians	Dr. Mohammed Salam Bern University	Dr. Khaled Al-Jarallah
Dr. Abdallah Al-Ali	Dr. Adrian arbe	Dentists	Internist, Chest & Heart
Dr. Abd Al-Hameed Al-Taweel	Dr. Verginia s.Marin	Dr. Anil Thomas	DR.Mohammes Akkad
Dr. Sanad Al-Fathalah	Dr. Fozeya Ali Al-Qatan	Dr. Shamah Al-Matar	Dr. Mohammad Zubaid
Dr. Mohammad Al-Daory	Dr. Majeda Khalefa Aliyami	Dr. Anesah Al-Rasheed	MB, ChB, FRCP, PACC
Dr. Ismail Al-Fodary	Dr. Ahmad Al-Khooly	Dr. Abdallah Al-Amer	Assistant Professor Of Medicine
Dr. Mahmoud Al-Booz	Dr. Salem soso	Dr. Faysal Al-Fozan	Head, Division of Cardiology
General Practitioners	General Surgeons	Dr. Abdallateef Al-Katrash	Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital
Dr. Mohammed Y Majidi	Dr. Amer Zawaz Al-Amer	Dr. Abdallah Al-Duweisan	25339667
Dr. Yousef Al-Omar	Dr. Mohammad Yousef Basher	Dr. Bader Al-Ansari	Consultant Cardiologist
Dr. Tarek Al-Mikhaizeem	Internists, Chest & Heart	Dr. Sohal Najem Al-Shemeri	Dr. Farida Al-Habib
Dr. Kathem Maarafi	Dr. Adnan Ebil	Dr. Jasem Mola Hassan	MD, PH.D, FACC
Dr. Abdallah Ahmad Eyadah	Dr. Mousa Khadada	Dr. Sami Aman	Inaya German Medical Center
Dr. Nabeel Al-Ayoobi	Dr. Latefa Al-Duweisan	Dr. Mohammad Al-Shamaly	Te: 2575077
Dr. Dina Abdallah Al-Rafea	Dr. Nadem Al-Ghabra	Dr. Foad Abdallah Al-Ali	Fax: 25723123
Urologists	Dr. Mobarak Aldoub		
Dr. Ali Naser Al-Serfy	Dr. Nasser Behbehani		
Dr. Fawzi Taher Abul			
Dr. Khaleel Abdallah Al-Awadi			
Dr. Adel Al-Hunayan FRCS (C)			
Dr. Leons Joseph			

Britney Spears on pop inspiration and why she's not making a comeback

After a career spanning two decades that include highs and lows, pop singer Britney Spears discussed her inspirations and why her latest album should not be seen as a return to music. "I don't really see it as a comeback. I've been here for a really long time," the singer told Reuters ahead of her performance at the Apple Music Festival in London on Tuesday. Hundreds of fans cheered, sang and danced at the Roundhouse music venue in Camden as Spears and a troupe of male and female dancers performed her chart-topping hits including "...Baby One More Time" and "Oops!... I Did It Again."

The singer donned a variety of outfits during the gig, ranging from a sparkly sequined leotard to a schoolgirl-inspired skirt, shirt and tie. The concert comes a month after Spears' ninth album "Glory" came out and she delivered a steamy, high-octane

performance at MTV's Video Music Awards, thrusting the singer back in the national spotlight. "I feel like it's been a while since I brought new music to the table," Spears said. "I didn't want to do a typical pop record for this. I wanted to do something really different."

Spears, 34, said "Glory," which features the hit song "Make Me," is still her style but with "a little bit of a flair to it," drawing inspiration from pop singer Selena Gomez's most recent "Revival" tour. "I just love her music. I think she's really great. So I was really, really inspired by her work," she said. The new album cements a steady return to music after Spears took a hiatus following a personal and career meltdown in 2006-2007 that included shaving her signature blonde locks, losing custody of her two children and being placed under a court-ordered conservatorship. She made a comeback in late 2008 and since

2013 has helmed a successful residency show in Las Vegas, extended through 2017. As for future musical collaborations, Spears has a couple of rockers in mind, specifically Aerosmith's charismatic frontman. "I love Steven Tyler; he's great. He's like rock'n'roll man, like just crazy cool. I think he exudes sex and electricity and you're just like a magnet when you get next to him," Spears said. "I would love to work with Lenny Kravitz. I think he's great; he's a legend," she added. — Reuters

Singer Britney Spears performs onstage at the iHeartRadio Music Festival at T-Mobile Arena in Las Vegas, Nevada. — AFP



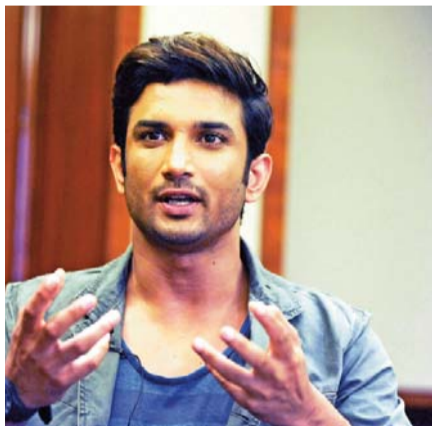
Indian Bollywood actor Sushant Singh Rajput (right) and Indian cricket captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni pose during the trailer launch in Mumbai of the upcoming biographical film "MS Dhoni: The Untold Story" directed by Neeraj Pandey.

