

2 Visa woes of Pakistanis set to be resolved soon



13 Trump hosts Sisi in landmark visit, praises 'fantastic job'



21 Qatar to boost output from world's biggest gas field



18 Kuwait Times infographic: NBA Power Rankings



150 FILS
NO: 17188
40 PAGES



RUSSIA SUBWAY BLAST KILLS 10; SECOND BOMB DEFUSED

MOSCOW PROBES 'ACT OF TERROR' • ENTIRE ST PETERSBURG METRO SHUT



Min 18°
Max 31°
High Tide 06:12 & 16:29
Low Tide 11:10

conspiracy theories

ALLAH KAREEM



By Badrya Darwish

badrya_d@kuwaittimes.net

Hi guys. I was so busy over the week, I forgot to write about something important about my last trip through Kuwait Airport. I hope one day this airport will change and we will have a new one. But please, until the new one is ready, can't you maintain the existing one that we are using? Firstly, can I ask if there is a maintenance department at the airport? I have no idea. Whoever is in charge of maintenance, can I please bring to his attention the problem with the escalator that brings passengers from the gates downstairs to the immigration hall?

Continued on Page 13



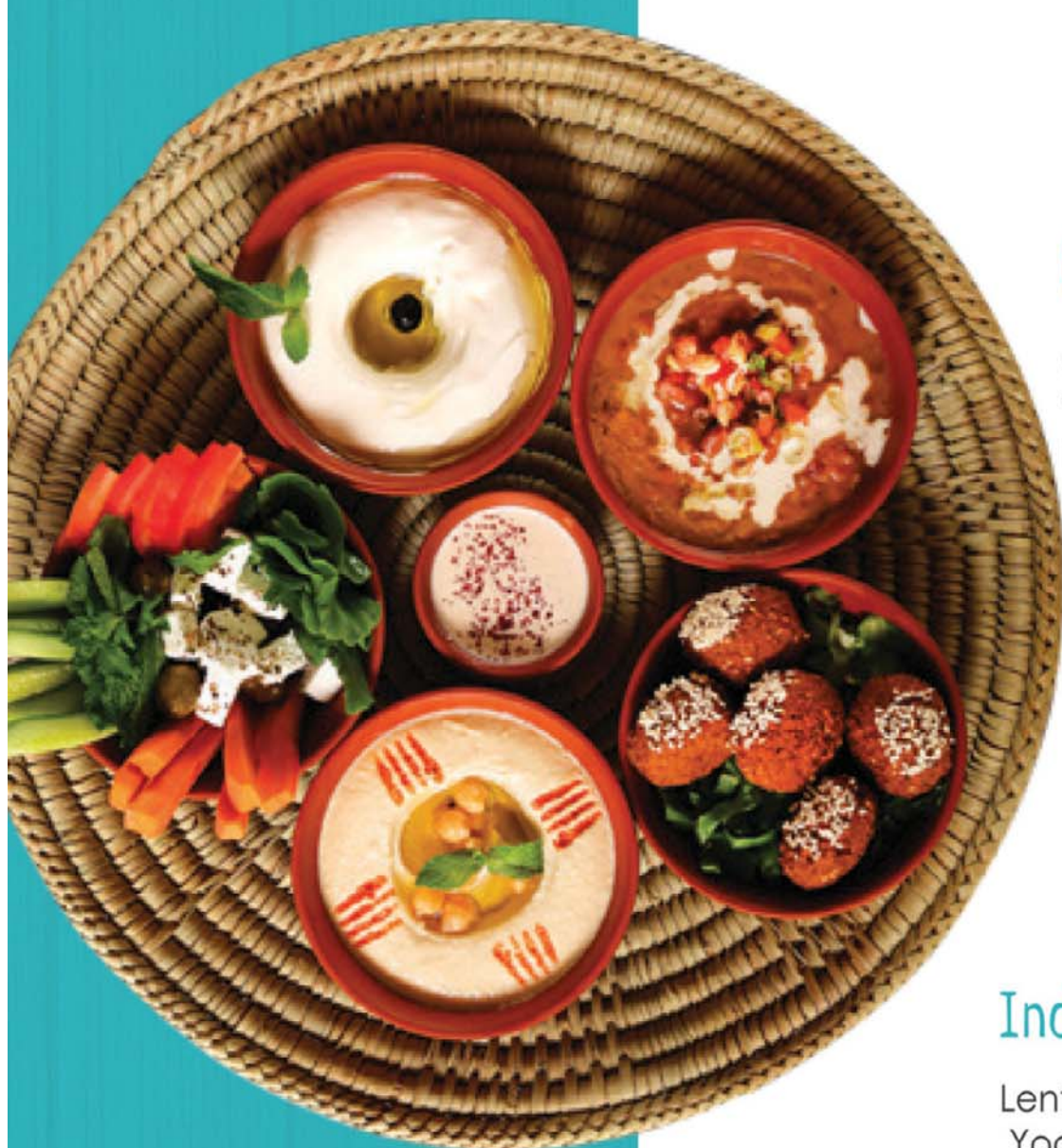
ST PETERSBURG, Russia: Blast victims lie near a subway train hit by an explosion at the Tekhnologicheskoy Institut subway station yesterday. — AP

SAINT PETERSBURG: Russia opened a probe into a suspected "act of terror" yesterday after 10 people were killed and dozens more injured in a blast that rocked the Saint Petersburg metro. Authorities shut down the metro system in Russia's second city as security services said they had also defused a bomb at a second metro station. Russia's Investigative Committee said it was probing an "act of terror" but added it would look into all other possible causes of the blast. The Interfax news agency said law enforcement agencies were searching for two suspects, and state TV showed a photo of one possible suspect wearing what appeared to be a skull-cap characteristic of Muslim regions in the former Soviet Union.

Pictures screened on national television showed the door of a train carriage blown out, as bloodied bodies lay strewn on a station platform. Above ground, emergency services vehicles rushed to the scene at the Technological Institute metro station, a key transport hub in the city center. Health minister Veronika Skvortsova said the blast had killed seven people on the spot, with three more succumbing to their injuries later. Thirty nine people were hospitalized, including a 15-year-old girl, Skvortsova said.

"My mom was in the metro, I don't know what's happened to her, I can't get hold of her," one woman, Natalia, told AFP outside the station as she was trying to make a phone call on her mobile. Pensioner Vyacheslav Veselov told AFP he had seen four bodies at the station. "A station attendant in tears called on the men to help carry the bodies," he said.

Continued on Page 13



Tassyouira Breakfast (For 2 Person)

Kuwaiti Breakfast 5.950 KD

Omelette, Foul, Lebneh, Chicken Liver, Fresh Vegetable, Qimar, Darabeel, Baqsam, Jam & Honey, Served With Tanoor Bread

Jordanian Breakfast 4.900 KD

Whole Egg, Foul, Falafel, Musabaha, White Cheese, Olive Oil, Zaatar, Served With Tanoor Bread

Lebanese Breakfast 5.950 KD

Fried Egg, Grilled Halloum, Sausage, Lebneh "Traditional Lebanese", Makdoos, Cold Cut, Qimar & Honey, Served With Lebanese Bread

Indian Breakfast 4.750 KD

Lentil Mix, Qeema, Tawa Chicken, Egg Tomato, Yoghurt Mint, Served With Chapatti





KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with member of the senior scholars authority and special advisor to the Custodian of the two Holy Mosques Dr Abdullah Al-Mutlaq and his delegation. —KUNA photos



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Minister of Health Dr Jamal Mansour Al-Harbi and members of the Gulf Union for Cancer Control.



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and State Minister for Economic Affairs Hind Al-Sabeeh.



KUWAIT: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with member of the senior scholars authority and special advisor to the Custodian of the two Holy Mosques Dr Abdullah Al-Mutlaq and his delegation.



KUWAIT: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and State Minister for Economic Affairs Hind Al-Sabeeh.

AMIR MEETS MEMBER OF SENIOR SCHOLARS AUTHORITY IN SAUDI

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace yesterday member of the senior scholars authority and special advisor to the Custodian of the two Holy Mosques Dr Abdullah Al-Mutlaq and his accompanying delegation on the occasion of their visit to the

country. The meeting was attended by Deputy Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah and Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs and State Minister for Municipality Affairs Mohammad Naser Al-Jabri. The Saudi delegation later met with His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-

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

Meanwhile, His Highness the Amir received Minister of Health Dr Jamal Mansour Al-Harbi and members of the Gulf Union for Cancer Control on the occasion of the first

Gulf joint conference on cancer control in Kuwait. His Highness also received Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and State Minister for Economic Affairs Hind Al-Sabeeh who presented His Highness a report on the developmental planning march in the State of Kuwait during the past 65 years. Sabeeh later pre-

sented a copy of the report to His Highness the Crown Prince as well. Also yesterday, His Highness the Crown Prince received President of the National Security Bureau Sheikh Thamer Ali Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah and former education minister Dr Bader Hamad Al-Essa. —KUNA

CABINET OKS CITIZENSHIP REVOCATION PANEL

KUWAIT: The Cabinet has consented to a decree forming an ad hoc committee entrusted with looking into Kuwaiti citizenship abrogation cases. The move was taken during a customary weekly cabinet meeting held yesterday at Bayan Palace under chairmanship of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

The committee would also give appropriate practical overtures in this regard in line with law, and would eventually report to the cabinet over relevant findings, Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah said in a press statement following the meeting.

The cabinet also instructed all state agencies to use the logo of activities pertinent to the choosing of Kuwait Capital of Arab Youth for 2017 on their respective websites, added Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, who doubles as Acting Minister of Information.

At the onset of the meeting, the ministers were apprised of a letter addressed to His Highness the Amir from UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres, inviting him to attend a donor conference on Yemen due in Geneva on April 25. The ministers then listened to a briefing from First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah on the outcomes of His Highness the Amir's participation in the 28th Arab Summit held in Dead Sea in Jordan.

In the briefing, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled quoted His Highness the Amir as calling for a fresh approach to be adopted in order to address the grave challenges of the Arab world. The cabinet lauded the efforts of His Highness the Amir and other Arab leaders during this summit, and thanked Jordanian King Abdullah II for proper preparations and successful organizing of the Arab gathering.

Afterwards, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled kept the ministers



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

posted on the outcomes of the 142nd session of the GCC Ministerial Council recently held in Riyadh, which underlined Gulf positions and resolutions against terrorism and

extremism. Meanwhile, the cabinet condemned a recent attack that targeted a police training center in Tanta City in Gharbiya Governorate in Egypt, and left several policemen

wounded. The cabinet reiterated Kuwait's unshakable positions based on rejecting all terrorist act regardless of relevant motives and goals. —KUNA



KUWAIT: Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and State Minister for Economic Affairs Hind Al-Sabeeh, and Ambassador of Pakistan to Kuwait Ghulam Dastgir cut the ceremony's cake during a reception held on the occasion of Pakistan's national day at Crowne Plaza Hotel. —Photos by Joseph Shagra



Ambassador of Pakistan to Kuwait Ghulam Dastgir delivers a speech during the ceremony.



Guests pictured in attendance.

VISA DELAY FOR PAKISTANIS TO BE RESOLVED SOON

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: Visa delays for Pakistani nationals in Kuwait is now under serious considerations and this matter will be resolved soon, said Hind Al-Sabeeh, Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and State Minister for Economic Affairs.

Speaking with reporters at the Pakistan National Day reception yesterday, Sabeeh said the main subject being deliberated are on the procedural and technical matters being prepared by the Ministry of Interior.

Last month, Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif visited Kuwait and one of many issues tackled with the Kuwaiti leadership was the difficulty Pakistani nationals face obtaining family, visit and trade visas to Kuwait.

In 2011, Kuwait suspended all tourism, visit, trade visas as well as visas sponsored by spouses for nationals of Syria, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan. The ban was placed due to 'difficult security conditions' in the five countries.

Asked on the plan to establish a refinery in Pakistan, Sabeeh said the issue is under study with the Ministry of Oil and the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC). "There are talks about it but it is under studying. They are being brought out to the cabinet to determine when the time table would be," she noted. Sabeeh also lauded the Kuwait-Pakistan relations which she said are based on brotherly and mutual respect.

Meanwhile, Pakistani Ambassador to Kuwait Ghulam Dastgir said the government of Pakistan, under the leadership of Prime Minister Sharif, is committed to realizing the dream of the

founding father Quaid e Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah to build a democratic, stable and prosperous Pakistan. "Despite many challenges that it faced for decades, Pakistan has made tremendous progress in terms of socio-economic development. It is a matter of great satisfaction that Pakistan has emerged victorious and stronger out of many challenges including fight against the menace of terrorism in its ongoing operations," he said.

Pakistan's economy is on the rise, he said, and is poised to become a regional economic power. "All economic indicators are positive and renowned global institutions are projecting that Pakistan will be among top global economies in

decades to come. China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is considered as a game changer and has the potential to transform the fate of the region in terms of socio-economic development. The mega project, once completed, will usher in prosperity and progress not only in Pakistan but also in the whole region," he added.

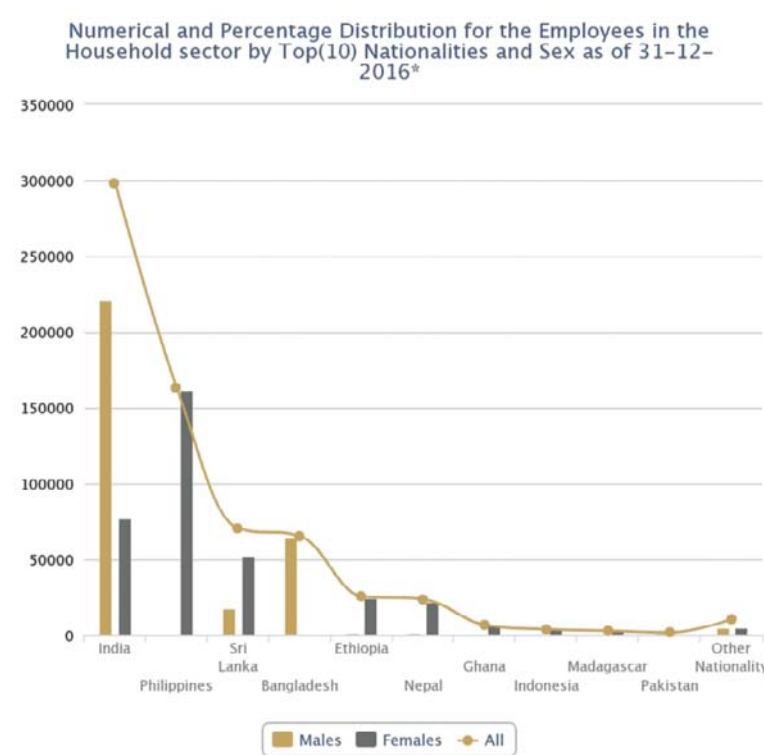
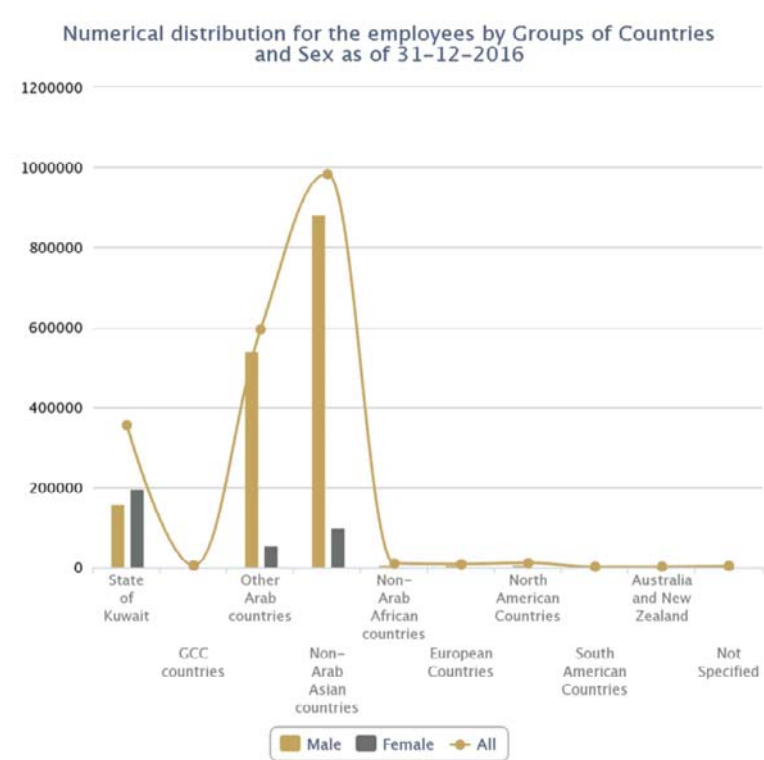
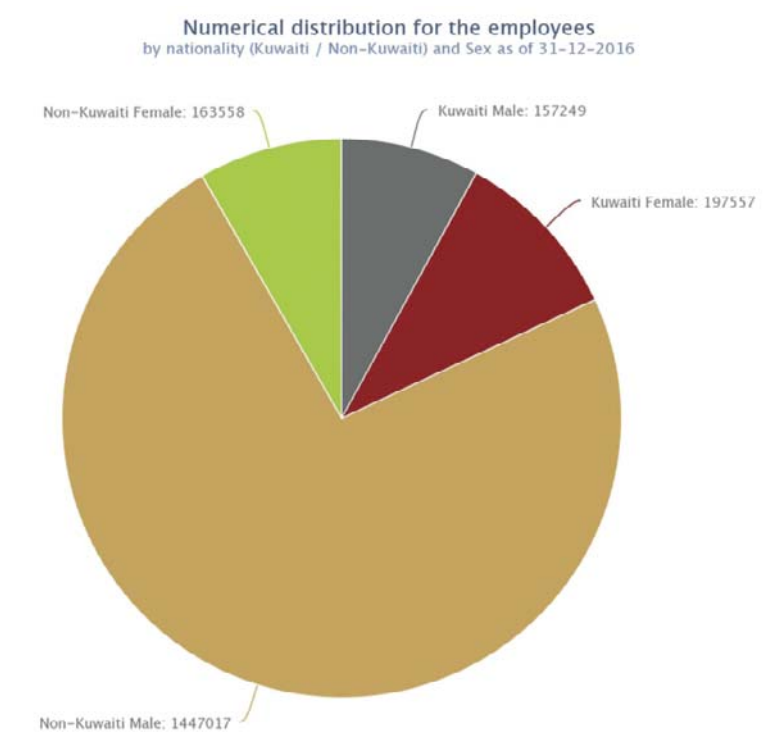
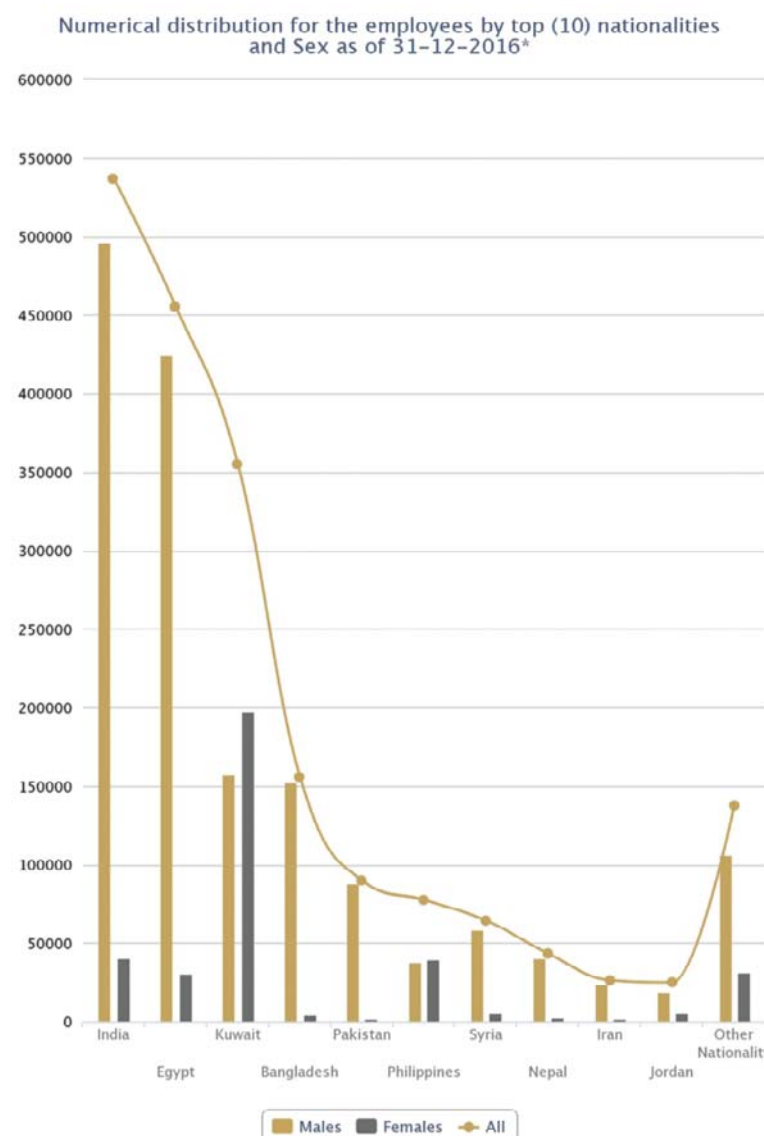
On the Pakistani community in Kuwait, Dastgir noted that it plays a very constructive role in the progress and development of Kuwait. "Our community is also very active in social activities. They always come forward to help the less privileged people, which is acknowledged and appreciated by all segments of the society," he concluded.



Ambassador of Pakistan to Kuwait Ghulam Dastgir welcomes Ambassador of Senegal to Kuwait and Dean of the Diplomatic Corps Abdul Ahad Mbacke.

UNEDUCATED: NEARLY HALF OF EXPATS IN KUWAIT PRIVATE SECTOR DON'T HAVE HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMAS

LATEST FIGURES RELEASED BY THE LABOR MARKET INFORMATION SYSTEM



By Ahmad Jabr

KUWAIT: Nearly half of expatriates working in the private sector in Kuwait have only a middle school degree (49.5 percent), while the number of workers with a university degree reaches only 10.5 percent, according to official statistics.

Those figures, released recently by the Labor Market Information System of the Central Statistical Bureau, shed more light on the quality of foreign manpower in a country where expatriates made up 81.9 percent of the total labor market as of December 31, 2016. They are also important considering that they are released at a time in which debate on the negative impact of the demographic imbalance is perhaps at an all-time high in political and social arenas in Kuwait.

The private sector, which employs 59.9 percent of total manpower, remains heavily dependent on expatriate workers, who take up 95.5 percent of private jobs in Kuwait. Of those workers, 70.6 percent work in four economic activities: manufacturing industries (14.1 percent), construction (10.2 percent), wholesale and retail, trade, repair of vehicles and motorcycles (32 percent), and real estate activity (14.3 percent).

In addition to improving a worker's chances of finding a better, more financially rewarding job, having a university degree is also essential for many governmental transactions in Kuwait, such as applying for a driver's license (which also requires a minimum KD 600 monthly wage and two-year stay in the country), and having the ability to change employers freely.

Average salary

In the meantime, the statistics show that the average monthly salary of expatriates in Kuwait is KD 281, including only KD 259 in the private sector and KD 643 in the public sector. The average salary of a male expatriate private sector employee remains at a meager KD 251, which for instance is well below the aforementioned KD 600 minimum to apply for a driver's license, or the KD 400 minimum to sponsor a family in Kuwait.

The average salary of expatriates working in the public sector is generally better at KD 643, but remains humble compared to the KD 1,457 average for Kuwaiti public sector employees. In the meantime, the statistics show a narrower gap between the average salary of Kuwaitis in the public and private sectors, as a Kuwaiti in the private sector receives an average of KD 1,378. Still, the public sector remains more attractive for national manpower considering that it is more rewarding, less demanding (six daily working hours in average compared to eight in the private sector), and provides more in terms of benefits and job security.

Labor growth

According to the statistics, the number of expatriate workers in Kuwait grew by 6.8 percent as of the end of last year compared to a year before, whereas the number of Kuwaiti workers increased by only three percent during that period. The total number of Kuwaiti manpower dropped slightly to 18.1 percent from 18.6 percent by the end of 2015. The total number of workers in Kuwait reached 1,965,381 as of December 31, 2016, of which only 354,806 are Kuwaitis while the rest (1,610,575) are citizens of many countries who call Kuwait home. This number does not include domestic helpers (also known as household employees) who totaled 673,099 by the end of last year. People from non-Arab Asian countries make up 50 percent of the total workforce, compared to 30.4 from Arab countries (excluding Kuwaitis). The Indian and Egyptian worker groups remain the two largest expatriate communities in Kuwait respectively, and the only two that are larger than the Kuwaiti manpower in the country.

جدول رقم (3)
التوزيع العددي والنسبي للعمالة حسب أعلى 10 جنسيات والنوع وفقاً للتحلة في 2016-12-31
Numerical and percentage distribution for the employees by top (10) nationalities and Sex as of 31-12-2016*

Nationality	النسبة (%) Percentage (%)			العدد Number			الجنسية	الترتيب serial
	جملة Total	انث Females	ذكور Males	جملة Total	انث Females	ذكور Males		
India	27.3	11.2	30.9	536,742	40,603	496,139	الهند	1
Egypt	23.2	8.5	26.5	455,106	30,528	424,578	مصر	2
Kuwait	18.1	54.7	9.8	354,806	197,557	157,249	الكويت	3
Bangladesh	7.9	1.0	9.5	155,056	3,770	151,888	بنغلاديش	4
Pakistan	4.6	0.4	5.5	89,843	1,479	88,364	باكستان	5
Philippines	3.9	11.0	2.3	77,333	39,667	37,666	الفلبين	6
Syria	3.3	1.5	3.7	64,191	5,487	58,704	سوريا	7
Nepal	2.2	0.7	2.5	43,152	2,535	40,617	نيبال	8
Iran	1.3	0.5	1.5	20,142	1,923	24,219	ايران	9
Jordan	1.3	1.7	1.2	24,873	6,161	18,712	الأردن	10
Other Nationality	7.0	8.7	6.6	137,535	31,405	106,130	باقي الجنسيات	11
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	1,965,381	361,115	1,604,266	الإجمالي	

* Except for the household sector (domestic workers).
Source: Integrated Database - LMIS

* باستثناء القطاع المنزلي (الخدموما في مناهم)
المصدر: البيانات المدعجة - نظام معلومات سوق العمل

- Only 10 percent of expats in the private sector have university degrees
- Expats make up 81.9 percent of total manpower

جدول رقم (1)
التوزيع العددي والنسبي للعمالة حسب الجنسية (كويتي/غير كويتي) والنوع وفقاً للتحلة في 2016-12-31
Numerical and percentage distribution for the employees by nationality (Kuwaiti / non-Kuwaiti) and Sex as of 31-12-2016*

Nationality	النسبة (%) Percentage (%)			العدد Number			الجنسية
	جملة Total	انث Females	ذكور Males	جملة Total	انث Females	ذكور Males	
Kuwaiti	18.1	54.7	9.8	354,806	197,557	157,249	كويتي
Non-Kuwaiti	81.9	45.3	90.2	1,610,575	163,558	1,447,017	غير كويتي
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	1,965,381	361,115	1,604,266	الإجمالي

* Except for the household sector (domestic workers).

* باستثناء القطاع المنزلي (الخدموما في مناهم)

جدول رقم (4)
توزيع العمالة حسب متوسط الأجر الشهري، الجنسية (كويتي/غير كويتي)، القطاع والنوع وفقاً للتحلة في 2016-12-31
Employees distribution by average monthly wages, nationality (Kuwaiti / non Kuwaiti), sector and Sex as of 31-12-2016*

Nationality	Gender	الإجمالي Total	القطاع الخاص Private Sector		القطاع الحكومي Government Sector		النوع	الجنسية
			الخاص	الحكومي	الخاص	الحكومي		
Kuwaiti	Males	1,641	1,346	295	1,726	ذكور	كويتي	
	Females	1,170	798	372	1,254	انث		
	Total	1,378	1,067	311	1,457	جملة		
Non-Kuwaiti	Males	264	251	13	641	ذكور	غير كويتي	
	Females	431	359	72	646	انث		
	Total	281	259	22	643	جملة		

* Except for the household sector (domestic workers).

* باستثناء القطاع المنزلي (الخدموما في مناهم)



جدول رقم (11)
التوزيع العددي والنسبي للعمالة بالقطاع المنزلي حسب أعلى 10 جنسيات والنوع وفقاً للتحلة في 2016-12-31
Numerical and Percentage Distribution for the Employees in the Household sector by Top(10) Nationalities and Sex as of 31-12-2016*

Nationality	النسبة (%) Percentage (%)			العدد Number			الجنسية	الترتيب serial
	جملة Total	انث Females	ذكور Males	جملة Total	انث Females	ذكور Males		
India	44.3	21.6	70.2	298,269	77,451	220,818	الهند	1
Philippines	24.2	45.3	0.3	163,162	162,188	974	الفلبين	2
Sri Lanka	10.5	14.7	5.6	70,542	52,799	17,743	سريلانكا	3
Bangladesh	9.7	0.3	20.4	65,271	1,048	64,223	بنغلاديش	4
Ethiopia	3.8	6.8	0.5	25,763	24,309	1,454	اثيوبيا	5
Nepal	3.5	6.1	0.6	23,654	21,813	1,841	نيبال	6
Ghana	1.0	1.8	0.1	6,861	6,437	424	غانا	7
Indonesia	0.6	1.1	0.0	3,985	3,966	19	اندونيسيا	8
Madagascar	0.5	0.8	0.0	3,046	3,041	5	مدغشقر	9
Pakistan	0.3	0.0	0.6	1,949	23	1,926	باكستان	10
Other Nationality	1.6	1.5	1.7	10,597	5,338	5,259	باقي الجنسيات	11
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	673,099	358,413	314,686	الإجمالي	

* Source: Integrated Database - LMIS

* المصدر: البيانات المدعجة - نظام معلومات سوق العمل

ADAN HOSPITAL DOCTORS SUCCESSFULLY PERFORM 12-HOUR HEART SURGERY

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: A medical team at Salman Al-Dabbous heart center of Adan Hospital, led by the head of heart surgery center Prof Riyadh Al-Tarazi and assisted by a team from University of Hanover, succeeded in carrying out a Vascutek Thoraflex frozen elephant trunk surgery, which lasted over 12 hours. This operation is considered the most critical for the heart and the aorta.

The 44-year-old patient suffered from dissection and lacerations in his aorta since 2011, and underwent lifesaving surgery then. But recently, it was noticed that the

aorta had expanded and the tearing endangered his life, as the diameter of the aorta reached 9 cm, which required a complex surgical intervention.

Dr Tarrazi said it was decided to carry out the operation to prevent the danger of the aorta bursting at any moment, so the surgery was done using the latest German technology, maybe for the first time in the Middle East. The German team that participated in the operation said the success rate of this operation at University of Hanover is over 90 percent, and complications affect no more than 10 percent of cases. The patient is recovering very well and is undergoing rehabilitation.



KUWAIT: Khalid Al-Hajri, Chairman of the Green Line Environmental Group, speaks during a lecture to spread environmental awareness for teachers.

GREEN LINE SPREADS ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS AMONG TEACHERS

By Nawara Fattahova

KUWAIT: The Green Line Environmental Group (GLEG) announced the conclusion of a national project on environmental awareness for teachers yesterday. This program was held over two weeks in cooperation with the Ministry of Education. Khalid Al-Hajri, Chairman of GLEG, said the program is one of the biggest environmental awareness projects on the ministry level in the region. "This is one of the national environmental projects held by GLEG during the past 17 years in cooperation with other institutions. They all aim to raise environmental awareness in the society," he said.

This year, 1,200 teachers participated in the project from various schools from all areas. "It is a great achievement to witness this huge number of teachers responding and participating. GLEG considers this event as one of the biggest events of 2017. It is also one of the achievements of the Ministry of Education, which participated in

making it successful," stressed Hajri.

Its success and positive feedback were behind listing this project on the annual agenda of GLEG's activities. "We will hold this program annually in cooperation with the Ministry of Education to spread awareness among teachers. This project focuses on enriching the teacher with information on all aspects of the Kuwaiti environment," he added.

More than 30 environmental issues in Kuwait were discussed, including the ways of dealing with them. "These included environmental pollution and the ways of eliminating it, in addition to the importance of protecting the environment and its impact on health, social and economic aspects of individuals," he noted. "Every environmental issue that was discussed included statistics, information, scientific, technical, legal, and environmental documents to provide full information, which increases the environmental awareness of teachers," concluded Hajri.

KUWAIT TO IMPORT FUEL, GAS AFTER REFINERY SHUTDOWN

4.1 QUAKE DETECTED NORTHERN KUWAIT

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) yesterday announced completely suspending operations at Shuaiba refinery following the Supreme Petroleum Council's decision to shut down Kuwait's oldest refinery. Commenting on the decision, KNPC's deputy CEO for Mina Abdullah refinery Mutlaq Al-Azmi said that the decision comes within a five-year plan including 16 transitory months until Zour refinery and the clean fuel project at Mina Abdullah and Mina Ahmadi are operational.

Speaking in an interview with Al-Arabiya TV, Azmi said the plan includes importing some products, namely fuel oil to be used during the summer to generate electricity, in addition to importing gasoline during certain months when Kuwaiti refineries undergo maintenance operations. Azmi added that the cost of gasoline was getting dearer because the refinery was very old, but stressed that importing it would have the same cost.

Notably, the decision to close Shuaiba refinery came after all studies showed how difficult and economically unfeasible its development would be. The refinery was launched in 1968 with a daily capacity of refining 200,000 barrels. It will be substituted by Zour refinery and its storage facilities and marine export platforms will be used for the biofuel project, while its staff will be distributed to new posts in the other three refineries.

Earthquake

KISR's national earthquake detection network yesterday recorded a 4.1 earthquake to the west of Faw in Iraq and northern Kuwait. The network added that the earthquake's epicenter was 80 km to the north of Kuwait City and that it took place 20 km deep underground. It also recorded two aftershocks - 2.1 and 2.6 on the Richter scale.

Court orders

The court of appeal yesterday rejected a case filed by Shaab Co-op Society contesting a decision by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor (MSAL) on invalidating the co-ops union elections. The court also seconded MSAL's decision on withdrawing the Harbush wedding hall's management from the donor and have it run by the ministry's community development department. The court also mandated the donor to pay the ministry

the sum of KD 6,000 in rent since issuing the withdrawal decision. Accordingly, MSAL will withdraw the managements of all other wedding halls, starting with the ones where violations were detected and which have been ignoring ministry warnings and notices. Notably, ever since putting out MSAL's administrative decision number 1291/2015 pertaining withdrawing the management of wedding halls, the ministry has so far withdrawn them from 25 halls, including 10 belonging to co-ops and 15 belonging to individuals.

Disabled workers

Deputy director of the Public Authority for Disabled Affairs' (PADA) educational sector Majed Saleh said a meeting would be held this month with 111 private sector companies to explain articles 14 and 15 of the disabled law pertaining appointing four percent of disabled people in these companies. Saleh added that a representative from the manpower authority would attend the meeting to explain the measures taken in the case of ignoring this percentage, as well as incentives to those respecting it. Saleh explained that disabled law mainly applies to citizens, while non-Kuwaiti disabled people would only have access to healthcare, education and employment provided they are children of Kuwaiti mothers. He added that according to the law, non-Kuwaiti disabled people get traffic facilities and letters of recommendation to charities assisting non-Kuwaiti disabled people.

Drag racers

Jahra Governor Lt Gen (retired) Fahd Ameer declared plans to build a new city 10 km to the west of Jahra including low-cost houses built by the housing welfare authority for the residents of Taima, which can then be used as a private residence area. Ameer also reassured drag race lovers that a special track would be built near Jahra cemetery where they can practice various driving skills. In addition, Ameer stressed the need to diversify national income sources by building more factories instead of imposing more fees. He also expressed hope that the Silk City project would achieve cultural development rather than building more concrete structures. He also noted that a touristic project would be built in Khowaisat, in addition to a heritage market similar to Mubarakiya to the south of Saad Al-Abdullah.