Bollywood biopic shows India cricketer Dhoni's heartbreak

A Bollywood biopic of Mahendra Singh Dhoni is to bring a tragic episode in the Indian cricket hero's life to movie screens—the death of his first love. "MS Dhoni: The Untold Story", due for release on September 30, charts the rise of India's limited-overs captain from boy to train ticket collector to World Cup glory. Actor Sushant Singh Rajput, who plays Dhoni, told AFP in a video interview that filming scenes that dealt with the death of the cricketer's former girlfriend had been heart-rending. "It was very difficult because, after we did the preparation, in my head I was him and everything that was happening was actually affecting me," said the 30-year-old.

before I lose her... I was emotional," explained Rajput. The film, directed by Neeraj Pandey, includes scenes from Dhoni's childhood when football was his passion as well as his years as a young ticket collector. It culminates with his heroics at the 2011 final.

Rajput, who describes himself as an "ardent" cricket fan, said his preparations for playing an icon had been "exhaustive". "People already know the way he talks, walks, plays his cricket so I realized very early that it was a possibility that I could act well in the film but at the same time not be very convincing," said Rajput. The Hindi actor watched "hours and hours" of videos of Dhoni and met the star several times to study his mannerisms.



Indian Bollywood actor Sushant Singh Rajput gestures during a press meeting in Mumbai for his upcoming Hindi film "MS Dhoni: The Untold Story", a biography of Indian cricket captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni. — AFP photos

In 2002 Dhoni was in his early 20s and trying to break into India's national team when his girlfriend, Priyanka Jha, was killed in a road accident, according to Indian media reports. A music video released by producers as a teaser shows Dhoni's character romancing his sweetheart, played in the movie by Disha Patani, just before her death. Rajput said that it was a particularly moving scene to film. "It was just

"Helicopter shot" "There was a certain level of subconscious imitation and it happened from completely immersing myself in him, either thinking about him or looking at him or behaving like him," said Rajput. Dhoni told a promotional event in New York that he hadn't enjoyed relaying elements of his life. "What was most difficult for me was to narrate the story and all of that because I am somebody who lives in the present," he said, according to footage broadcast by NDTV news.

Rajput says he has left no stone unturned in ensuring the cricket scenes would be convincing, even mastering Dhoni's trademark "helicopter shot". "We would carefully analyse it and fix the bowling machine into one spot and then we would play the same shot at least 200, 300 times a day for a week to a point that it came naturally," he said.

The 35-year-old Dhoni, nicknamed "Captain Cool", is idolized for leading India to victory over Sri Lanka in the 2011 World Cup final. The skipper hit an unbeaten 91 off 79 balls, including a match-winning six. Rajput said the memory of Dhoni's exploits at Mumbai's Wankhede Stadium gave him "goosebumps". But what did the famously taciturn Dhoni think of the film's final cut? "He was very moved by it but he didn't say anything. He kept quiet for 15 minutes, smiled and then left," said Rajput. — AFP

Paris finally bows to the importance of Oscar Wilde

It has taken more than a century, but France is finally paying fulsome tribute to Oscar Wilde, the writer who died penniless in a fleapit Paris hotel saying, "My wallpaper and I are fighting a duel to the death. One of us has got to go." The first major exhibition in the French capital on the Irish wit and playwright opened yesterday. Its "hugely touching" final rooms chart his tragic end in the city, exiled and disgraced aged only 46. Wilde fled to Paris in 1897 after being hounded out of England having served two years in jail with hard labor for his doomed love for Lord Alfred Douglas.

His grandson Merlin Holland, who has helped put the show together, said it is "still very hard to read" some of his letters written on blue prison paper "where Oscar is on his knees" begging for clemency. "To see him have to plead like is quite hard to take. Having to say that he was 'suffering from the most horrible form of erotomania... which left him the prey of the most revolting passions' was just not Oscar. It showed how desperate he was," Holland told AFP.

The show at the Petit Palais also includes the misspelt calling card left by Douglas' father, the Marquess of Queensberry, which led to Wilde's fall. The fiery aristocrat, who wrote the rules of modern boxing, scrawled on front, "For Oscar Wilde posing Somdomite" [sic].