The Shuaiba refinery.

In my view

THEN AND NOW

By Nawaf Al-Arbash



At first, let us set a fact straight: I strongly believe that entrepreneurs do not have to own a business. They can be anyone who is proactive, takes the initiative and leads in their domain - be it a daytime job, volunteer work or even in their homes amongst their families - although this article sheds light on business entrepreneurs (business owners).

I am very proud of all Kuwaiti entrepreneurs who have risen in different business industries in the past decade. They were and still are role models for many entrepreneurs after them, which means they have set a benchmark that says "you do not have to settle for a job and a fixed paycheck." This is where I beg to differ. I have been witnessing a lot of resignations nowadays by people proclaiming to be entrepreneurs, because they are willing to take the risk of leaving their job and starting their own businesses, shifting from the former to the latter like a bullet train!

You see, back in the days where our ancestors were working day and night to bring some bread and butter home; some made it as businesspeople, while others merely secured a roof and food on their tables. Let us take the ones that established successful businesses, many of whom own major conglomerates in our present day. Such entrepreneurs from the 20th century most likely started from nil, or a very weak compensation from a job. Yet, they nurtured their families and saved some of their income - if they could afford to - and continued to work faithfully.

Now, the difference in investment opportunities and business ideas back then is that the market was new and growing, where almost any idea would have been seen as a "new and good idea", because at that time there were gaps and demands in many sectors, with zero competitors of those that could be counted on one's fingers. This made it almost inevitable (even statistically) for a business to succeed; and in turn, it would have made a lot of sense for the entrepreneur to leave their job and attend to their business to nourish and grow it.

Coming back to the 21st century: Our young entrepreneurs are highly motivated and extremely smart, but some might be a tad bit over-motivated after seeing their peers' success, reading "successful people's quotes" (which is a trend now), and seeing wealthy people's Instagram posts from all over the world. This creates a blur in their judgment.

We are in an era where the gaps in the market are not as they were back in our ancestors' days, and many ideas which our young entrepreneurs have exposed to a saturated market (which means that there is no room for one more). It also means that the person is taking a very high risk leaving their stable income for a business that they might have not planned well for.

As many success stories as there are, people should also know there are lots of people who did not quite make it - which is fine - but they have also put themselves in debt and have lowered the living standards of their families, all because of an ambition. Or specifically, taking the wrong way to pursue an ambition.

Opportunities are there in the market, and like there were gaps back in the 20th century, new gaps exist now as a result of the high rate of businesses opening. A person should have a comprehensive business plan, do some market research and perform a feasibility study. These tools are like stories that will tell you the risk you will be taking, and if it is worth it or not to take it.

I hope all readers advise - but never stop - anyone around them who wants to leave their job blindly because of a business idea. Let them start it leanly (I will talk about lean start-ups in another article) - the state's policies allow and support it well now.

DRUG SMUGGLING ATTEMPT FOILED

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Kuwait Coastguard foiled an attempt to smuggle drugs into Kuwait via sea. The Coastguard Department had received information about a planned drug smuggling attempt, and detectives were able to confirm the data received. Two persons, Kuwaiti and Saudi, were identified and arrested red handed while trying to smuggle a bag containing 60 pieces of drugs. A sample of the drug was sent for testing to determine its contents. The suspects were sent to concerned authorities for further action.

Meanwhile, the Interior Ministry also announced that central prison authorities arrested two persons who attempted to smuggle contrabands into the prison's facility. One of the suspects had a mobile phone and a SIM which he attempted to smuggle for his jailed brother, while the other possessed a substance believed to be drugs.

Traffic campaigns

The traffic department carried out several campaigns last week during which 36,185 tickets were issued, 189 vehicles and 17 motorcycles were impounded, 71 people were arrested and three expats were deported.

Fire

Fire broke out in Ahmad Al-Humaidhi elementary school for boys yesterday morning. Jahra occupational center responded to an emergency call reported the fire, and managed to tackle the flames within minutes. No injuries were reported.

Strategic Partner **ZAIN** Sponsored By **SAMSUNG**

Organized By **Kuwait Times**

The Middle East's Largest Students' Art Competition

KUWAIT BEAUTIFUL & GREEN

& STUDENTS ART COMPETITION

March 19th Till April 20th, 2017

HELLO ARTISTS...

Welcome to the Student's Art Competition. I hope you are ready to paint a beautiful painting and win wonderful prizes. The theme for your painting must be related to planting and greening, basically anything pertaining to our environment. We are looking for a great painting. So, please pick up your color pencils, paint brushes, crayons or whatever you prefer and start drawing and painting.

Good luck to you, our young artists.

- Competition is open to ages from (6 - 8) (9 - 11) (12 - 14) (15 - 17) and Special needs.
- The competition is open for all schools in Kuwait (Government and Private)
- **The competition will start on March 19th and will continue till April 20th 2017.**
- 10 winners from each category will receive valuable prizes.
- All participants will receive a certificate of appreciation.
- All schools participating in the competition will receive an appreciation plaque.
- Any school or individual interested to participate in this competition is welcome to visit the office of Kuwait Times and collect the drawing sheets.
- Drawing sheets will be given to schools FREE of charge.
- Only drawing sheets provided by the Kuwait Times will be allowed.
- You can use any kind of color pencils, paint brushes or crayons.

* For all Jazeera Airways tickets terms and conditions are applied

Kuwait Times Participation Form

If you are interested to participate fill the form and send it to Kuwait Times.

From: _____

We would like to confirm our participation in the above mentioned activity with the total number of participating student's so the corresponding number of drawing sheets can be delivered to our school.

School: _____

Tel: _____ Fax: _____

Address: _____

Total number of interested students are

6 - 8 years 9 - 11 years 12 - 14 years 15 - 17 years Special need

Name: _____ Signature: _____

For more information contact Kuwait Times Tel: 24835616/7 Fax 24835620/1 or send an email to: ads@kuwaittimes.net

* For more information and updates please visit

facebook/kuwaittimesc twitter/TimesComp

Sponsored By **JW MARRIOTT KUWAIT CITY** **Jazeera AIRWAYS**



KUWAIT: Sheikha Altaf Al-Sabah (left) and Leann Abdulraheem at the Kuwait Textile Arts Association's annual exhibition in Dahiat Abdullah Al-Salem. — Photos by Athoob Al-Shuaibi



Woven recreation of an old Kuwaiti flag.

KTAA HOLDS 18TH TEXTILE EXHIBITION

By Athoob Al-Shuaibi

KUWAIT: Textile art is part of an ancient tradition inherited by generations in Kuwait, alongside the sadu industry. From the past eight years, the Kuwait Textile Arts Association (KTAA) has been guarding this craft under the umbrella of the Sadu House. Recently, the

association held their 18th annual textile exhibition under the patronage and presence of Sheikha Altaf Al-Sabah, the honorary president of Sadu House.

"This organization aims to emphasize the advancement of cultural exchange regarding the textile heritage in order to build up and energize our textile community," Sheikha Altaf

said. "I am real happy and proud to see the growth of the KTAA under the Sadu House's support." Mariam Moussa, a textile artisan, expressed her appreciation for participating in this exhibition. "I am from Yemen, and have been living in Kuwait since 1963," she said. "After my children grew up and winged away from our nest, I started to occupy my free time with a hobby. My work is not for sale; I am saving it for my grandchildren. The exhibited work represents women selling bread in Sanaa." The textile works were characterized by smart and vivid colors, as well as bold and harmoniously intertwined strings. They are



A visitor looks at the 'Weaving Stories' exhibition. Textile artists from Kuwait and the United States collaborated to create the unique artwork, featuring various aspects of Kuwait's heritage, environment and history. Organized by the Sadu House.



Textile artist Mariam Moussa (right) and her daughter in front of her textile artwork.



The quilted pixelated portrait of Abdulrahman, the father of Haifa Abdul Mughni.

varied in content and concepts. Some of them represented nature and heritage, while others showed geometrical shapes.

However, in a unique piece of art, Haifa Al-Abdul Mughni presented a monotone, pixelated portrait of her father using scraps of different shades of a gray of an Arab garment (dishdasha). In the setting, there are thirty squares with a different pattern on each one of them. "This work has been recently selected among 80 textile creations from around the world, and from more than a thousand participants during a prestigious annual contest," said Haifa.

All winning participants were observed at



Haifa Abdul Mughni in front of her award winning textile artwork, a quilt she created to honor her father.

the end of the opening ceremony. Sheikha Altaf gave a special recognition and praised the effort of Leann Abdul Raheem, the inaugural member of the association who joined in 1995. The textile exhibition will carry on until today. It is held at Ahmad Aladwani Hall in Dahiat Abdullah Al-Salem.

FISHERMEN UNION SPEAKS AT PRESS CONFERENCE TODAY

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: The fishermen union yesterday called all fishermen for a press conference today at the union's headquarters in Sharq to discuss the challenges they face after a decision to evict fishermen from their accommodation. A number of fishermen were handed over notices earlier this week to evacuate their apartments at the fishermen's temporary residence near the Amiri Hospital. The fishermen were not given an alternative residence they could relocate to.

The union explained that the decision to evict the build-

ing was made months ago, urging state officials to solve the problem. "The owner did not give a reasonable period before the eviction despite fact that April's rent was already paid," the union stressed in a statement, urging all fishermen to be present at the union headquarters at 6:30 pm this evening.

The union also urged the government to build a village for fishermen in order to avoid a situation that would severely affect Kuwait's daily production of fish. In addition, the union invited lawmakers and relevant government bodies to attend the press conference.

FARMER NOMINATED FOR MIDDLE EAST PRIZE

KUWAIT: Middle East Agricultural Award for best innovation in Dubai selected Kuwaiti farmer Yusef Al-Kuraibani for the second consecutive year among best three nominees to win the prize. Kuraibani said yesterday that hundreds of companies, universities, research centers and agri-

cultural organizations around the world are competing to win the prize, one of the top agricultural prizes in the region. The prize is not only restricted to the Middle East, but also allowed participation of companies and agricultural organizations around the world in case they possess branches in the Middle East like many American and European companies that have long expertise in this domain.

This resulted in raising the number of participants from various parts of the world and made the competition tougher.

After the referees' committee evaluated hundreds of participants, Kuraibani was chosen as one of the best three nominees, as he took part individually and presented a comprehensive project of planting rare kinds of vegetables which he succeeded to plant for the first time in the Middle East region. His plantations include black tomatoes, white strawberries, and red corn besides many other rare kinds.

"I prefer to take part in this competition individually and to compete with international companies and organizations to prove the ability of young Kuwaiti youth," Kuraibani said. The prize recognizes the prominent achievements of individuals, departments, teams, or organizations that contributed to the growth and development of agriculture, aquaculture and veterinary industry.

The UAE Ministry of Climate Change and Environment approved the prize officially in 2017. — KUNA



START PACKING NOW FOR THE NEXT SUMMER!

Book your holiday early to one of our destinations in India & enjoy our special fares

India Starting From

KD 52

Round Trip All Inclusive



- Sales Period from 1st April to 30th April 2017.
- Travel Period from 1st April to 8th June 2017.
- Terms & conditions apply.
- Increased frequencies to Delhi, Colombo, Dakka and Kochi.

#SamanaKuwaitiya

171

kuwaitairways.com

or contact your travel agent



The United Nations Development Program in Kuwait

Within the framework of the project
"Achieving Kuwait Vision 2035 Towards Persons with Disabilities"

is hiring for the position of:

Project Manager

For details about the position, please check the Terms of Reference available at the link below:

http://procurement-notices.undp.org/view_notice.cfm?notice_id=36699

The last date for accepting applications is Thursday, 13 April 2017



BURGAN BANK SPONSORS 'GREEK MUSICAL NIGHT'

KUWAIT: Borgan Bank, the second largest conventional bank in terms of assets, in partnership with the Embassy of Greece in Kuwait and Dar Al Athar Al-Islamiyyah recently sponsored a Greek musical night event at the Yarmouk Cultural Center on 2 April 2017. The musical night, held under the patronage of the Greek Ambassador in the State of Kuwait, Andreas Papadakis, aimed to celebrate the rich Greek music and encourage the exchange of cultures.

The night hosted a group of famous Greek musicians as well as renowned "Zoe Tiganouria", the Greek composer, accordion soloist and performer worked as a composer and accordionist with famous singers in the Greek discography, as well as with international artists (such as James Brown, Al Di-Meola, Omer Faruk Tekbilek, Goran Bregovic, Chico Freeman, Z'lf, Livaneli, and others). 'Zoe' entertained the audience through her Greek, Middle Eastern, Latin and international music performance.

Borgan Bank believes that sponsoring cultural events such as this, gives a chance to the public and younger generations to meet international artists and get introduced to different music genres from different cultures. As art continues to play a powerful role in bringing people of different cultures together and supporting progress and advancement in society, Borgan Bank is proud to support such an important musical event. This sponsorship falls under Borgan Bank's full-fledged community program entitled 'ENGAGE' - Together to be the change. This program sheds light on important aspects affecting every segment of the society by promoting social welfare through educational, cultural, social and health initiatives. Borgan Bank's approach to 'ENGAGE' begins with a vital principle that as a Kuwaiti financial institution, its conduct and policies should be aligned with the needs and interests of the Kuwaiti society.

CHANGE OF SKIN COLOR THROUGH GENERATIONS

By Salah Al-Sayer

Both anthropologists and biologists believe that Africa, namely Tropical Africa through which the Equator passes and is known to be extremely hot and humid, was the home of the first man. They believe that, by time, people's naturally red skin turned into black to resist the negative impact of ultraviolet rays and protect the folic acid needed for fetuses' growth inside wombs. However, following the first human migrations to cold areas, their complexion changed to white to produce vitamin D because dark complexions provide natural protection against sunrays.

A research done by a group of scientists at Californian Academy of Science says that ancient immigrants from Central Africa to South Africa, known as the Khoisan, have lighter complexions than that of Central Africans. This change in color took place to cope with less ultraviolet rays in the new habitat. The research also shows that the Zulu Group are darker than the Khoisan because Zulus' migration to the south was more recent (1,000 years ago) and they have not spent enough time to have their skin color change like those who arrived earlier.

Racial groups that inhabited the western banks of the Red Sea (near Sudan and Ethiopia) have very dark skin to help them resist the heat and limit the effect of ultraviolet rays, which is unlike the Arabs who inhabited the Eastern bank of the sea and managed to resist the same climate conditions by more civilized ways such as wearing clothes without which they would have had darker complexions.

The most amazing finding of the research is talking about the dark complexion of the Inuit people in Alaska (where the cold requires a white complexion that produces vitamin D from the sun). Scientists explain this by the fact that they have vitamin D-rich fish, which spared them from the need to change color and adapt because their bodies do not need it.

—Translated by Kuwait Times

ABK MARKS WORLD AUTISM DAY

KUWAIT: Reinforcing its support towards the special needs segment in Kuwait, Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) celebrated World Autism Day in collaboration with the Kuwait Dream Center; a UK accredited Early Intervention Centre Specialized in autism. The event was held on April 2, 2017 at the center's headquarters in Khaldiya.

World Autism Day is an internationally recognized day, which aims to raise awareness of children with autism around the world. The day itself brings individual autism

organizations together to aid in things like research, diagnoses, treatment, and overall awareness for those with the disorder. ABK's sponsorship and support to this cause stems from its strong belief in the value of supporting individuals with special needs and raising awareness of the importance of recognizing them among Kuwait's communities, and providing them with a sense of equality.

The children from the Center enjoyed a fun-filled day and were engaged in various activities. The event was con-

cluded with a powerful message sent across by the children, where they released blue balloons into the sky of Kuwait, as a sign of solidarity.

The Bank is keen to play an active role in encouraging a stronger sense of belonging among these individuals by celebrating them and offering them the opportunity to realize how special they truly are. It will continue to participate in impactful events and activities in an effort to make a true difference in the lives of these individuals.

Strategic Partner: ZAIN

Sponsored By: Canon

Organized by: Kuwait Times

2017 SHOOT & WIN KUWAIT SCENERY & NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

March 12th, 2017 Till April 20th, 2017

Rules & Conditions

The photo contest begins on March 12, 2017 and ends on April 20, 2017. To ensure eligibility for the contest, please submit files in high resolution:

- **Photographic Camera:** Please submit original files (entries should include metadata if possible) in jpg format on CD or flash memory with hard copy on photo paper (size: 300 x 400 millimeters or 11.81 x 15.75 inches)
- **Mobile phone or tablet Camera:** Please submit original files in jpg format on CD or flash memory with hard copy on photo paper (A4 size: 210 x 297 millimeters or 8.27 x 11.69 inches).
- **File photographs** should accurately reflect the subject matter and the scene as it appears. 'High Dynamic Range' images are acceptable. Photos that have been digitally altered beyond standard optimization (removal of dust, cropping, reasonable adjustments to exposure, color, contrast, etc.) will be disqualified.
- **Location - Detailed caption of subject matter**
- If you choose to include people in your submission, you are responsible for obtaining the necessary permissions from the individuals depicted, and must be able to provide copies of these to Kuwait Times upon request.
- **Kuwait Times & Jazeera Airways** has all rights to use the photograph in internal and external communications materials including but not limited to websites and web publications, fact sheets, fundraising publications, advertising, multimedia, presentation and membership services, annual reports and Kuwait Times' magazines, or by other individuals and organizations for Kuwait Times' use in news stories, newsletters, reports, displays, web pages, videos, membership premiums and the like.
- **Winners** will be chosen by a panel of independent judges.
- **Original coupon should be stuck on the back of each photo with complete information of the participant.**

Prizes:

- First prize:** Canon Camera EOS 5D MARK II BODY + free Bag, One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Dubai - Kuwait by Jazeera Airways*.
- Second prize:** Canon Camera EOS 80D + 18-55MM IS STM + free Bag, One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Dubai - Kuwait by Jazeera Airways*.
- Third prize:** Canon Camera EOS 750D 18-135 IS STM + free Bag, One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Dubai - Kuwait by Jazeera Airways*.
- Fourth prize:** EOS 750D 18-55 IS STM + Free Bag, One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Dubai - Kuwait by Jazeera Airways*.
- Fifth prize:** EOS 750D 18-55 IS STM + Free Bag, One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Dubai - Kuwait by Jazeera Airways*.
- Sixth prize:** Canon Camera Dsc bus 310 HS + free Bag, One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Dubai - Kuwait by Jazeera Airways*.
- Seventh prize:** Canon Camera PSD 30 BLUE + free Bag, One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Dubai - Kuwait by Jazeera Airways*.
- Eighth prize:** Canon Camera PSD 30 BLUE + Camera Bag, One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Dubai - Kuwait by Jazeera Airways*.
- Ninth prize:** Canon Camera IXUS 180 BLACK + free Camera Bag, One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Dubai - Kuwait by Jazeera Airways*.
- Tenth prize:** Canon Camera IXUS 180 BLACK + free Camera Bag, One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Dubai - Kuwait by Jazeera Airways*.

For all Jazeera Airways tickets terms and conditions are applied

Participation Form

If you are interested in participating fill in the form and send it to Kuwait Times,

Name: _____ Tel: _____ Civil ID: _____

e-mail: _____

DSLR Camera Mobile phone or tablet camera

Caption information: _____

For more information contact Kuwait Times
Tel: 24835616/7 Fax 24835620/1 or send an email to: ads@kuwaittimes.net

For more information and updates please visit:
facebook/kuwaittimesc twitter/TimesComp

AN ARMLESS PARLIAMENT

By Thaar Al-Rasheedi

Historically speaking, politically immunizing His Highness the Prime Minister is not a first, and was not invented by some of the current lawmakers who announced this immunity last month after making a deal to solve some tensed issues in return for a period of political calmness. The majority of the 2012 parliament; the first to be annulled, gave the premier a similar immunity when they suspended a grilling motion planned by then MP Obaid Al-Wasmi. However, both cases prove that suspending a monitoring tool is a fatal unacceptable parliamentary mistake not only because such 'immunization' has no constitutional, legal, or even organizational support, but also because it is a declaration of suspending the duty of monitoring, which is the parliament's second arm after legislation. It costs the parliament to unjustifiably lose one of its arms.

In my opinion, neither the government nor His Highness the Prime Minister should be blamed for this immunization, because if we assume that it was the government that made this offer to opposition MPs as part of a certain political deal, we should only blame

those who accepted the offer, not those who made it. If what we hear is true, this deal does not indict the government. It indicts the entire parliament because it means that the opposition has turned into a temporary pro-government wing, which clearly involves an unjustified and unacceptable abdication by the entire parliament, not only the opposition.

By this, the opposition has made a political bargain without authorization from those who voted for them and thought they would achieve public gains. The people only authorized them to practice public monitoring and legislate in the name of the nation. They were not authorized to abdicate either constitutional tool. For the first time ever, the government is innocent of committing a fatal constitutional mistake for which only opposition MPs should be blamed.

The real problem does not lie in declaring the parliament's loss of its monitoring arm through this deal, it actually lies in the fact that the parliament also suffers from paralysis in its legislative arm, as ever since it was elected, it only passed one law so far. It is more of an armless parliament. —Translated by Kuwait Times



KUWAIT AIRWAYS' 6TH BOEING 777-300ER ARRIVES ON TIME

KUWAIT: Kuwait Airways, the official national carrier of the State of Kuwait, has once again welcomed a further addition into its fleet, with the arrival at Kuwait International Airport of the sixth of 10 Boeing 777-300ER aircraft on order. The sixth delivery in only four months. The new aircraft is to be called 'Meskan' - named after the small Kuwaiti island just off the East coast of the mainland.

The addition of 'Meskan' brings Kuwait Airways' operational fleet up to 25, with the five 777-300ER aircraft already in service having made had an immediate impact on the official national carrier of Kuwait's improving product, seat capacity and frequency increases to its passengers.

The sixth Boeing arrives during a Summer Season that Kuwait Airways recently announced has seen its weekly frequencies increased by 16 percent, across its network - a total of 324 flights per week. The 777-300ER's introduction has also seen seat capacity boosted by up to 58 percent, on certain routes.

With the sixth 777-300ER now set to enter commercial service within days, this allows Kuwait Airways to not only support existing routes on its regular 36-destination network, but has also meant that certain

routes are now exclusively served by the new aircraft. These routes include: London; New York; Frankfurt; and soon to be Dhaka; Bangkok and Manila.

"The addition of the Boeing 777-300ER into our fleet is not only making a significant difference to the overall product and service Kuwait Airways can now offer our passengers, but the fact that we are receiving more than one new aircraft per month, since the first delivery in December 2016, proves that we are well on schedule for this order of 10 to be completed by Q3 2017," said Rasha Al-Roumi, Chairperson and CEO, Kuwait Airways.

"We are pleased to note that Kuwait Airways' aircraft acquisition program is backed fully by all stakeholders and the Kuwait government and we are confident that the official national carrier of Kuwait will be a significant driver of success - not just for the airline - but for the overall ambitions of the government for the diversification of the economy and the country's long-term commercial status, infrastructure development and wider business and tourism goals." A further 25 Airbus aircraft are also on order by Kuwait Airways, over the next four to five years, including those from the A320neo and A350 families of aircraft.

Crime Report

CRASHING WALL KILLS WORKER

KUWAIT: An Egyptian man died when a concrete wall collapsed on him while working in a house in Naeem. A case was filed for investigation. A medical report that a colleague of the victim brought to police indicated that the man died as a result of injuries sustained from a heavy object that fell on him. The man was pronounced dead at the hospital and his body was sent to the coroner for a final report.

Officer charged

A military police officer ordered a non-commissioned army officer to remove his uniform so that he can be locked up at Fintas police station. The policeman faces charges of beating and insulting a citizen who had lodged a complaint against him.

Missing wife

Jahra detectives are looking for an Egyptian woman after her husband told police that she disappeared from Jahra Hospital where she was admitted earlier. The man explained that he took his wife to the hospital after she complained from an illness, but discovered later that she had escaped. He tried to call her but her phone was switched off, he added.

Thefts

An unknown person entered an Iraqi man's house in Al-Qasr and stole KD 170 and \$800 in cash. The complainant, a student, lodged a complaint at Naeem police station. Meanwhile, a citizen in Jabriya told police that his phone went missing while he was at a school. A theft case was filed. Separately, a citizen accused a Filipina of stealing a gold necklace worth KD 650 in Maidan Hawally. In the meantime, a citizen informed police that an unknown thief broke into her car and stole her iPhone, expensive watch, phone charger, an ID, blood pressure monitor, school notes, make-up bag and KD 50 in cash. The incident took place in Salmiya.

Harassment

A woman accused a dentist of sexual harassment, saying that he committed his behavior inside his clinic in the presence of an Indian nurse. She said that the dentist harassed her for more than a minute before she confronted him. The dentist was summoned for questioning.

Teachers insulted

Two Kuwaiti teachers lodged a complaint at Bayan police station claiming they were insulted by a Kuwaiti couple while at school.

Physical assault

A citizen took his son to Naeem police station with a medical report to lodge a complaint against a school mate who beat him inside the school. When the student was questioned after summoned, he said he was also beaten. Police are investigating. Meanwhile, a Lebanese woman accused her compatriot of beating her, then when the man was summoned to the police station, he claimed that the woman also assaulted him physically. Both were sent for questioning to find out what exactly happened.

Hoax calls

Police received a number of calls from a girl reporting a suicide and murder taking place in Farwaniya. Police and detectives responded, but could not locate the address given to them. When they called the phone number that the emergency calls came from, it was out of service. Detectives called the same number through WhatsApp, and this time a Syrian man in his sixties answered and told them he did not report any crime. Detectives went to his home and eventually discovered that his 16-year-old daughter used her mother's phone and made the emergency calls. The girl said she made the calls to challenge her family, who had denied her request to travel back home. Her father told police that she suffered mental issues, so the case was closed after police took an undertaking from the father to prevent his daughter from repeating her act. —Translated from the Arabic press



Colombia mudslide death toll hits 254

CHILLING ONLINE 'DEATH GROUPS' SPARK PANIC

BAHRAIN APPROVES MILITARY TRIALS FOR CIVILIANS



AZ ZINJ: A Bahraini man holds a placard bearing the portrait of Sheikh Ali Salman, head of the Shiite opposition movement Al-Wefaq, during a protest against his arrest, at Al Wefaq headquarter building, in the village of Zinj on the outskirts of the capital Manama. — AFP

TOP COURT CUTS OPPOSITION CHIEF'S JAIL TERM

DUBAI: Bahrain's king yesterday approved a constitutional amendment granting military courts the right to try civilians, raising alarm among rights groups for activists in the Gulf kingdom. The decision comes as the Sunni-ruled kingdom tightens its grip on dissent, with scores of largely Shiite activists sentenced to lengthy prison sentences. Bahrain, a key US ally that neighbors Saudi Arabia, has been rocked by frequent protests since authorities cracked down on Shiite demonstrations demanding political reforms in 2011.

Military courts in Bahrain were previously limited to trying members of the armed forces or other branches of the security services and could only try civilians under a state of emergency. Under the new amendment, the courts have the power to try any civilian accused of threatening the security of the state. The official BNA news agency said on Monday that King Hamad had approved the amendment to Article 105(b) of Bahrain's constitution.

The move coincided with a decision by the kingdom's top court to reduce the jail sentence of the leader of main Shiite opposition faction, Sheikh Ali Salman, who had been convicted of inciting hatred and insulting the state. Salman's sentence was cut from nine years to four years in prison. The constitutional amendment was

approved weeks ago by both the 40-seat upper house of parliament, appointed by the king, and the 40-seat elected lower house.

Hamad had declared a temporary three-month state of emergency after the crackdown on protests in 2011, allowing special courts to try civilians connected with a wave of protests. News of the latest amendment sparked harsh criticism among rights groups. Amnesty International called the amendment a "disastrous move towards patently unfair" trials of civilians, warning that it could be used to try activists on "trumped-up charges".

Authorities have justified the move as necessary to fight what they say are Iran-linked anti-government cells that have targeted the state. The kingdom has tightened its grip on dissent over the past six years, stripping dissidents of citizenship and banning foreign media. Bahrain, home to the US Navy's Fifth Fleet, accuses the opposition of working with predominantly Shiite Iran to incite unrest in the kingdom. Tehran has consistently denied involvement. The kingdom last year ordered the dissolution of Shiite opposition group Al-Wefaq, headed by Sheikh Salman, over links to "terrorism". Al-Wefaq had been the largest bloc in Bahrain's elected lower house of parliament. — AFP

EL-SISI AND TRUMP: A COMMON LANGUAGE?

CAIRO: Egypt's President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi, a former general who was elected but rules with a heavy hand, may find a kindred spirit in Donald Trump this week. The two first met in September at New York's Plaza Hotel, with the US president calling El-Sisi "a fantastic guy" and proclaiming "good chemistry" in a meeting that boosted a struggling candidate short on foreign policy experience.

Soon El-Sisi became the first foreign leader to congratulate Trump on his surprise electoral win, his office says. On Monday he visits the White House. That contrasts sharply with El-Sisi's distress under President Barack Obama, who seemed far more sensitive to human rights abuses than his successor, holding up various forms of assistance and never inviting El-Sisi to Washington. El-Sisi is hardly cut from Trump cloth: He is a somewhat taciturn career military man, while his host is a brash real estate developer and reality TV star who inherited a fortune. Yet their instincts and language seem strikingly similar:

Bad people

Trump often speaks of "bad people" seeking to infiltrate the United States, using the term to justify attempted visa bans for nationals of various Muslim countries and to slam illegal immigration from Mexico. El-Sisi often speaks of "evil people" seeking to undermine Egypt, seeming to reference the once-governing Muslim Brotherhood, an Islamist group he overthrew, banned and declared a terrorist organization, as well as the Islamic State group which has launched attacks in Egypt. Some see a hint at mysterious other foreign powers as well.

Fake news

In El-Sisi's Egypt, journalists have been imprisoned on charges of disseminating "false news," and information that contradicts official statements can lead to prosecution. El-Sisi has also said that "the media and the state should not disagree." Trump hasn't come close to arresting journalists, but he does rail against reporters he doesn't like, often dismissing critical stories and even entire media outlets as "fake news" regardless of the facts. He also has bitterly criticized the use of anonymous sources.

Great again

Trump's controversial borrowed slogan, "Make America Great Again," struck a nostalgic chord among certain Americans who yearn for what they view as a simpler time of unabashed national greatness. Many Egyptians are also proud of past glories and despondent over present decline - which El-Sisi has tapped into with skill. "Long Live Egypt" was a mantra, as is "Egypt is the Mother of the World and will become as big as the world." Both seek greatness in massive projects: Trump wants a wall on the Mexico border and other infrastructure upgrades; El-Sisi has launched a much-ballyhooed widening of the Suez Canal, road-works and ambitious plans to build a new capital city.

Winning

Both leaders whip up supporters with talk of victories and seek to project a mystic sense of inevitable success. El-Sisi frequently claims Egypt is winning its continuing war on terrorism in the Sinai Peninsula and has urged people to not "listen to anybody's words but me." Trump promised to make Americans "bored from so much winning," speaks of himself in singular terms and frequently references his surprise election victory.

So-called judges

Trump's attacks on the judiciary for blocking his executive orders have led him to refer to "so called" judges and to tweet that the public should blame them in case of another terrorist attack. El-Sisi has his conflicts with his judiciary, saying that they were "holding back the hands of justice" and should be sentencing more Islamists to death. — AP

NOW OPEN

THE BIGGEST AND MOST ADVANCED DELIVERY CENTER

Work Timings
 (Saturday to Thursday)
 8:00 am to 8:00 pm
 (Friday)
 4:00 pm to 8:00 pm

1803803

Ext.: 2716 / 2721 / 2736 / 2781

At Al-Sayer Group Holding, we always strive to better ourselves by investing in, and delivering, new facilities in order to evolve and improve our customers' experiences.

Our all-new Ardiya facility consists of a Pre-Delivery Inspection Center which is equipped with state-of-the-art technology, a comfortable customer lounge while you wait for your vehicle, ample parking space, and much more that meets your needs.

We believe that going to such lengths is key to provide the very best service to our customers – and the largest, most advanced Car Delivery Center in Kuwait is yet another stride in our journey of achieving great success with our loyal customers.

شركة مؤسسة محمد ناصر السايير وأولاده د.م.
 إحدى شركات مجموعة السايير القابضة

Mohamed Naser Al-Sayer & Sons Est. Co. W.L.L.
 ONE OF THE AL-SAYER GROUP HOLDING COMPANIES.

FROM DUCKS TO DUSHKAS: GUN REPAIR SHOPS IN SYRIA

HASAKEH: For years, Abboud Jan's gun repair shop in the northeastern Syrian city of Hasakeh catered exclusively to local hunters, but the country's devastating six-year war has changed all that. "We used to repair just hunting weapons, but things have changed with the crisis," says the 36-year-old, standing under a sign in his shop promising "Repair of all weapons."

Jan has been in the business for 15 years. When he started out, he mostly fixed shotguns used to hunt waterfowl and other birds. But since Syria's conflict began in March 2011, his skills have branched out to include weapons of war. Now he works on everything from pistols to the widely used Russian DshK heavy machinegun nicknamed the "Dushka." "Now we fix big pieces, in addition to the Dushka and the PKC machineguns, as well as light Russian weapons," he says.

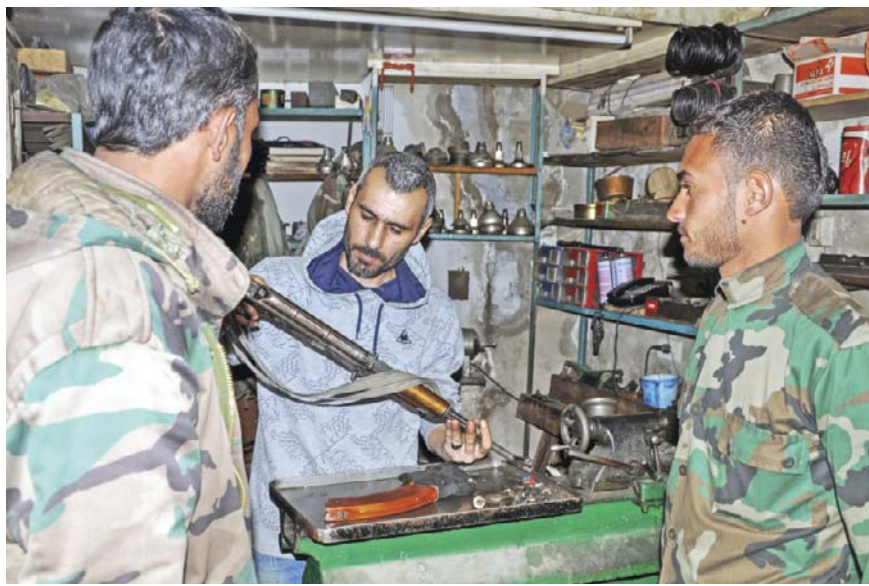
His clientele has also changed. Many of his customers these days are either people who carry a firearm for protection, or fighters from local Kurdish or pro-regime militias. Much of Hasakeh province and the regional capital are under the control of a Kurdish "autonomous administration," which runs separate schools and police units. Other parts of Hasakeh city and the surrounding province remain under

government control. Jan receives around 10 customers a day in his cramped city centre shop, where empty tea cups sit atop soot-covered drawers filled with tools.

Carrying arms

Freddy, a 31-year-old jeweler wearing a baseball cap, comes in holding a small pistol. Jan swiftly gets to work on it. "Before the war I had a hunting rifle, and I used to come here for repairs now and again," Freddy said. "But when the war started, I bought a pistol. 'I keep it with me all the time. We've seen several kidnappings during the war,' he says, adding that his work as a jeweler makes him particularly vulnerable to crime. Jan charges between 1,000 and 5,000 Syrian pounds (\$2-\$10) for basic maintenance work on a pistol, with the price for work on larger pieces determined by their size and make. Most of his work involves fixing weapons that have jammed because of heavy use without proper cleaning and care.