World collapsed

Disastrously as it turned out, Wilde sued Queensberry for criminal libel. "A man cannot be too careful in the choice of his enemies," Wilde once wrote. And Queensberry was a vicious adversary. He hired a team of private detectives to trawl the London underworld for evidence of the writer's "depravity", and Wilde's Dublin university contemporary Edward Carson as a barrister to bait him in court. The original court transcript of the trial shows the very moment Wilde's world collapsed. Pressed over whether he had kissed a young man, Wilde fatally played to the gallery by saying, "No, never in my life. He was a peculiarly plain boy." The writer had been at the height of his powers with his masterpiece "The

Important of Being Earnest" playing to packed houses in London. But his downfall was instant and terrible.

'Untouchable'

"It is hard to overestimate how much he was razed from society," Holland added. "He became an untouchable overnight." As he left court a warrant was issued for his arrest on charges of sodomy and gross indecency. He was quickly tried and the Paris show, which runs till January 15, also has the handbill advertising the sale of his possessions, including "Moorish and Oriental curiosities", which had been seized by the court. "They left him with nothing," said Holland. Wilde wrote the "Ballad of Reading Gaol" under the pseudonym of his prisoner number, C33, after fleeing to France.

"It was only in the fifth edition that the publishers dared put his name on it, and then it was only inside brackets," said Holland. The show also includes photos of the bedroom in the Hotel d'Alsace on Paris' Left Bank where he spent his final days on credit from its kindly owner. Wilde's tomb is still one of the most visited in the city's Pere Lachaise cemetery. But the greater part of the exhibition is dedicated to Wilde cutting a swathe through London and Paris society and his barnstorming tour of America.

It also brings out his passion for art, which Holland told AFP "he believed was the civilizing influence in the world". The show also includes several Pre-Raphaelite paintings Wilde wrote about in 1877 and 1879 as well as work by his friend Aubrey Beardsley, who famously illustrated "Salome", the play Wilde wrote in French for the era's leading lady, Sarah Bernhardt. Curator Dominique Morel said a major Wilde show was long overdue in France. He said it "contains many unseen and extremely hard to acquire material" thanks to the help of the Turkish philanthropist and Wilde expert Omer Koc, who loaned some of his "astounding collection" of the writer's letters and papers. — AFP



STAGE MUSICAL TO BE MADE FROM 1988 FILM 'MADAME SOUSATZKA'

A musical based on the 1988 Shirley MacLaine film "Madame Sousatzka" is hoping it can make it to Broadway. Producer Garth Drabinsky said yesterday the show "Sousatzka" has songs by the composer-lyricist team of David Shire and Richard Maltby Jr, whose Broadway shows include 1996's "Big." It will star Tony Award-winner Victoria Clark, Tony-nominee Montego Glover and Tony-winner Judy Kaye. Previews start in February at Toronto's Elgin Theatre.

Drabinsky, the producer of "Ragtime," served time in a Canadian prison for fraud. The new musical's story charts the relationship between an eccentric London-based piano teacher and her pupil, a 15-year-old boy of exceptional talent. The musical will be directed by Adrian Noble and has a book by Craig Lucas, who wrote the story for "An American in Paris." — AP



File photo shows Victoria Clark attends the Drama Desk Award Nominees Cocktail Reception in New York. — AP

Filmmaker Michael Moore says theater won't allow his show

Documentary filmmaker Michael Moore says he's not allowed to perform a one-man show about the presidential race at a central Ohio theater because officials there consider him too controversial. Moore says in a Facebook post that Newark's Midland Theatre "banned" him from presenting and filming the show there next month. He says the community board overseeing the theater recently voted not to allow the show.

The Columbus Dispatch reports that Midland operators say Moore wasn't banned and that the decision not to finalize the contract was based on several factors. Those included a too-short time frame and questions about what the production involved. Moore says he will go ahead with his plans for the show at an undisclosed site in southern Ohio in October. — AP



In this file photo, Michael Moore attends the 20th Annual Webby Awards at Cipriani Wall Street in New York. — AP

Katy Perry strips down at ballot box for Funny or Die



File photo shows Katy Perry performs during the final day of the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia. — AP

Katy Perry would like to remind voters it doesn't matter what you wear when you vote. In a video for Funny or Die, the singer shows up at the polls on Election Day with disheveled hair and wearing star-spangled pajamas. She says in the clip that she "briefly scanned the Constitution and nowhere does it say you can't just roll out of bed and come to the polls in whatever state you woke up in."

The video ends with Perry declaring that she can even vote naked, stripping down to nothing and then getting hauled away by police. She finds a naked Joel McHale next to her in the back of a police cruiser, who asks "you too?" Perry has been an outspoken supporter of Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Clinton. — AP

Hawn's key to romance with Kurt Russell? No marriage



In this file photo, actors Goldie Hawn and Kurt Russell attend the premiere of 'The Hateful Eight' at the Ziegfeld Theatre in New York. — AP

Goldie Hawn says the key to her successful 33-year Hollywood romance with Kurt Russell is that they never got married. The actress appeared on the chat show "Loose Women" on Britain's ITV on Monday. She says she "would have been long divorced" if she had gotten married. She says choosing not to get married "gives you the freedom to make decisions one way or the other," adding that she and Russell "liked the choice."

Hawn says "not every relationship works" and adds that movie stars may have "a harder time because the camera is on them all the time." Hawn has a son, Wyatt, with Russell and two children from her marriage to Bill Hudson: actors Oliver and Kate Hudson. — AP

Hiking to Machu Picchu past sacred Inca peaks in the Andes



Photo shows mountain peaks framed by stone windows in the ruins of Machu Picchu, the Inca citadel built in the mid-15th century.

Our hiking group had reached the highest point of our trek through the Andes to Machu Picchu. Now our guide was leading us in a Quechua ritual. We took turns placing stones in an "apacheta" pyramid over herbs and bits of chocolate bars, offering them to Apu Salkantay, the spirit of the mountain sacred to the Incas. Its ice-covered peak shone above us, spotted by the sun. Three days earlier in Cuzco, the region's gateway city, I had watched hundreds of people carry glittering statues of Catholic saints in procession around the main plaza, past rippling Baroque churches and whitewashed houses with carved wooden balconies. In another three days, I would see the dawn's first sunray fill a stone window in the 550-year-old Temple of the Sun at Machu Picchu.

The Incas' "lost city" is one of the world's iconic destinations, with over 1.2 million visitors in 2015. But to absorb the mesmerizing historical and spiritual significance of this region, I first explored Cuzco's fusion of native traditions and colonial heritage, and then trekked with locals through the steep 15,000-foot (4,500-meter) mountains surrounding it.

World's navel

Cuzco was built on an 11,150-foot (3,400-meter) Andean plateau. By the mid-15th century, it became the umbilical center of the Incas' continent-spanning empire. The perfectly-fitted, massive mortar-free walls of their palaces and temples still line many of the narrow streets, though most buildings were rebuilt after the violent conflicts during the Spanish conquest a century later. The rounded boulders of the Incas' central sanctuary, Qoricancha, became the foundation of Santo Domingo, whose convent courtyard encloses the temple's tapered niches.

European and indigenous imagery mixes in Cuzco's celebrated paintings, most conspicuously in an 18th century "Last



Photo shows statues of St James and the Virgin Mary in front of the Cathedral during the celebration of the Corpus Christi holiday in Cuzco, Peru.

(2,400 meters) up on a skinny ridge between precipices where the Andes meet the Amazon basin, and abandoned it a hundred years later. It lay covered by the rain forest until the 1910s, when Yale historian Hiram Bingham brought it global renown. (Many artifacts he took were recently returned to Cuzco, at Museo Machu Picchu Casa Concha.)

For two days, I wandered the main site along steep staircases, climbed the "you-slip-you-die" path to the ruins on Huayna Picchu, the peak overlooking the citadel, and walked the Inca Trail to the Intipunku viewpoint. The nearly 200 gray houses, temples and agricultural buildings are haunting, but the practical and cosmological engineering is mind-blowing. From every perspective, the view defies logic: Terraces clinging to sheer, 1,640-foot (500-meter) drop-offs hold up colossal granite palaces and sanctuaries. Carved stones, foundations and windows precisely trace the sun's travels and line with sacred peaks like Salkantay.

Late on my last afternoon, a white llama grazing inches from my feet woke me from a doze on a terrace overlooking the citadel. Most of the thousands of daily tourists had gone, and workers raked highlighter-green grass in the main plaza. Archaeologists still debate why the Incas built this citadel. As I watched the sun slant through the peaks, tinged wisps of clouds at eye level, the real and symbolic magic of Machu Picchu's placement seemed answer enough. — AP



Photo shows participants in the Corpus Christi religious festival, including a man leading a llama, gathering in the main plaza in Cuzco, Peru.



Photo shows a group of Catholic faithful, dressed in traditional Quechua clothing, waiting to start carrying a statue of the Virgin Mary in the Corpus Christi procession in the main plaza of Cuzco, Peru.

Supper" canvas in the cathedral that features a paws-up, roasted Andean rodent as the meal's entree. I preferred seafood ceviche at Limo restaurant or local charcuterie at Museo del Pisco, paired with potent pisco sours. But I did try cuy (guinea pig) in chiriuchu, a dish including fish eggs, corn fritters, seaweed, sausage, dried meat, cheese, chicken and singeing rocoto pepper prepared for the Corpus Christi celebration, held 60 days after Easter.