Local pro-regime militiaman Fayeze, a 25-year-old dressed in military fatigues, comes to Jan with a malfunctioning Kalashnikov. Jan examines the assault rifle's sights and then replaces a part. Within minutes he hands it back, fully working again. "I never expected I'd be using weapons," says



HASAKEH: Syrian Abboud Jan inspects an assault rifle in his firearm-repair workshop in the central part of northeastern Syria's Hasakeh city. — AFP

Fayeze. "But today I take care of my weapons and maintain them on a regular basis." Fixing firearms is the only line of work Jan has ever known, but he says he hopes his children will continue with their education

and enter a profession unrelated to violence. In another repair shop in the Kurdish-controlled Azziyeh neighborhood, 47-year-old Abu Mohammed replaces part of a pistol using rough, grease-stained hands. He says

he is unhappy about the turn his business has taken. Like Jan, he mostly worked on hunting weapons before Syria's conflict began in 2011, and he too has since shifted to fixing battlefield arms. "At the beginning, war prompted me to quit my job for a while. I didn't want to deal with combat weapons," he said. But with no other work available, he felt forced to return to his sole source of income. He now handles a wide range of arms, including pistols, rifles and machineguns. He says he avoids working with heavy weapons because of the dangers involved.

"Our profession requires a lot of concentration—it's as though you're dealing with mines," he says. "The first mistake you make is your last." The constant risk is one reason why Abu Mohammed hopes to find another job and stop repairing guns for good. "Maintaining a hunting rifle that brings pleasure to its owner is far better than maintaining these death pieces," he says. He says he never expected Syria to turn into a war zone, and struggles with the idea of fixing weapons to be used against fellow humans. As if trying to convince himself, he adds: "All the guns and pistols that I repair are being used to defend the country, not to spread death within it." — AFP

EMOTIONAL REUNION SHOWS PLIGHT OF SYRIA'S 'LOST KIDS'

DAMASCUS: When Jaafar's grandmother recognized him by his birthmark in a Turkish orphanage, months after his parents were killed fleeing Syria's civil war, she held him tight, screaming for joy. The story of how Hajar Saleh, a 47-year-old nurse, spent fraught weeks tracing her grandson in a foreign country and many months trying to bring him home underscores the terrible plight of Syria's thousands of lost children and their families.

Jaafar was only three-months-old when his parents, Amina Saleh, 23, and her husband Imad Azouz, 25, decided to flee their home in the Sayeda Zeinab suburb of Damascus, close to a frontline, and seek a better life for their family abroad. Palestinian refugees whose families had been in Syria for decades, they lacked legal travel documents, so they gathered their scant savings and paid a smuggler to guide them across the border into Turkey from an area held by Kurdish groups.

A last photograph Amina sent her mother before the attempted border crossing in January 2016 shows her smiling warily at the camera, wearing a heavy winter coat and black headscarf and holding Jaafar, a tiny pink baby in yellow romper suit. But when they tried to cross the frontier a few hours later with dozens of other refugees in a smuggler convoy in northeast Syria, the Turkish border guards who battle Kurdish insurgents there opened fire. Amina and her husband were killed.

Little Jaafar escaped unscathed, protected by his father's body, and was gathered up by survivors of the shooting and taken to the nearby Turkish city of Mardin, where they gave him into the care of a local judge. Hajar's account of the ill-fated border crossing comes from them and from what Turkish authorities told the United Nations children's agency UNICEF, she said.

Before they left Mardin, some of the refugees phoned Hajar to inform her of the fate of her daughter and son-in-law, and to give her the name and phone number of the judge, the start of her months-long odyssey to reclaim her grandson. "I still have two sons, but Amina was my only daughter. My friend

and secret keeper," said Hajar apologetically, as if to justify her frequent sobbing and the black clothes of mourning she still wears for the dead couple.

Lost children

UNICEF told Reuters in March it had documented the cases of 650 separated children in 2016 alone, but that the likely number of undocumented cases was probably far higher. Since the war began in 2011, hundreds of thousands of Syrians have been killed and about half the country's pre-war population made homeless, large numbers of them children. After learning about her grandson's plight, Hajar approached every local and international organization she could think of seeking help.

Eventually, UNICEF and the UN's refugee agency UNHCR located Jaafar and secured travel documents for her to visit Turkey to pursue the legal process of proving kinship and claiming him. "My daughter always came to me in my dreams and would beg me to bring her son back and raise him," she said, speaking in the UNICEF headquarters in Damascus. Little Jaafar, now 16-months-old, wide-eyed, smiling and well-groomed, was meanwhile snatching at everything in his reach and fidgeting to escape his grandmother's lap for a few steps before quickly returning to her.

Hajar's journey to the orphanage in Mardin was nearly over before it began, a victim to the chaos inflicted by the attempted coup d'état in Turkey last summer, a day before she was scheduled to fly, which closed all the country's airports.

With her Lebanese visa running out, Hajar only managed to fly to Ankara five days later with a day to spare before she would have been returned to Syria. Unable to speak Turkish and having never travelled before, she was lost for five hours while changing flights in Istanbul before UNHCR officials found her and guided her onwards. After a 16-hour bus drive from Ankara, she finally reached Mardin. As soon as Hajar saw Jaafar in the Cucuk Evleri Sitesi Mudurlugu orphanage, she recognized him by the prominent birthmark on his forehead, she said. — Reuters



MOSUL: Federal Police soldiers move towards the front line during fighting against Islamic State militants on the western side of Mosul. — AP

'BROTHERS IN ARMS' - ARMED GROUPS GROW AS IS SHRINKS

IRAQI MEN FLOCK TO JOIN ARMED FORCES TO FIGHT JIHADISTS

MOSUL: For Iraqi police officer Jassem and his brothers, the battle against Islamic State is personal. The militants captured and beheaded their father, a Shiite militiaman, in 2014; before that, the family lost another son fighting the jihadists. "We were able to identify my dad's body by the tattoo on his arm. The head wasn't found. They had also drilled holes in his hands and cut fingers off," 31-year-old Jassem told Reuters on the front line in Mosul as Iraqi forces battle with Islamic State in the city. After the murder, Jassem's youngest brother signed up with the army and another joined a Shiite paramilitary group. With a further brother already with the Counter-Terrorism Service, that meant their mother had all four of her surviving sons at war.

"Mum wasn't happy," said Jassem, not giving his full name because he works in intelligence. But his brothers still answered the call to arms. "They said Iraq was falling apart, and they wanted to protect it," he said.

The family from southern Iraq - far from Mosul which lies near the country's northern border - is just one of many where entire sets of brothers have taken up arms against Islamic State out of revenge, duty or just to earn money. The US-backed Iraqi forces are now set to drive the group from its stronghold of Mosul, taken in 2014 when the jihadists seized large areas of Iraq and Syria, proclaiming a caliphate.

But the fight has further militarized Iraqi society, pushing young men into the armed forces and, increasingly, sectarian and tribal militias. This has raised fears of new outbreaks of violence once the caliphate has crumbled. Iraq's top Shiite cleric issued a fatwa in 2014, calling on all men able to carry arms to fight Islamic State, which is known in Arabic by its opponents as Daesh. On another Mosul front line, Counter-Terrorism Service commando Hamza Kadhem said that before Islamic State arrived, he was the only one of five brothers to have picked up a gun. "The others all joined after the fatwa," he said.

The Hashid Shaabi

They joined the Hashid Shaabi, or Popular Mobilization Forces, a state-run umbrella that includes Shiite militias. Two are deployed west of Mosul, and another two near the Syrian border, where Shiite fighters have played a crucial role in cutting off Islamic State supply lines. Before the call-up, they had worked as farmers in the southern Kut region, more than 500 km away. As well as Shiites from the south, young men from around Mosul - where Sunni Muslims are in the majority - are also keen to fight. They are now flooding to join Sunni tribal militias also under the Hashid, security officials and militia leaders say. Many residents told Reuters in recent weeks they want to join, or know relatives and friends who are trying to do so. "Many men are volunteering in the

Hashid groups. They either want to fight terrorism or to get wages," one security officer in the area said, declining to be named because he was not authorized to speak publicly. "It's easier than joining state armed forces. You just put your name down." He said the number of those seeking to join could be in the thousands, on top of the several thousand that local community leaders estimate are already in the Sunni tribal militias. This would not pose security problems because the Hashid ultimately answer to the government and have limited powers, the officer added.

Militias spread

Provincial government officials, however, say the rising number of recruits to paramilitary forces and the formation of new militias is dangerous because it raises the risk of factional clashes. "These Hashid groups are subservient to the peo-

ple who lead them, not to the state," said Abdul Rahman al-Wagga, a council member for Nineveh, of which Mosul is the capital. "So if a Hashid leader wants to impose himself in a certain region, and another sheikh or clan doesn't like it, they might attack," he told Reuters by phone.

"I think after Daesh, these groups will not be reined in ... Their agendas are party, political or regional, and won't serve Nineveh, or Iraq," Ramzy Mardini, a fellow at the Atlantic Council think tank, said turning to armed forces, particularly militias, was inevitable in an atmosphere where local communities fear for their own safety. "Not only has the war further militarized Iraqi society, but there appears to be no pressure from the top or willingness from below to disarm, demobilize, and reintegrate the militias that now occupy the diverse and former insurgent landscape," he said. — Reuters

DEATH AROUND CORNER FOR THOSE LIVING ON THE MOSUL'S FRONTLINE

MOSUL: Sitting in a wheelchair and wearing sunglasses, pensioner Abdelraziq Abdelkarim enjoys the afternoon sun outside his house in Mosul after a day of rain. He does not flinch when a mortar opens fire just around the corner. His home is on the busiest frontline in the northern Iraqi city just 200 m (yards) from Islamic State positions. Outside his house, Federal Police units are firing at the militants. Government forces have been evacuating civilians as they fight to seize Mosul, once the headline Sunni militant group's main urban stronghold in Iraq and now the scene of a six-month-old battle.

But some families refuse to go, shrugging off the danger of a mortar fired two blocks away or a counter-attack from the militants who move around at night. Gunfire rings out constantly between Federal Police and militants holed up in abandoned shops and apartments. "I don't want to go. I've lived all my life in this house," said 72-year-old Abdelkarim, a former studio photographer, sitting next to his handicapped son and a grandchild. They share a two-storey house in a narrow street with five people from two other families. Military Humvees and mortar launchers are just parked outside.

Almost 300,000 people have fled Mosul since the government offensive to recapture the city began in October, according to the United Nations. But Abdelkarim and his friends dread going to one of the crowded camps where aid agencies sometimes place two families in one tent for lack of space. Others stay with relatives in cramped homes. They had stocked up food, water and petrol for a power generator when the military campaign began. There is no food store at the frontline but soldiers sometimes share rations or a family member goes to one of the food distribution centers set

up by the military, they say. "We are maybe three or four families left. The rest are gone," said Abdullah Ahmed, a 42-year old engineer staying with Abdelkarim. "Right across our door 50 people stayed in one house but they've fled."

Death around corner

Their short alley shows the military's challenges in dislodging Islamic State fighters hiding in the Old City - navigating is difficult in the labyrinth of narrow, often covered alleys offering perfect hideouts for snipers or to stage ambushes. US officials estimated about 2,000 fighters were still in Mosul in February at the start of the second phase of the campaign, to dislodge them from western sector. Iraqi forces have been edging closer to Al-Nuri Mosque - some 300 meters away - where Islamic State leader Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi proclaimed a caliphate nearly three years ago across territory controlled by the group in both Iraq and Syria.

But the front has hardly moved in past two weeks as Humvees or tanks are of no use in the Old City. "See our street is about one-and-a-half meters wide," said Ahmed, whose TV satellite shop was closed by Islamic State as watching TV channels was banned under its austere version of Sunni Islam. "Near the mosque the streets only half as wide as this. There are some 40 to 50 small houses clustered around it," he said, pointing in the direction of the mosque.

"It's very difficult to move there." When Federal Police opened fire with a machine gun perched on the top floor of a house through a hole broken into a wall, Islamic State fired back within two minutes with accuracy. "There are snipers here," a federal policeman said. There is another reason why the friends want to avoid going to camps. — Reuters



HAMOURIA, Syria: A Syrian man runs for cover amid the dust and smoke following a reported government air strike on the rebel-controlled town of Hamouria, in the eastern Ghouta region. — AFP

EGYPT LAWYER APPEALS COURT RULING BACKING ISLANDS TRANSFER TO SAUDI

CAIRO: An Egyptian human rights lawyer said yesterday he had launched an appeal against a court ruling which backed Cairo's proposed transfer of two Red Sea islands to Saudi Arabia. President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi's government announced last year a maritime demarcation accord with Saudi Arabia, which has given billions of dollars of aid to Egypt, ceding control of the islands to the Gulf kingdom. The proposal angered many Egyptians and the issue was referred to the courts - irritating Riyadh and raising political tensions between two major Arab states and traditional allies.

The islands of Tiran and Sanafir, both uninhabited, are situated in the narrow entrance to the Gulf of Aqaba leading to Jordan and Israel. After an initial ruling against the transfer last June, the government appealed and the case was referred to the Higher Administrative Court which also ruled against the proposed transfer, saying the islands' Egyptian sovereignty was incontestable. On Sunday, just four days after Sisi

and Saudi Arabia's King Salman held a public meeting at an Arab summit in Jordan, another Egyptian court decreed that the administrative court's ruling was void - potentially reviving the deal.

Human rights lawyer Khaled Ali said he submitted an appeal, arguing that the administrative court had the final say and the matter was beyond the jurisdiction of the Court of Urgent Matters which issued the latest ruling.

Sunday's verdict "reflects the continued attempts of the regime to circumvent the final ruling of the Higher Administrative Court", Ali said in a statement. Saudi and Egyptian officials had argued that the islands belonged to Saudi Arabia and were only under Egyptian control because Riyadh asked Cairo in 1950 to protect them. But lawyers who had opposed the accord said Egypt's sovereignty over the islands dated back to a treaty in 1906, before Saudi Arabia was founded. — Reuters

6 MONTHS POST-HURRICANE, HUNGER GNAWS AT SOUTH HAITI

JEREMIE: Crouching beside the makeshift shelter shared with his parents and five siblings, Fanfan Edouard slowly sharpens his machete. But there's no rush to cut firewood, because there is no food to cook. "I'll try to buy rice on credit and find work, anything to pay later," the 26-year-old says, speaking without much conviction. Since Hurricane Matthew destroyed their two small homes, the Edouard family makes ends meet in a shelter just a few square meters large.

But corrugated tin roofs do little to protect the two beds they share. When it rains, the family spends their nights in a nearby cave. "We're not comfortable because we have to pile up on each other, but it's a chance for us to have a dry space," says Edouard's mother, Marguerite. Having just one cave for shelter is hardly the main concern of the approximately 100 people who live in Fond Rouge, on the outskirts of Jeremie in the southwest of Haiti. Matthew slammed the region around Jeremie in October 2016. The storm, which tore through the Caribbean, killed more than 700 people—mostly in Haiti—and caused some \$2.8 billion in damage. Haiti is also still struggling to recover from the world's most significant cholera outbreak, with an estimated 30,000 cases expected this year, as well as the effects of the January 2010 earthquake, with tens of thousands of people still camping in tents without proper sanitation.

'Used to misery'

Isolated some two hours on foot from the nearest town, these small farming families that lost their crops received aid only once in the past six months. They survived on tea of wild herbs and bread—and endure plen-



JEREMIE: View of a beach close to the wharf in Jeremie, Haiti. In the background are seen houses that were damaged by Hurricane Matthew. — AFP

ty of hunger. "We're Haitians, we're used to misery," says Joachim Agelet, a 22-year-old hurricane survivor. "I was in (school when the hurricane struck) and this is my life now: I can't go to school anymore, and I lost two sisters in the hurricane." In downtown Jeremie, where NGO aid groups regularly meet with United Nations officials, the living conditions of hurricane survivors is hardly any

better. On Jeremie's beach some 15 men work to raise a nearly empty net. "We all lost our boats so we can only fish here," lamented Astrid Guerrier, 38. "There is nothing but small fish. We know that it's dangerous because they do not have time to breed, so later there will be fewer fish." "But we have no choice: we only have that to eat and to try to earn a little money." With her feet in

the sand, Wiliana Charles has managed to rake in just a dozen fish—mere centimeters long—and a few crabs.

"Sometimes I lose money doing this, because at the market I cannot resell them at the price I paid the fisherman," she said, adding that yesterday she failed to make even 25 Haitian gourdes, about 36 US cents. Earning less than half a dollar a day means she cannot feed her five children. "I always look for friends and neighbors who can give me a portion," she said, her eyes fixed on the meager catch. "Really, I wonder if I have the right to live in this world."

Waste of resources

In March, a branch of the minister of agriculture working on food security dubbed the circumstances in the southwest Grande Anse department—which took a direct hit from the storm—"chaotic," saying that more than 180,000 people were in an "emergency situation." Bertrand Dasney, who works in Jeremie for the ministry of agriculture, got the fishermen's association to voluntarily clean up trash that has accumulated over past months on the beach. He is a witness to the daily challenge Haitians face to survive as well as what he sees as a waste of resources.

"The money goes into the big cars that come and go, in the gas they consume," he said. "Imagine, the other day, a foreign NGO took two cars, 10 people, just to put two boxes back in a remote area." "They are not accountable to us, Haitians, but they will have to be accountable to God," he said, earning approving looks from fishermen who have resumed cleaning, though without masks to protect themselves from toxic fumes. "Unfortunately, we don't have the money to buy them," sighed Dasney. — AFP

COLOMBIA MUDSLIDE DEATH TOLL HITS 254

43 CHILDREN PERISH; DESPERATE HUNT FOR SURVIVORS

MOCOA: Residents of Mocoa were yesterday desperately searching for loved ones missing since devastating mudslides slammed into the remote Colombian town, as the death toll soared to over 250, including 43 children. Many who survived the torrents of mud, boulders and debris that hit the town late Friday gathered at the local hospital and at the cemetery to hunt for family members and friends they fear have been killed or injured.

The mudslide, caused when three rivers overflowed after days of torrential rain, swept away homes, bridges, vehicles and trees. President Juan Manuel Santos traveled to Mocoa to oversee relief operations and announced the death toll of 254 late Sunday, warning that it could continue to rise. "Unfortunately, these are still preliminary figures," Santos wrote on Twitter, after giving an earlier toll of 210. "We offer our prayers for all of them. We send our condolences and the entire country's sympathies to their families." More than 200 people were injured in the disaster. Rescuers worked in stifling heat under a cloudy sky in the remote Amazon town, the capital of Putumayo department. Debris left by the mudslides was everywhere: buried cars, uprooted trees, children's toys and stray shoes sticking up out of the mud.