That holiday and Inti Raymi, the winter solstice celebration in late June, are Cuzco's wildest mingling of piety and partying. They fall at the start of prime hiking season (May-October).

Above the clouds

From my glass-covered igloo, the swirls of stars framing Salkantay were breathtaking, even more so than hiking to this camp at 12,631 feet (3,850 meters) on the Salkantay trail, which follows ancient routes and is considered the best alternative to the often sold-out Inca Trail. For four days, we hiked past glaciers and through cloud forests to Machu Picchu. Our guides, Kenneth Leon and Irvin Llacta from Salkantay Trekking, showed our group of nine from four countries turquoise mountain lakes, tiny mud-brick villages, and centuries-old Inca channels.

They also grounded us in local life, explaining Quechua traditions like medicinal uses of plants they picked by the trail, where we also found mouthwatering avocados and grandadillas (a type of passion fruit). Their team of cooks and horsemen prepared eight-course meals and afternoon teas of mate de coca, which alleviates altitude sickness.

Toward the sun

From the village of Aguas Calientes, I looked across the river straight up vertical peaks and cheated, taking the shuttle instead of 1,500-plus steps to Machu Picchu. In the mid-15th century, the Incas built this improbable citadel nearly 8,000 feet



Photo shows visitors taking selfies with llamas along a terrace in Machu Picchu, Peru.

THE DESK IS BACK: MARRIOTT IS REDESIGNING HOTEL ROOMS

The desk is back. Marriott is redesigning its hotel rooms, and desks with chairs are once again a standard feature.

Desks had started to disappear from hotel rooms partly due to a perception that they were unnecessary in the era of laptops and cellphones, and that younger travelers weren't using them. Rooms without desks also seemed to fit into a larger trend in the hotel industry toward minimalist decor.

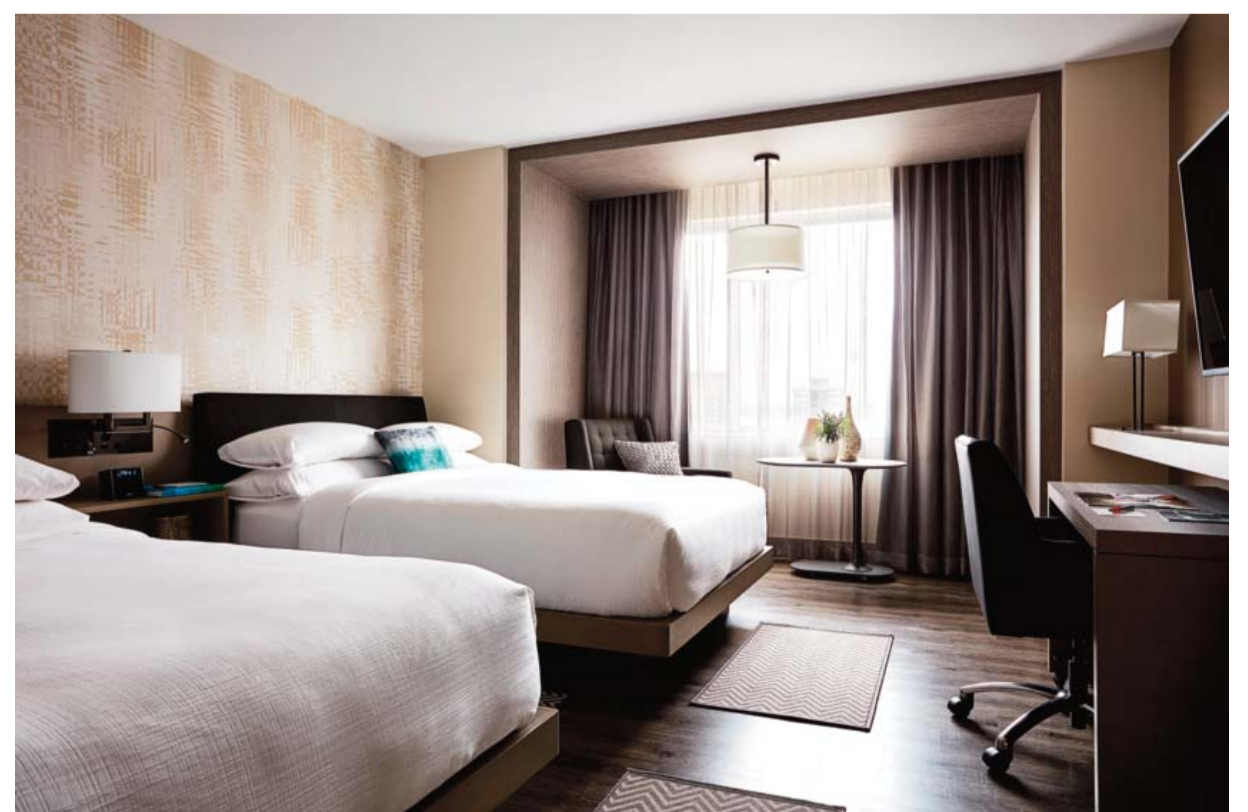
But travelers began complaining. "What happened to the desk in my hotel room?" Yahoo Sports columnist Dan Wetzel tweeted and blogged in December 2015, subtitled his post, "A Call to Arms for my fellow desk-loving Marriott patrons." Other travelers shared similar stories, with one tweeting back that when he complained to the hotel about a deskless room, "They encouraged me to 'work in the lobby.'"

The desks in what Marriott is calling its "modern guest rooms" are on wheels so you can move them around the room to work where you want. In addition to other workspaces in the rooms, the redesign also includes hardwood flooring, benches to place your luggage on, locally inspired decor and

various check-in options such as using your cellphone as a key to unlock the door. Tubs are disappearing, too. Bathrooms will have only walk-in showers with hand-held sprayers in roughly 75 percent of the new hotel rooms, except for hotels in leisure/family markets.

In addition, Marriott is partnering with TED to bring speakers into certain hotels for evening events open to guests and the public. The redesign has been completed in more than 10,000 rooms at 25 hotels, including Marriotts in Charlotte, North Carolina, and in Brooklyn, New York, and another 25 hotels are scheduled to have renovations completed by the end of the year. A total of 108 hotels are in the pipeline. — AP

This undated image provided by Marriott shows one of the hotel company's redesigned 'modern guest rooms.' — AP



Rihanna's stiletto sneaker hype leaves Paris in her wake

Before she even set foot on the Paris catwalk yesterday singer Rihanna was making headlines with her second collection for Puma, sending supermodel Gigi Hadid off sprinting in a pair of stiletto sneakers. In pictures released on Instagram, Hadid was shown running and jumping in high-heeled trainers in a long dress with a swimsuit-like bodice. Another had her stretched out in a skin-tight body suit like a sprinter set to speed off down

the track in the same white stilettos with the German brand's trademark black stripe.

The carefully choreographed series of leaks to hog the maximum of social media attention, also hinted that the Barbadian star is finally bringing color to her Puma x Fenty (crrt) range, after a debut show based solely on black and white. Another mustard and white tunic dress gives Hadid much more room for manoeuvre. Behind-the-scenes

videos show the 28-year-old star preparing for her Paris debut in a light pastel pink shift dress.

The show, in a mansion close to the Champs Elysee, will be streamed live on the rapper Jay-Z Tidal platform. Rihanna's first collection for Puma was shown in New York last autumn and was heavy on sportswear and reworked jogging gear. This is far from the first time that designers have given sneakers a bit of a life. Several has given them a

high heel including New York-based Donna Karan in 2012. Despite it new-found hipness Puma, which is owned by the French-based fashion conglomerate Kering, has struggled to compete with rivals Nike and Adidas. It does however make Usain Bolt's running shoes. — AFP



YVES SAINT LAURENT DESIGNER MAKES HIGHLY-ANTICIPATED DEBUT

A huge crane in the colors of the French flag hoisted up a giant neon YSL logo above a construction site in the French capital, literally setting expectations high for this year's YSL show at Paris Fashion Week. The decor announced that the grand debut from Saint Laurent's new designer Anthony Vaccarello on Tuesday night aimed to dramatically reconstruct the YSL aesthetic following the departure of Hedi Slimane.

French singer Jane Birkin and her two actress daughters Charlotte Gainsbourg and Lou Doillon stared up expectantly alongside myriad iPhone-snapping fashionistas to marvel at the radiant 50-meter (164-foot) crane - a real machine being used to rebuild the house's Paris Left Bank headquarters. "The derelict aspect sets a nice metaphor," said Gainsbourg, speaking from the show's front row. "Anthony has completely understood the house codes," Doillon said ahead of the show. As the designer's revealing looks filed by, the metaphor of reconstruction and renewal of the Saint Laurent image was heard loud and clear but the high expectations set by the decor were dashed.

This "new" image was largely a rehash of the Glamazon, uber-sexy, ultra-mini styles that have come to be synonymous with the 34-year-old Italian-Belgian designer's own brand and his work at Donatella Versace's flesh-baring Versus house. To his credit, Vaccarello's debut featured a check-list of YSL archive references, with iconic YSL pieces fused alongside the sex aesthetic. A sultry leather variation on the voluminous sleeves of the Flamenco Dress shimmered with cool '80s micro-mini. Yves Saint Laurent's 1968 transparent looks, which once shocked the fashion establishment, made a comeback and Vaccarello gave a nod to the textured materials of the famed 1976 Ballets Russes collection.