Chilling discovery

Covered in mud, 38-year-old Marta Gomez told of going to search for her missing niece and making a chilling find instead. "I went to look for my niece, but I couldn't find her. I dug and dug and found what turned out to be a baby's hand. It was horrible," she said in a shelter set up for the newly homeless.

As she stood in line waiting to register for government aid for those who lost their homes, Gomez said she had given up on finding her niece. "The mud took her away. I'll never see her again," she said, clinging to the leash of her equally muddy German shepherd.

Carlos Acosta said he forced himself to vomit mud to survive after he was swept away in the landslide. "I was dying due to a lack of air—so what did I do? I stuck my finger in my mouth and vomited a lot of mud," Acosta, 25 said. "Everything was mud."

I kept vomiting mud. I sneezed out mud until I could breathe again," said Acosta, 25, who was recovering from cuts and bruises from the ordeal. But his pain ran deeper. When Acosta



MOCOA: Rescuers search for survivors in Mocoa, Colombia. A grim search for the missing resumed in southern Colombia after surging rivers sent an avalanche of floodwaters, mud and debris through a city, killing at least 250 people. — AP

woke up late Friday to find water rushing into his home he managed to pick up his three-year-old son Camilo. "But the water swept us away and then I was hit by rocks," he said. Acosta was knocked unconscious, and when he woke up there was no trace of the boy. The stunned father latched onto a tree branch and managed to extricate himself, but without his son.

Pope's prayers

Most of the hardest-hit neighborhoods in the town of 40,000 are poor and populated with people uprooted during Colombia's five-decade-long civil war. A "profoundly saddened" Pope Francis said Sunday that he was praying for the victims. Santos declared an emergency to speed up aid operations.

Health authorities said they had dispatched sanitation specialists in hopes of preventing outbreaks of disease. Santos said four emergency water treatment plants would be set up "to

avoid an epidemic and an even bigger public health crisis." An unexpected offer of help also came from the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), a leftist rebel group engaged in a historic peace process with the government. It said FARC members were prepared to help rebuild the town.

'No preparations'

Electricity and running water have yet to be restored to Mocoa. Local authorities said repairing the electrical substation would take time. Several deadly landslides have struck Colombia in recent months. A landslide in November killed nine people in the rural southwestern town of El Tambo, officials said. The previous month, 10 people lost their lives in a mudslide in the north of the country. The Pacific rim of South America has been hard hit in recent months by floods and mudslides, with scores killed in Peru and Ecuador. — AFP



QUITO: The Ecuadorian presidential candidate of the ruling Alianza PAIS party, Lenin Moreno, waves to his supporters in Quito. — AFP

SOUTH AMERICA 'STRUGGLING LEFT' BOOSTED BY ECUADOR'S VICTORY

QUITO: Leftist candidate Lenin Moreno yesterday celebrated victory in Ecuador's presidential election, bucking a shift to the right in South America, but his conservative challenger demanded a recount as some supporters took to the streets in protest. Moreno's triumph was a relief for WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange after former banker Guillermo Lasso had vowed to remove him from Ecuador's embassy in London if he won the runoff.

It was also a boost for the struggling leftist movement in South America after right-leaning governments recently came to power in Argentina, Brazil, and Peru as a commodities boom ended, economies flagged and corruption scandals grew.

The region's high-profile Socialist leader, President Nicolas Maduro of crisis-hit Venezuela, congratulated Moreno profusely on Twitter, as did Bolivian President Evo Morales. "Congratulations Ecuador, the citizen's revolution has triumphed!" said Maduro, as did much of his cabinet. "21st century Socialism always triumphs," tweeted Morales.

"Congratulations brother @Lenin!" Lasso had promised to denounce the embattled Maduro, who foes say has turned his country into a dictatorship. Moreno, a paraplegic former vice president, secured 51.15 percent of the votes, compared with Lasso's 48.85 percent, with more nearly 99 percent of votes counted, according to the electoral council yesterday morning. Lasso, who had proclaimed himself victorious based on a top pollster's exit poll, disputed the results that would extend a decade-long leftist rule in oil-rich Ecuador.

"They've crossed a line," he told supporters in a hotel in his coastal hometown of Guayaquil on Sunday, vowing to challenge the results, a complex process that could take time. "We're going to defend the will of the Ecuadorian people in the face of this fraud attempt," he said. Lasso tweeted photos showing what he said were original votes for him that were changed by electoral officials. The election authority denied fraud allegations. Lasso contrasted Sunday's quickly tallied vote with the first round in February, when a final results took days to come out. Hundreds of his supporters swarmed in front of electoral

council offices in the capital, Quito, and Guayaquil, waving yellow, blue and red Ecuadorian flags and chanting "No to fraud!" and "We don't want to be Venezuela!" There were reports of isolated clashes, but protests ebbed as the night went on and people went home. Ruling Country Alliance officials scoffed that Lasso was a sore loser and inciting violence. Moreno also accused Lasso of paying a pollster to project him as winner.

'Lenin President!'

Moreno, who lost the use of his legs two decades ago when he was shot during a robbery, would become a rare head of state to use a wheelchair when he takes office on May 24. "Lenin," as he is commonly referred to by his supporters, celebrated in mountainous Quito overnight with the flag-waving crowd chanting, "Lenin President!" "We're going to keep building the path. We've done a lot but there's a lot more to do!" he said, flanked by running mate and current vice president, Jorge Glas, as well as outgoing President Rafael Correa.

He broke into several songs, including one about Argentine revolutionary hero Ernesto "Che" Guevara. Moreno, a former UN special envoy on disability and accessibility, has a more conciliatory style than the fiery Correa and has promised benefits for single mothers, the elderly, and disabled Ecuadorians. He will be under pressure to create jobs and crack down on graft amid corruption scandals at state-run oil company PetroEcuador and Brazilian conglomerate Odebrecht.

Lasso has criticized Moreno as being ill-equipped to deal with economic issues and warned that his major social promises would hit already pressured coffers in a country dependent on exports of oil, bananas, and shrimp. "Moreno's margin of victory was much smaller than those of his predecessor Rafael Correa, leaving him in a much weaker spot," said John Polga, a political scientist at the US Naval Academy.

"He has the advantage of a legislative majority (for now), but his government will have to confront fiscal restraints, a stagnant economy, and the burden of a recovery from last April's earthquake." — Reuters

SINGAPORE EXPELS ISLAMIC TEACHER

SINGAPORE: Singapore's interior ministry yesterday ordered the repatriation of an Indian Islamic teacher for an exhortation against Jews and Christians, saying there was no room for such remarks in a multi-religious society. Nalla Mohamed Abdul Jameel, 47, was ordered to be sent home after he pleaded guilty at a district court to a charge of promoting enmity between different religious groups and was fined S\$4,000 (\$2,860).

"Nalla has paid the fine. He will be repatriated," the Ministry of Home Affairs said in a statement. The imam, or Muslim religious teacher, had recited a supplication in Arabic during a prayer session at a mosque in January, which translated as "Grant us help against the Jews and Christians," court documents showed. A video of his remarks was uploaded by another person on Facebook in

February, triggering a police investigation and the filing of charges.

"Recent events abroad have highlighted how the build-up of anger and resentment among different religious groups can lead to social friction and violence," the ministry said. "The government has the responsibility to act quickly and firmly to repudiate divisive speech, even if the course of action is sometimes difficult." Singapore is a mainly ethnic Chinese society with large Malay Muslim and Indian populations.

District Judge Jasvender Kaur said Singapore "cannot allow any person or group to sow discord or promote enmity among the different religious or racial groups when we have worked so hard as a society to achieve religious and racial harmony." — AFP

FRANCE'S FILLON VOWS TO LAUNCH PROBE INTO HOLLANDE IF ELECTED

PARIS: French presidential candidate Francois Fillon, an outsider to win after involvement in financial scandal, said yesterday he would order a parliamentary inquiry into allegations President Francois Hollande interfered in the justice system, if elected. Once the frontrunner, the conservative former prime minister's poll ratings have slumped since allegations surfaced that he paid his wife and sons hundreds of thousands of euros of public money for minimal work. Although some polls show his support recovering slightly with less than three weeks to the April 23 first round, he is well behind far-right leader Marine Le Pen and independent centrist Emmanuel Macron, who are tipped to go through to a May 7 run-off.

Fillon, 63, who is being investigated by magistrates over the jobs allegations and over a gift of expensive suits, insisted on his innocence. "If I had the slightest doubt about my guilt I wouldn't be a candidate in the presidential election," he told BFM TV. He said he was the victim of "manipulation" and believed his case was being closely followed "by the highest authorities." He drew back from previous allegations that Hollande, a Socialist president who is not standing for a second term, had personally led a smear campaign against him. He said he could not prove this.

He said however that prosecutors should



French conservative presidential candidate Francois Fillon

open an inquiry into allegations made in a book by two journalists from the satirical weekly Le Canard Enchaîné that Hollande had had judicial wiretaps that interested him sent to his office. "Prosecutors should take up this case. If they don't do so and if I am elected president, there will be a parliamentary commission of enquiry,"

Fillon said. Hollande's office has rejected Fillon's accusations and denied interference in the justice system. Fillon said that, given the investigations against him, there was "every chance" his own phone was tapped.

Fillon also said that Francois Baroin, a former finance minister, would be a "very good choice" for prime minister if he won election to the Elysee. Investors are concerned the wave of frustration with political elites behind Britain's vote to leave the European Union and the election of Donald Trump in the United States could sweep Le Pen into power in France. The National Front leader would take France out of the euro and hold a referendum on EU membership.

The latest poll, by Opinionway, showed Le Pen, with 25 percent in the first round, one point ahead of Macron and six points ahead of Fillon. It showed Macron would easily beat Le Pen in the run-off, but former Prime Minister Manuel Valls said last week he believed Le Pen's potential score was seriously under-rated. Macron told Le Monde in an interview yesterday that Fillon and Socialist candidate Benoit Hamon were wrong to focus their attacks on him, when Le Pen was the real threat. "Those who say Marine Le Pen can't win the second round are the same as those who said Trump could never win. We don't know what can happen if she is far ahead in the first round," he said. — Reuters

GIBRALTAR SAYS EU PRESIDENT LIKE A 'CUCKOLDED HUSBAND'

SPAIN SURPRISED BY TONE OF BRITISH COMMENTS

LONDON: Gibraltar's leader yesterday cast EU Council President Donald Tusk as a "cuckolded husband taking it out on the kids" for explicitly proposing that Spain be given a veto over the ties between the British enclave and the European Union after Brexit. The future of Gibraltar, a British Overseas Territory of just over 2-square miles of rock on Spain's southern tip, has become the first big dispute of Brexit since Prime Minister Theresa May filed formal divorce papers on March 29.

In the EU's draft position on the exit talks distributed by Tusk, Gibraltar was given explicit mention. Spain was specifically

named as having a veto on the application of any future EU trade deal with Britain. "Mr Tusk, who has been given to using the analogies of the divorce and divorce petition, is behaving like a cuckolded husband who is taking it out on the children," Gibraltar's chief minister, Fabian Picardo, told Reuters in an interview. "This is clear Spanish bullying."

Picardo said the EU should remove the reference to Gibraltar, which voted overwhelmingly to stay in the EU, from the draft guidelines. While years of tortuous negotiations await on issues that could affect trillions of dollars in trade, the Brexit debate in

Britain has for three days focused on the future of the "Rock" captured by Britain in 1704 but which Spain wants back. The row over Gibraltar illustrates how swiftly the United Kingdom's influence has declined since the June 23 Brexit vote - in this case in Spain's favor and how issues perceived by EU powers as marginal can become major complications.

Brexit rock?

After the explicit reference to Spain and Gibraltar became publicly known, May spoke to Picardo and issued a statement saying London was "steadfast" in its com-

mitment to the territory which has positioned itself as a springboard for finance to the EU because of an attractive tax and regulatory regime. A former leader of May's Conservative party, Michael Howard, even said she would be prepared to go to war to defend the territory, as then prime minister Margaret Thatcher did with Argentina over the Falkland Islands 35 years ago. "The Spanish government is a little surprised by the tone of comments coming out of Britain, a country known for its composure," Spain's Foreign Minister Alfonso Dastis said during a conference in Madrid.

Ceded to Britain "in perpetuity" in the 1713 Treaty of Utrecht, Gibraltar has long been a bone of contention between London and Madrid and the border was closed for many years during the Franco dictatorship. In a 2002 referendum, Gibraltarians rejected by 98 percent a proposal for joint British-Spanish sovereignty. "The sovereignty of Gibraltar is unchanged and is not going to change," British Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson said on Monday as he arrived for an EU foreign ministers meeting in Luxembourg. While every EU member state would have a veto over any future trade deal between the EU and post-Brexit Britain, the explicit mention of Gibraltar surprised London and angered the British territory.

May, in her letter to Tusk that triggered Brexit, had not mentioned Gibraltar, which uses the British pound and where Britain operates a military base overlooking the strait. "The way that the European Council has behaved in allowing Spain to single out Gibraltar in this negative way is really quite pernicious," Picardo said. When asked if Gibraltar was now a chip in negotiations, he said: "The last time I looked at this monolithic rock of mine and of the people of Gibraltar it doesn't look like a chip and its not going on any table. "We are not going to be a chip and we are not going to be a victim of Brexit as we are not the culprits of Brexit: we voted to stay in the European Union so taking it out on us is to allow Spain to behave in the manner of the bully," he said. —Reuters



A woman walks on the Spanish side of the border between Spain and the British overseas territory of Gibraltar with the Rock as a background, in La Línea de la Concepción, Southern Spain. —AP

EMIRATES AND ETIHAD TO BOOST SCREENING

DUBAI: Emirates and Etihad airlines will tighten screening for passengers flying to Australia this week after the country imposed new requirements for enhanced explosives detection, the UAE companies said yesterday. Australia on Friday announced it would increase screening of passenger baggage on flights from Dubai and Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates, as well as Doha, Qatar.

While the directive stops short of the sweeping electronics ban introduced last month by the United States and Britain, it may include targeted screening of passengers' personal electronic devices. Emirates and Etihad Airways, two of the largest airlines in the Middle East, said the measures would take effect on Thursday. "The new directive requires additional screening at the gate, but there is no restriction on electronic devices," said an Emirates spokesperson. The new screening requirement covers direct flights on Emirates, Etihad, Qatar Airways and Qantas Airways. It does not apply to flights bound for the UAE out of Australian airports.

Etihad operates two daily flights to

Sydney, while Emirates has 11 daily flights to international airports across Australia. Regional carriers have since last month scrambled to cope with the US and British bans on laptops and tablets on board direct flights out of key Middle East airports. Airlines including Emirates and Etihad have introduced complimentary services enabling passengers to continue to use their personal electronics after check-in and until boarding.

Qatar Airways has announced it will offer free laptops for business class passengers flying to the United States. The US ban went into effect on March 25 on nine airlines in Turkey, Morocco, Jordan, Egypt, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates. The British ban targets direct flights on all airlines out of Egypt, Turkey, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia and Lebanon. Officials from both countries cited security concerns for the ban, which has come under criticism as another measure targeting Muslim-majority countries. Unlike the United States and Britain, Australian officials say there is no specific threat behind the new screening requirement.—AFP

HOMELESS POLES HOIST SAILS FOR AROUND-THE-WORLD TRIP

WARSAW: Residents of a homeless shelter in Warsaw can already feel the wind in their sails as they work on the imposing steel hull of a majestic schooner, which they aim to take around the globe. "I work on it from 7:00 am to 3:00 pm, and more if we need it," says Slawomir Michalski, of his labor of love. Sunny and mild spring weather now allows the work to go ahead full steam after a long, cold winter. "It's like I'm building my own home," Michalski said, of the 57-foot-long sailboat (17.8 meters).

Construction began a decade ago—the brainchild of Father Boguslaw, a priest working at the Saint Lazarus shelter at the time and a former shipyard worker in the Baltic port city of Gdansk. With technical knowledge and skills in shipbuilding, he was convinced that involving the homeless in the project would help win back their self-confidence, encourage teamwork and contribute towards their return to the workforce. When the charismatic Father Boguslaw died in 2009, Michalski says that residents swore "on his grave" to complete the schooner, which will bear his name.

'Left everything behind'

Shipbuilding is also in Michalski's blood. Now aged 60, in the 1970s, he worked as a welder at the Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk just as the anti-communist Solidarity movement was taking shape, led by freedom icon Lech Walesa. At the time, Walesa was just another electrician, but soon won the Nobel Peace Prize as the leader of Solidarity, the communist bloc's first and only free trade union that peacefully toppled the system in Poland, ushering in democracy in 1989.

Walesa became Poland's first freely elected post-World War II president a year later. "I worked on the ship's hold, while Walesa was repairing the electric trolleys," Michalski recalls, of his shipyard days, as he welds metal parts of a door leading to the schooner's galley. "We worked together,

we were on strike together during the Solidarity era, and then I left everything behind and wound up in a homeless shelter," Michalski said. He has been living at the shelter in Warsaw's western Ursus district-famous during the communist era for its tractor factory—on and off since 2009, as he has battled with alcohol. But building the schooner has helped keep up his morale. Run by the Roman Catholic order of the Camillian Fathers, the centre provides shelter for about 100 men over the age of 40, and squeezes more in on extra mattresses on the floor in winter.

'Gives us strength'

"There were a lot of people wondering whether we weren't a little mad-what a completely silly idea: homeless people are building a sailboat?" Michalski says, tapping his head. "But they've seen the yacht grow from one year to the next, so people have changed how they think about it, and now they see it as a great idea," he added. Polish shipbuilder Bogdan Malolepszy donated the blueprints for the two-masted BM-57 model schooner he designed himself, while other firms have furnished metal, cables, paint and other supplies.

Hopes are high that the vessel will be seaworthy within two years and allow those who built it to sail it, before then chartering it. "Altogether with the bowsprit, the boat will be up to 63 feet long," said ship captain Waldemar Rzeznicki, checking the schooner's blueprints. He devotedly oversees the work, day and night, on the grounds of the shelter. "Just building it gives us strength, both to the homeless and us volunteers, because this work is happiness," Rzeznicki said. Michal Jedynak, another shelter resident, works on the staircase leading to the cabin, which will sleep 12 crew members. But it has not been all smooth sailing. "Michal is very strong, but an alcohol problem prevents him from working regularly," Rzeznicki notes.—AFP



WARSAW: A steel schooner called 'Father Boguslaw' is under construction at the courtyard of a homeless shelter run by Catholic Fathers in Warsaw. —AFP

News

in brief

German tourist 'raped' in southern India state

NEW DELHI: A German tourist has accused two men of taking her captive and raping her in southern India, police said yesterday, just weeks after the rape and murder of an Irish woman in Goa. The woman told police two men dragged her to a secluded spot from a private beach resort in the southern tourist town of Mamallapuram in Tamil Nadu state and raped her on Sunday. "We have registered a sexual assault complaint and a manhunt has been launched to track the attackers," the district police chief Santosh said. "We are questioning suspects but no arrests have been made yet." He said medical tests had confirmed sexual assault and the German embassy had been informed. A spokeswoman for Germany's Foreign Office said by email that its consul-general in the state capital Chennai was in close contact with local authorities about the incident. It comes barely three weeks after a 28-year-old Irish woman was raped and murdered in the popular tourist state of Goa. Danielle McLaughlin's naked body was discovered in a field near a beach on March 16.

Hate crime beating; 5 people charged in UK

LONDON: Authorities in London charged five people yesterday over an unprovoked attack on a 17-year-old Iranian-Kurdish asylum-seeker as police sought to piece together the mob violence that involved up to 30 people. London's Metropolitan Police say the five were charged with violent disorder, with one also being charged with racially aggravated grievous bodily harm following the attack Friday in the London borough of Croydon. Three others remain in custody. Police said a group of youths approached the teen at a bus stop and questioned him. Upon learning he was an asylum-seeker, they chased him through the streets and beat him. The attack only stopped after police sirens could be heard and bystanders intervened. The teen's two friends got away. The teen has been hospitalized with a fractured skull and a blood clot on the brain but police say he is starting to make a recovery and may be moved out of intensive care today.



Photo shows emergency services and ambulance at the scene of a bus accident, on the E45 between Sveg and Fagelsjo in Sweden. —AP

3 high school students killed in Swedish crash

HELSINKI: Swedish police say all three people who were killed when a bus skidded off the road and crashed Sunday in central Sweden were high school students. Police spokesman Peder Jonsson declined to provide more information on the students yesterday. Authorities say the two-story bus was carrying 52 students, six adults and a driver when it crashed into a ditch and fell on its side on a main highway about 7 am - nine hours after it had left the southwestern town of Skene on a school trip to a northern ski resort. Ostersund hospital spokeswoman Anna-Lena Hogstrom said Monday that 11 people from the accident were still being treated, including two with serious but not "life-threatening" injuries. Jonsson said police were investigating but did not know the cause of the accident.

262 Turks with official passports seek asylum

BERLIN: More than 250 Turkish diplomats, government employees and their family members have filed for political asylum in Germany, Berlin said yesterday, amid a bitter row between the two NATO allies. Germany's interior ministry said 151 of the asylum applications came from Turks holding diplomatic passports while the other 111 were from people with passports issued to other government employees and their dependants. The ministry did not specify how many of the requests came from Turkish military personnel stationed at NATO bases. "The asylum applications will be treated on a case-by-case basis ... and decided according to the law," a ministry spokeswoman said during a regular press conference. The wave of requests for safe haven follows last July's failed coup against President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and a subsequent crackdown, which has seen more than 100,000 people arrested or dismissed from their posts over alleged links to the plotters or to Kurdish militants.

Heavy security as Congolese opposition embarks on strike

KINSHASA: Congolese police deployed heavily across the capital Kinshasa yesterday as opposition calls for a general strike after a breakdown in talks with President Joseph Kabila's allies last week raised fears of renewed violence. Security forces in Democratic Republic of Congo killed dozens in protests over election delays last year but the strike appeared to be peaceful yesterday morning as stores and banks were shuttered and streets quiet. With police deployed at bus stops and intersections, there were only a handful of cars on the central boulevard in Kinshasa, a city of more than 10 million people, and the normally bustling central market was shut. "I couldn't go to work... It's my way of supporting the opposition."

Bulgaria prosecutors charge health minister Semerdzhiev

SOFIA: Bulgarian prosecutors have charged the country's interim health minister with misuse of power for threatening the head of a state health agency because she would not hire his protegee, they said yesterday. Ilko Semerdzhiev, who is also Bulgaria's interim deputy prime minister, threatened to sack the executive director of the country's drug agency for refusing the favored candidate, citing potential conflict of interest, they said in a statement. Prosecutors said two witnesses reported the threats against agency head Asena Stoimenova and quoted Semerdzhiev as telling her on March 24: "I can sack you, I can also do other things to you."

APRIL FOOL'S ADVERT 'NO JOKE' FOR TURKISH SWEET GIANT

ANKARA: An April-fool's day advert from the Turkish confectionery giant whose stable includes top brands Godiva and McVitie's has proved to be no laughing matter, inciting controversy and a dive in its share price. Prime Minister Binali Yildirim lashed out at the advertisement for the Ulker confectionery company, while the company's share price dropped by over three percent on the Istanbul bourse Monday.

Ahead of April 1, Ulker released an advert in which siblings play pranks on each other during which one brother serves a chilli-covered cake. It ends with the narrator saying: "Now is the day of reckoning". Yildirim late Sunday said in an interview that the slogan was an unwelcome throwback to the failed July 15 coup aimed at unseating President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

"Already there is an uneasiness among the people, and this unfortunate advert triggers this unease," he said. "These days, people must act more responsibly, must respect the people's sensitivity." Ruling party lawmaker Metin Kulunk added there was "a dirty business" going on with an attempt to "manipulate the psychology" of the Turkish nation. But Ulker said in a statement that the advertisement had been misconstrued and also distorted through digital manipulations on social media.

"The campaign was hacked through manipulating scenes and messages on (the) digital campaign and subsequently taken out of context through the addition of texts and visuals on social media." "Legal action has been immediately taken to protect our company and brand, against every party involved in this misconduct and/or misintent," it said. Political tensions are running high in Turkey in a tightly-fought campaign ahead of the April 16 referendum on expanding Erdogan's powers. Shares in Ulker Biscuvi Sanayi were down 3.30 percent at 1000 GMT, having earlier fallen by nearly five percent.

Turkish conglomerate Yildiz Holding owns Ulker, Godiva Chocolatier and United Biscuits, whose portfolio of brands includes iconic British names like McVitie's Jaffa Cakes. Yildiz chairman Murat Ulker is the son of Ulker's founder Sabri Ulker and Turkey's richest man with an estimated fortune of \$3.7 billion (3.4 billion euros), according to the Turkish edition of Forbes magazine. Like most of the bosses of the family-run conglomerates that dominate the Turkish private sector, Murat Ulker usually steers well clear of commenting on politics. Yildiz bought United Biscuits in 2014, in one of the most significant acquisitions in the company's history.—AFP

PIRATES HIJACK BOAT, KIDNAP 11 INDIAN CREW MEMBERS

DUBAI: Pirates have seized a small boat and kidnapped its 11 Indian crew members off the coast of Somalia, an investigator said yesterday, the latest vessel targeted by the region's resurgent hijackers. The attack on the small ship happened Saturday as the vessel passed through the narrow channel between Yemen's Socotra Island and the Somali coast, said Graeme Gibbon Brooks, CEO of Dryad Maritime, a shipping security firm. The pirates are taking the vessel to the Eyl area of northern Somalia, he said.

There was conflicting information over the boat's name and where it was heading. Brooks said the small dhow, a traditional wooden sailing ship common in regional waters, initially was heading from Dubai to Bosaso, Somalia. Malini Shankar of the Indian Directorate General of Shipping told the Press Trust of India news agency that the vessel was instead heading to Yemen, where a Saudi-led war against Shiite rebels holding its capital has raged for years.

Other Indian media reported the boat was heading to Mukalla, a southern port city once occupied by Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula that has since been captured by Saudi-led forces. India's Ministry of External Affairs said it was trying to gather information about the hijacking. Databases also showed the boat was named either the MV Al-Kausar or the MV Al-Kaushar. It wasn't immediately known what cargo the vessel is carrying or who owns or operates it. Lt Ian McConaughy, a spokesman for the US Navy's 5th Fleet in Bahrain, said sailors there are "aware of the reports and we are monitoring the situation." The 5th Fleet oversees regional anti-piracy efforts.

Piracy off Somalia's coast was once a serious threat to the global shipping industry. It has lessened in recent years after an international effort to patrol near the country, whose weak central government has been trying to assert itself after a quarter-century of conflict. Since then, concerns about piracy off

Africa's coast have largely shifted to the West Africa's Gulf of Guinea on the Atlantic Ocean. But frustrations have been rising among Somali fishermen, including former pirates, at what they say are foreign fishermen illegally fishing in local waters.

In March, Somali pirates hijacked the Comoros-flagged oil tanker Aris 13, marking the first such seizure of a large commercial vessel since 2012. They later released the vessel and its Sri Lankan crew without conditions, Somali officials said at the time. Pirates in late March also seized a fishing trawler, which police warned could be used for further piracy. Dryad Maritime, the maritime safety company in Britain, is warning its clients to stay at least 100 nautical miles away from the so-called Socotra gap over piracy concerns. "The fact they've taken three now in a row is an indicator or a warning of a growing problem" Brooks said. "I don't think they are going to stop doing this." —AP



HOBYO: Masked Somali pirate Hassan stands near a Taiwanese fishing vessel that washed up on shore after the pirates were paid a ransom and released the crew, in the once-bustling pirate den of Hobyo, Somalia. —AP



PUNE, India: Indian social activists shout slogans and hold signs during a protest condemning an attack on students from African countries yesterday. Representatives of 44 African countries accused the Indian government of failing to do enough to stop racist attacks on their nationals following a series of brutal assaults targeting Nigerians. —AFP

AFRICAN DIPLOMATS BLAST INDIA OVER RACIST ATTACKS

NEW DELHI: Representatives of 44 African countries accused the Indian government yesterday of failing to do enough to stop racist attacks on their nationals following a series of brutal assaults targeting Nigerians. Around a dozen people were injured, some seriously, when a mob angered by the death of a local teenager went on the rampage in a satellite city of New Delhi last Monday. The violence erupted after a group of Nigerian students who were detained in connection with the teen's death were released without charge, with police saying there was no evidence against them.

The vicious assault was captured on camera and shared widely on social media, triggering concern over a rise in racist violence against Africans in India. In a statement, the African Heads of Mission said that "no known, sufficient and visible deterring measures were taken" by New Delhi after previous such attacks. It said the authorities had failed to "sufficiently condemn" either the latest attacks or past incidences of racist violence against Africans.

The diplomats also called for an inde-

pendent investigation into the latest violence by groups including the UN's Human Rights Council, calling it "xenophobic and racial". Thousands of people from African countries study and work in India, where many face discrimination. They are often accused of involvement in the illegal drug trade. The issue was thrown into the spotlight last year when a Congolese teacher was bludgeoned to death allegedly by three Indian men after an argument over hiring an auto-rickshaw in Delhi.

In 2013, a Nigerian national was killed by a mob in the tourist state of Goa, with a state minister later calling Nigerians a "cancer". Delhi's former law minister was also accused in 2014 of harassing African women after he led a vigilante mob through an area of the capital, claiming they were prostitutes. Police have arrested six of the 10 main suspects involved in the latest attack. India's foreign ministry condemned the incident as "deplorable" and assured Nigeria steps were being taken to protect their citizens in India, as Abuja demanded "diligent prosecution" of the culprits. —AFP



YEREVAN: Armenia's President Serzh Sargsyan arrives at a polling station during a parliamentary election in Yerevan, Armenia. —AP

PRO-RUSSIAN RULING PARTY WINS 'MILESTONE' ARMENIAN ELECTION

YEREVAN: Armenia's pro-Russian ruling party has won the first legislative elections held since the adoption of constitutional reforms that are transforming the country into a parliamentary republic, official results released yesterday showed. With votes tallied from 99.8 percent of precincts, the central electoral commission said President Serzh Sargsyan's Republican Party beat the main opposition coalition, led by wealthy politician Gagik Tsarukyan, by 49.15 to 27.37 percent.

"According to the elections' early results, the Republican Party has every chance of forming the new government," the party's spokesman, Eduard Sharmazanov, told a news conference. Another opposition coalition, Elk, and the Dashnaksutyun nationalist party received 7.78 percent and 6.58 percent of the vote respectively and will also enter the parliament. Turnout was 60.86 percent, the electoral panel said. The West views Armenia's election as a key democratic test for the landlocked nation of 2.9 million, which has no history of transferring power to the opposition through the ballot box.

The pro-Russian Sargsyan has said his government "made enormous efforts so that (the) milestone vote is flawless." Violence flared fol-

lowing his election in 2008, with 10 people killed in clashes between police and opposition supporters. But opposition politicians have reported violations at polling stations after previously warning that the government is preparing mass electoral fraud.

"We have recorded numerous violations at polling stations—violation of ballots' secrecy and multiple voting," Hovsep Khurshudyan, a leader of Ohanyan-Raffi-Oskanyan, an opposition coalition said on Sunday night. Before the vote, the EU delegation to Armenia and the US embassy said in a joint statement they were "concerned by allegations of voter intimidation, attempts to buy votes, and the systemic use of administrative resources to aid certain competing parties."

The polls followed constitutional amendments initiated by Sargsyan in 2015 that his opponents say are designed to perpetuate the rule of the Republican party, which has been in power for the last two decades. The amendments will shift the country away from a strong presidency to a parliamentary form of government after Sargsyan's second and final term ends in 2018. —AFP

CHILLING ONLINE 'DEATH GROUPS'

SOCIAL MEDIA GROUPS ENCOURAGE TEEN SUICIDES

SAINT PETERSBURG: Chilling online "death groups" on popular social media that egg on teenagers to kill themselves are causing panic in Russia after a string of teen suicides. Hidden groups on social networking site VK, the Russian equivalent of Facebook, are reportedly controlled by "mentors" who incite their members to take their own lives. The existence of these groups, highlighted in an investigation by Novaya Gazeta opposition newspaper last year, has rattled parents and sparked heated debate in a country where suicide is largely a taboo subject.

President Vladimir Putin has publicly expressed concern, this month calling for harsher punishments for those convicted of incitement to suicide—a crime that currently carries a prison sentence of up to three years. Several dozen Russian teenagers out of the total of 130 who committed suicide between November 2015 and April 2016 were pressured by members of "death groups" on VK, who remain in the shadows as they spread a suicide cult, Novaya Gazeta reported.

A "mentor" on one death group, 22-year-old Filipp Budeikin, was arrested by investigators in the city of Saint Petersburg in November after allegedly inciting 15 teenagers on VK to commit suicide. In an interview with local media shortly before his arrest, Budeikin outlined his tactics to attract teens he referred to

as "biodegradable waste" and "people who are worthless for society." "First you have to create groups with depressing content that plunges you into a special atmosphere," he said. "People click on links and enter a closed group. That's when the game starts."

Budeikin admitted he asked his victims to share personal information and perform certain "tasks", which often involved self-mutilation or scarification. "I just explained to some people why it was best to die, nothing more," he said. "They are the ones who made that decision. No one forced them." Budeikin added that he was simply "cleansing society". "Death groups" even threaten to blackmail their members by telling them they will go after their loved ones if they refuse to carry out the tasks, Novaya Gazeta reported.

'Urban legend'

The discovery of the VK death groups sent a jolt through Russian society, where the suicide rate among minors - 20 for every 100,000 people—is three times higher than the global average, according to World Health Organization (WHO) data. Russia's children's ombudswoman Anna Kuznetsova said this month that the suicide rate among minors had increased nearly 57 percent last year after dropping in previous years, attributing the phenomenon to the "death groups." These groups have also spread

to neighboring Ukraine, where the authorities have sounded the alarm over a significant increase in teen suicide.

Ukrainian police blocked access to 500 social media groups this month, saying they receive on a daily basis "nearly 70 alerts regarding runaway minors, 20 to 30 percent of whom are members of a death group." Despite the apparent impact the groups have had in Russia and Ukraine, experts think the phenomenon might not be as widespread as it seems. Some have accused Novaya Gazeta of overblowing its findings and of creating an urban legend out of a few isolated cases of teen suicide.

"This is not the first time panic has struck over an increase in suicide among minors," Meduza news site quoted demographer Yevgeny Andreyev as saying. "Statistics don't back up" this trend, he added. Rosstat national statistics agency published data that 22,839 people committed suicide in 2016, down from 24,982 in 2015, without differentiating age groups. The latest figure has more than halved from 2005 when there were 45,800 suicides. Suicide, as a subject for discussion, is still shied away from in Russia, adding to the difficulties in tackling it. It came second only to sexual problems in a November survey by Levada independent polling agency, on topics considered unacceptable to talk about in the family. —AFP

HOW TO SAVE A LIFE WHILE UNDER FIRE IN AFGHANISTAN

HERAT: It was first used by the armies of the Roman Empire. Centuries later, the tourniquet is buying casualties in Afghanistan what they need most—time—as surgeons adapt their battlefield procedures to the grinding conflict. Since the US invasion of 2001, the pattern of injuries sustained in Afghanistan has changed when compared to previous conflicts, such as Vietnam. In response, Western armies working with their Afghan counterparts have dramatically improved their emergency protocols—and, in the case of tourniquets and blood transfusions, revolutionized them.

These changes "have resulted from a combination of predominantly blast injuries and the use of body armor, leading to special focus on head and extremity injuries," says Colonel Robert Suter, an American surgeon based in Qatar. Suter says the tourniquet—long a controversial tool because, if badly applied, it can damage nerves or tissues on a wounded limb—in particular has had an enormous impact in Afghanistan. The peculiarities of war there have led to pioneering new forms of the ancient device: the first recorded combat use of a junctional tourniquet, which can be used on a pelvis or an armpit, was in Afghanistan in 2014.