There was also, at times, a marked return to elegance, which had eluded his predecessor Slimane. Those touches turned up in revamped archive YSL tuxedos and lashings of black. It was certainly not a groundbreaking collection, but many of the styles could prove highly appealing to the younger clients the house has courted in recent years. — AP



Models present creations for Saint Laurent during the 2017 Spring/Summer ready-to-wear collection fashion show in Paris. — AP/AFP photos

FASHION



Models present creations for Lanvin during the 2017 Spring/Summer ready-to-wear collection fashion show.

FRANCE'S LAST **IVORY CARVERS** FACED WITH EXTINCTION

Annick Colette-Fremond is the fifth generation of her family to practice the art of ivory carving—and she may be the last of her line, due to new rules in France. She is one of just a handful of French ivory carvers left, plying a trade that conservationists say spurs the slaughter of elephants and rhinos. Colette-Fremond and her fellow craftspeople work with ivory imported before a ban over four decades ago, but say their future will be doomed when a new decree takes effect—and will not stop the killing. “Sadly, this isn’t going to save the elephants,” said Colette-Fremond, 64, who operates a workshop in the Normandy port town of Dieppe, once a hub of the ivory trade. “There’s just a handful of us left,” said the artist, who showcases sculptures of a crying child, a mother with a baby and a sheaf of wheat. “We are not dangerous.”

Elephant slaughter

Defenders of elephants and rhinoceroses, though, say that behind a piece of artwork lies a darker truth. Poaching over the past decade has sent the African elephant population on its worst plunge in 25 years, according to a report released Sunday at the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) conference in Johannesburg. Elephant numbers have dropped by around 111,000 in the past decade, putting the continent’s total population at around 415,000. In France, the ivory business has been tightly controlled since it joined CITES, which now includes over 180 countries and bans import of the tusk.

In August, the French government tightened the screw, approving a decree that will ban “the making of objects using ivory... regardless of the age of the ivory used.” The French craftspeople say they are not at fault for the elephant slaughter, and complain their centuries-old art will be destroyed. At present, they use ivory acquired before the treaty took effect in 1975. “We work mainly with stock inherited from our forebears,” said carver Benoit Migeon. “We are audited by the authorities. We have a stock book, everything is marked,” he said referring to his 250-kilo (550-pound) supply.

‘Deadly decree’

The carvers have support from Dieppe town hall, which says ivory carving is an important part of its history. “The decree from (Environment Minister Segolene) Royal is ineffective in protecting elephants, and quite deadly to the beautiful craft of ivory carving,” said Mayor Sebastien Jumel. Conservationists disagree, saying the carvers—whatever the age of their ivory—indirectly feed demand, and poachers and traffickers benefit.

“This is what drives illegal ivory trade, so the only way to reduce demand is to close domestic markets,” said Celine Sissler-Bienvenu, France and francophone Africa director of the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW). “Given the major crisis elephants are going through, there is no way we can continue to trade ivory,” she told AFP at the CITES conference. Internationally, there is a fierce debate over what to do with ivory stockpiles.

A coalition of 29 African countries is pressing for a total halt to the ivory trade to curb poaching of elephants, but others believe it would only fuel illegal trading. Namibia and Zimbabwe have made a proposal seeking permission to sell off stockpiles of tusks to raise funds for local communities that co-exist with the animals. France’s new rules are the most stringent in Europe, although even activist groups doubt whether they will have much effect.

“France is not considered to be a major destination for newly poached ivory so it’s rather difficult to understand how such a ban will help to save elephants,” Richard Thomas, global spokesman for wildlife monitor TRAFFIC told AFP. “Ivory carvers are currently a dying breed worldwide and that trend looks likely to continue,” he added. In the 16th century, Dieppe—a port whose connections stretched from Scandinavia to Madagascar—was along with Paris the major pole for ivory-carving in France. The industry was extensive: in just one of the many workshops in Dieppe, 40 people were employed in the 19th century.

They had specific skills for carving, drilling or polishing the ivory, catering to demand from the aristocracy or the



rising middle classes at a time when few, if any, thought of conservation. Carvers worked in poor light—blindness was a risk of the trade—and often fell ill from breathing in ivory dust. Today, fewer than half a dozen people in France make their living from carving tusk. Colette-

Fremond had hoped her daughter Julia would be able to continue the tradition into the sixth generation. “Her plans are now in jeopardy,” she said. — AFP

Lifestyle

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2016

Yves Saint Laurent designer makes highly-anticipated debut

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Dancers perform during a dress rehearsal for the upcoming revue show 'The One - Grand Show' at the Friedrichstadt Palast in Berlin, Germany, yesterday. The show, which features costumes from Jean Paul Gaultier, premieres on October 6, 2016. — AFP photos

'Recycled Orchestra' turns garbage into gold

Festering alongside mountains of stinking trash under the sweltering South American sun, Cateura is a long way from the conservatories of Prague or Vienna. Yet the township which grew out of Paraguay's largest dump is gaining an unlikely reputation as a hothouse for musical talent and for its youth orchestra that plays instruments made from discarded rubbish. "The world sends us garbage. We send back music," said Favio Chavez, leader of the "Recycled Orchestra," during a recent visit by the group to Los Angeles.

themselves-rummage through the dump on the floodplains of the Paraguay River for scraps they can sell. Illiteracy is rampant, and the children of the township often fall into drugs, gang violence and delinquency. Chavez, a musical prodigy who was directing his church choir by the age of 11, came to Cateura as an environmental technician in 2006 and started a youth music school.

He knew shop-bought instruments were beyond the means of villagers whose shacks are worth less than a violin, so he approached carpenter Don "Cola" Gomez to make one out of debris from the dump. It worked, and soon Gomez was manufacturing cellos, guitars and even double basses. The orchestra caught the eye of Paraguayan filmmaker Alejandra Amarilla, the ex-wife of former LA Lakers basketball player Steve Nash, who began filming the young musicians in 2010.

Amarilla uploaded a short clip of the orchestra to YouTube in 2012, hoping to secure crowdfunding for what would become "Landfill Harmonic," a theatrical documentary being released across the US this month. Within days, millions of people around the world had seen the footage, and donations poured in as the youngsters were catapulted onto the world stage. "Landfill Harmonic" follows the children-many of whom had never left the slum-as they embark on a tour of the world's music halls, playing for European royalty and even Pope Francis.

'Brighter future'

Co-director Brad Allgood told AFP he wanted audiences to go away feeling inspired and motivated by Chavez's idea that you have to be dedicated, willing to work hard and be a team player. "There is one line in the film that stands out for me, which is where he says 'To have nothing is not an excuse to do nothing,'" the Los Angeles-based director told AFP. The orchestra has opened for heavy metal group Metallica, jammed with Stevie Wonder and Megadeth and spawned copycat projects across the world. Toby Armoa, 15, has been a member for four years, practicing his saxophone fashioned from a drainpipe, bottle tops and coins for two hours every day.

"The community has changed a lot, because now kids are thinking about finishing school and staying away from drugs. Now they want to have a brighter future," he told AFP. The "Recycled Orchestra," which is building a music school in Cateura, has given the community a newfound respect for the importance of education and the sanctity of childhood.

"Before, kids would stop studying or they'd have to go to work but now education has become an important aspect of the community," Chavez said during the orchestra's Los Angeles trip. "They may have fallen into drugs or other vices if this opportunity had not been there," he added. "Music is a powerful force not only for the musicians. It unites people. It transcends linguistic barriers." — AFP



Music director Favio Chavez from the Landfill Harmonic, a Recycled Orchestra of Cateura.



View of the violins made by the members of the Landfill Harmonic, a Recycled Orchestra of Cateura.



(From left) Musicians William Wilson Lopez, Cinthia Servin Aquino, Vannina Monserrath Vera Rojas, Celeste Elizabeth Fleitas Ortiz, Music director Favio Chavez, musicians Amara Rojas Ruiz Diaz and Emmanuel Insfran Caballero from the Landfill Harmonic, a Recycled Orchestra of Cateura in Paraguay, pose for a portrait session during the Landfill Harmonic Press Day, in Los Angeles, California. — AFP photos

Chavez hit upon the idea of using trash to make music 10 years ago. Orchestra members, impoverished children from Cateura, play violins fashioned from oven trays and guitars made from dessert dishes. One cello is made from an oil barrel with wooden spoons and a stiletto heel for tuning pegs, while a discarded x-ray serves as the skin for a drum. The orchestra provides the youngsters an outlet and an escape, a chance to transcend the squalor of their slum through the music of Mozart, Vivaldi and even Sinatra.

"In the beginning, it was difficult to play, but Favio helped me learn over time. From Favio, I have learned to be more responsible and value the things I have," 10-year-old violinist Celeste Fleitas told AFP. Cateura, a shantytown of 40,000 people on the outskirts of the capital Asuncion, is one of the poorest communities in South America.

Gang violence

The destination for more than 1,500 tons (three million pounds) of waste each day, the community has no safe drinking water and little access to electricity or sanitation, so disease is rife. Impoverished slum-dwellers-many just children



Violinist Emmanuel Insfran Caballero from the Landfill Harmonic, a Recycled Orchestra of Cateura in Paraguay, poses for a portrait session.



Violinist Cinthia Servin Aquino from the Landfill Harmonic, a Recycled Orchestra of Cateura in Paraguay, poses for a portrait session.



Musicians Isaac Tobias Armoa Ortiz (left) and Alejandro Melgarejo from the Landfill Harmonic.



Violinist William Wilson Lopez from the Landfill Harmonic, a Recycled Orchestra of Cateura in Paraguay, poses for a portrait session.