Blood transfusion protocols have also "completely changed as the result of our experience, with whole blood and early platelet use now the standard", Suter says. Other tools such as advanced trauma dressings, blood containers and concussion screenings are being brought to the frontline—most of them accessible to the NATO-trained Afghan army. "The biggest lesson learned from Afghanistan is that it is the simple things done promptly that save the most lives," says Suter. "Things like stopping bleeding, keeping the airway open, giving blood. When we do these things we buy the time needed to do the more complex things later with excellent survival rates."

Ten minutes under fire

"Time is gold, it will make the difference between life and death," agrees Dr Gianluca Polce, an

orthopedic surgeon at TAAC-WEST. In addition to the Golden Hour, the armed forces operating under NATO's banner apply the "10.1.2" doctrine—three emergency phases which, cumulatively, must not exceed two hours. Vital intervention must be received within the first ten minutes, known as the Platinum Ten; emergency first aid within an hour, and the first surgery must be carried out by the two-hour mark. Care is then divided into four stages, from initial management to evacuation to the

"It was very important for each soldier to understand how to save a life," Buffet explains.

Like Suter, she says the tourniquet plays a key role. During Buffet's first tour of Afghanistan from 2005-2007, the device was completely absent among Afghan forces—as opposed to American troops, who rely on it so heavily they often wear one attached to their pant legs. "The Afghan soldiers now all have their tourniquets and their AFAK (Afghan first aid kit)," she says.

means civilians sometimes arrive too late for effective medical aid to be administered, he says. "Once they are here, they are treated within 10 to 15 minutes... but some arrive 20 hours, one week after the injury." Spiraling casualty figures have underscored the need to narrow that time gap for civilians and soldiers alike.

When NATO combat forces withdrew at the end of 2014, more than 3,500 foreign soldiers had been killed and about 33,000 wounded (including 20,000



LOGAR: A US Army soldier attached to the 2nd platoon operating under NATO sponsored International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) receives medical assistance after he was injured in an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) blast during a patrol near Baraki Barak base. —AFP

country of origin.

It all works well in theory. But in practice it can be another story, admits Dr Polce: "Ten minutes is a tricky time when you are under attack." Nevertheless such protocols are essential, says Stephanie Buffett, a medical advisor to NATO's Resolute Support mission (RS). RS trains thousands of Afghan security personnel in emergency first aid during winter's relative lull in fighting, and the country's young air force carried out its first evacuations in 2016, flying 9,000 wounded soldiers to safety. The goal is to instill a sense of urgency.

"Now they can survive... This is the main advantage of the military (compared) to the civilians: they all have tourniquet."

Civilians left behind

At Kabul's Emergency Hospital, which receives wounded civilians and soldiers as well as insurgents, doctor Abdushukoor Sardar has just received a man who was wounded 12 days ago. "The man came from the north, he had received a bullet in the thorax. I had to remove the left lung," he says. The lack of infrastructure in some parts of rural Afghanistan

Americans), according to the Pentagon. But it is Afghan civilians who continue to pay the highest price. More than 20,000 Afghan non-combatants are estimated to have died in the conflict since 2005, and the situation has grown more grim with each passing year: civilian casualties approached 11,500 in 2016, the highest recorded by the UN since 2009. A disproportionate number of those casualties were children, raising the troubling question of how many of those who died could have been saved, if only they had received help in time. —AFP

WE THE PUPILS: MORE STATES TEACH FOUNDING DOCUMENTS

KNOW YOUR US CONSTITUTION?

NORTH SMITHFIELD: Should US high school students know at least as much about the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution and the Federalist papers as immigrants passing an American citizenship test? In a growing number of school systems, having such a basic knowledge is now a graduation requirement. But states are taking different approaches to combating what's seen as a widespread lack of knowledge about how government works.

Kentucky last week and Arkansas on March 16 became the latest of more than a dozen states since 2015 that have required the high school social studies curriculum to include material covered by the 100 questions asked on the naturalization exam. Lawmakers in other states, including Minnesota, are hoping to foster even deeper understanding of the fundamentals of American democracy by adding a full course to study its most important documents.

"Rights might be inherent, but ideas need to be taught," said Maida Buckley, a retired classroom teacher in Fairbanks, Alaska, who testified last year to an Alaskan legislative task force on civics education. "When you have a system of government that's based on ideas, espoused in the Declaration of Independence and carried out with a working document in the Constitution, those ideas need to be taught." It's a bipartisan cause, and in many states such bills are jointly introduced by Republicans and Democrats.

But proponents' motivations vary from dismay about the lack of participation in local school boards and town halls to concerns about how Republican President Donald Trump and his supporters view the power of the executive branch. "We clearly have seen there is a serious civics

deficiency in this country, all the way up to the top, the very top," said Rhode Island Democratic state Rep. Gregg Amore, a longtime high school history teacher who is co-sponsoring legislation that contends the "survival of the republic" depends on Americans understanding its principles and history.

the model or something similar. "You have to learn the basics before you can have the higher-level discussions." Other civics education boosters say such a mandate is too simplistic. "If you do something like that, people are going to start teaching to the test and teaching a game of Trivial Pursuit," said Charles Quigley, executive

partly inspired by a ninth-grade class taught at North Smithfield High School. The honors class uses the "We the People" curriculum developed by Quigley's group. Students participate in a national competition in which they must orally defend their ideas. On a March afternoon, teenagers stood at their classroom's lectern one by one, debating whether a California police officer can search a suspected gang member's smartphone without a warrant. As they argued, some cited language from the US Constitution's Fourth Amendment. Others looked to Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis' 1928 dissenting opinion in a wiretapping case.

Their teacher, Natalie O'Brien, gently prodded them to think critically and tap into more than 200 years of American history and legal philosophy. She didn't tell them that, in 2014, a unanimous Supreme Court ruled in the California case that police may not generally search the cell-phones of people they arrest without first getting search warrants. "Someone's going to channel James Madison, right?" she said. "What would Brandeis be saying about this particular decision? What would the founders be saying?"

North Smithfield High student Megan Skinner said she didn't pay much attention to politics before O'Brien's class, but the 15-year-old now said she now uses the founding US documents as a guide as family and friends debate the Trump presidency. "It gives us an entirely new perspective on all the events that are going on," Skinner said. "You see all these things in the news, and especially about the election, and all the things that are going on with the executive orders he passed, the travel bans. Before this class, we wouldn't have understood these things." —AP



Tested to death

A campaign by the Scottsdale, Arizona-based Joe Foss Institute has led many states to pass laws requiring students to know what's on the citizenship test. "It's not a panacea or silver bullet, but it's a step forward," said the group's Lucian Spataro, who said 17 states have adopted

director of the Calabasas, California-based Center for Civic Education. "Kids are already tested to death."

'We the People'

The Rhode Island bill, introduced by a Republican from North Smithfield, a conservative town where Trump is popular, is



BAGHDAD: Iraqi Prime Minister Haidar Al-Abadi meets with members of a US delegation including Gen Stephen Townsend, commander of the international coalition forces in Iraq and Syria, Jared Kushner, senior adviser to US President Donald Trump, Tom Bossert, the US national security adviser and US ambassador Douglas Silliman. —AFP

TRUMP'S SON-IN-LAW FLIES INTO IRAQ WITH A GENERAL

BAGHDAD: US President Donald Trump's son-in-law, Jared Kushner, flew into Iraq yesterday with the top US military officer to get a first-hand assessment of the battle against Islamic State from US commanders on the ground and to meet Iraqi officials. For Kushner, who has not been to Iraq before, the trip comes at a critical time as Trump examines ways to accelerate a US-led coalition campaign that US and Iraqi officials say has so far been largely successful in uprooting Islamic State militants in Iraq and Syria.

The visit appears to demonstrate the far-reaching portfolio of Kushner, 36, who is part of Trump's innermost circle and who has been given a wide range of domestic and foreign policy responsibilities, including working on a Middle East peace deal. Marine General Joseph Dunford, the chairman of the US military's Joint Chiefs of Staff, said he invited Kushner and Tom Bossert, White House homeland security adviser, to accompany him so they could hear "first-hand and unfiltered" from military advisers about the situation on the ground and interact with US forces. "I said, 'Hey, next time I go to Iraq, if you're interested, come and it'd be good,'" Dunford said, adding he extended the invitation weeks ago.

That kind of ground-level awareness of the war helps inform strategic decisions, Dunford said, adding it was the same reason he regularly leaves Washington to visit Iraq. "The more appreciation you could have for what's actually happening on the ground, the more informed you are when you start talking about the strategic issues," Dunford said. Although media reported on Sunday that Kushner and Dunford were in Iraq over the weekend, they only arrived yesterday afternoon. Reuters was among a small group of reporters traveling with the US delegation.

Kushner, who is married to Trump's daughter Ivanka Trump, did not speak with reporters during the flight to Iraq. Dunford's spokesman, Navy Captain

Greg Hicks, said Kushner was traveling on behalf of Trump to express the president's support and commitment to Iraq's government and US personnel helping combat Islamic State. Trump, who campaigned on defeating Islamic State, has yet to announce any dramatic shift in war strategy.

US role after Mosul fight

The trip to Iraq comes as Iraqi security forces engage in fierce, house-to-house fighting to retake Mosul, Islamic State's last major stronghold in Iraq and the city where leader Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi declared a caliphate nearly three years ago. Nearly 290,000 people have fled the city to escape the fighting, according to the United Nations. Although the loss of Mosul would deal a major defeat to Islamic State, US and Iraqi officials are preparing for smaller battles even after the city is recaptured and expect the group to go underground to fight as a traditional insurgency.

What happens to the US military role in Iraq after Mosul is recaptured remain unclear. Influential Shiite cleric Moqtada Al-Sadr has previously called on Iraq's government to order the withdrawal of US and allied forces after the battle of Mosul is over. Dunford said Iraqi Prime Minister Haider Al-Abadi understood the need for continued US military support. "It's not our judgment that the Iraqis will be self-sustaining and self-sufficient in the wake of Mosul."

More importantly, it's not Prime Minister Abadi's assessment, Dunford said. Across the border in Syria, a US-backed campaign to isolate Islamic State's de facto capital of Raqqa is advancing ahead of an eventual assault on the city. US-backed Syrian forces repelled a major counter-attack by Islamic State militants holding out at the country's largest dam and in the nearby town of Tabqa, the group and activists said on Sunday. The dam is a strategic target in the military campaign, located about 40 km to the east of Raqqa. —Reuters

S KOREA'S MOON EYES PRESIDENCY

SEOUL: The man tipped to become South Korea's next president was formally nominated yesterday as candidate of the main opposition party, and promised "justice" in a nation rocked by the impeachment of its former leader. Moon Jae-In, the left-leaning former chief of staff to late president Roh Moo-Hyun, became the Democratic Party's standard-bearer for the poll on May 9. It was called after Park Guen-Hye was removed from the presidency over a corruption scandal which led to her arrest Friday.

Moon, known for his softer stance on North Korea, has suggested Seoul should engage with Pyongyang. His conservative critics say he could also loosen South Korea's longstanding alliance with the United States, which bases 28,500 troops in the country. The 64-year-old former human rights lawyer promised to "start a new history with the Korean people" after securing a total of 57 percent of the votes in nationwide primaries for his party. "This presidential election is not a showdown between conservatives and liberals but a choice between justice and injustice," said Moon in his acceptance speech.

Moon was narrowly beaten in the 2012

presidential election by Park and his party has been out of power for almost 10 years. But this election looks set to give him a strong chance at power, with opinion polls suggesting he has a commanding lead. A Realmeter survey published Monday put him on 34.9 percent, with his nearest rival, former software tycoon Ahn Cheol-Soo, trailing far behind at 18.7 percent. In December Moon said that if elected, he was willing to visit North Korea ahead of the United States, the South's security guarantor.

He also vowed to recognize North Korea's strongman leader as his dialogue partner. "We can't deny that the ruler of the North Korean people is Kim Jong-Un." In an interview with the New York Times, Moon called the alliance with Washington "a pillar of our diplomacy" but said South Korea should learn to "say 'No' to the Americans". A US missile defense system is being deployed to the South in the face of threats from the North, infuriating Beijing, which has imposed a series of measures seen as economic retaliation. Moon has been ambivalent about the issue, saying it needed to be carefully handled as it would bring the South "both gains and losses". —AFP



SEOUL: Moon Jae-In (left), the left-leaning former Chief of Staff to late president Roh Moo-Hyun, poses with the Democratic Party leader Choo Mi-Ae after he was elected as a presidential candidate of the party during a party primary for the upcoming South Korean presidential election yesterday. —AFP

JAPAN SENDS ITS ENVOY BACK TO SOUTH KOREA

TOKYO: Japan said yesterday it would send its ambassador back to South Korea after a diplomatic row had prompted his recall, because the countries should work closely together to counter threats from North Korea. The government ordered the envoy home in January over a statue placed by activists late last year outside its consulate in Busan. The statue symbolizes the plight of "comfort women"—a euphemism for women forced to work in Japanese military brothels during World War II. Japan says the statue violates the spirit of a 2015 agreement meant to settle the hugely emotional and decades-long issue with a Japanese apology and payment of money to survivors.

South Korea's foreign minister said at the time that his government would "strive to solve" the issue of a similar statue that has stood across the street from Japan's embassy in Seoul since

2011. That one, which has become a symbol for activists campaigning on behalf of the few surviving former sex slaves, still stands and Japan saw the new one in the southern port city of Busan as unacceptable.

But intensifying concerns over North Korea's nuclear and missile development prompted Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida to announce that ambassador Yasumasa Nagamine would return to Seoul today. "Japan and South Korea need to closely exchange information at high levels and closely communicate in order to deal with North Korean issues," Kishida told reporters. He said Japan would continue to urge South Korea to implement the "comfort women" accord after Nagamine returns. Also behind the decision to send the ambassador back, Kishida said, was South Korea's election in May to choose a successor to ousted president Park Geun-Hye. —AFP

News

in brief

Karaoke bar blaze kills 15 in central Myanmar

YANGON: At least 15 people have died after a fire ripped through a karaoke bar in central Myanmar, trapping revelers inside singing rooms filled with poisonous smoke. Eleven men and four women died when the blaze consumed the top floor of the Shwe Myat Min Thamee KTV bar in the town of Magway, northwest of the capital Naypyidaw, on Sunday night. A local fire official said the electrical system had apparently overheated and set fire to the sound-proof lining inside the singing rooms. "All those killed were inside KTV rooms at the time... It seems the wires became hot and started burning the foam," Magway region fire department director Aung Win Sein said yesterday. The four women who were killed were all said to be workers at the bar. Police have opened two cases against the bar owner for negligence. Karaoke bars are popular in Myanmar, where many also serve as fronts for illegal brothels.

'Biggest insurgent attack' in years in south Thailand

YALA: Insurgents fired hundreds of shots into a police booth in restive Muslim-majority southern Thailand yesterday, wounding 12 officers in what police called the biggest such attack in years. A decades-old separatist insurgency in the provinces of Yala, Pattani and Narathiwat has claimed more than 6,500 lives since it escalated in 2004, according to independent monitoring group Deep South Watch. CCTV footage showed what appeared to be about 30 insurgents surround a Yala police booth and firing more than 500 shots inside the building, Police Major General Kritsada Kaewchandee, chief of Yala provincial police, said. "This was the biggest attack in the deep south in many years," he said. In February, the military government of the Buddhist-majority country struck a deal with MARA Patani, a long-standing umbrella group that claims to speak for the insurgents, over a "safety zone" to cover five districts in the three southern provinces. The names of the districts have not yet been announced.



SARGODHA: A view of the cordoned off Sufi shrine where three suspects including the shrine's custodian killed at least 20 people on the outskirts of Sargodha District in Punjab province. —AFP

'Living saint' charged with killing 20 people

ISLAMABAD: A man seen by devotees as a living saint has been charged with murder and terrorism after allegedly knifing and clubbing 20 worshippers to death at a Pakistani shrine, police said yesterday. Police are having to bring the case against 50-year-old Abdul Waheed and three alleged accomplices, officials said, because the victims' relatives have such "blind faith" in him that they refuse to file charges. The slaughter took place Sunday at the Sufi Muslim shrine of Mohammad Ali, built in 2015 near the city of Sargodha in Punjab province. Sufis believe in pirs or "living saints" who can intercede for them directly with God. Ali, the shrine's first saint, was succeeded by Waheed, the new pir, who is also the shrine's custodian. Senior police official Malik Ghulam Abbas said it was strange that even relatives of the dead did not wish to file a complaint. "They have such strong blind faith in their pir that they say whatever has happened, happened with the blessing of Allah," he said.

Vietnamese dies of stroke at Japan detention centre

TOKYO: A Vietnamese man who died in solitary confinement at a Japanese immigration detention centre, raising questions about monitoring of detainees, died from a stroke, a Justice Ministry official said yesterday. The death of Nguyen The Hung last month at the East Japan Immigration Centre in Ibaraki prefecture, north-east of Tokyo, took the toll in Japan's detention system to 13 since 2006. The deaths have provoked criticism from activists and a watchdog overseeing the centers over medical care and monitoring of detainees. An autopsy found that Nguyen died of a subarachnoid haemorrhage, the official said, requesting anonymity. The autopsy was carried out on Wednesday, a separate person with direct knowledge of the matter said.

Islam critic Hirsi Ali cancels Australia tour over security

SYDNEY: Ayaan Hirsi Ali, the Somali-born women's advocate and leading critic of Islam yesterday cancelled a tour of Australia and New Zealand at the last minute citing security concerns. She was due to appear on an Australian Broadcasting Corporation current affairs panel show yesterday evening before speaking engagements later this week. But organizers Think Inc said in a statement that "Ayaan Hirsi Ali regrets that, for a number of reasons including security concerns, she must cancel her upcoming appearances in Melbourne, Brisbane, Sydney and Auckland". No further details were given. The former Dutch lawmaker is a controversial figure and has been threatened with death in the past for criticizing Islam.

EU nations and Israel eye longest undersea pipeline

TEL AVIV: Italy, Israel, Greece and Cyprus pledged yesterday to move ahead with the world's longest undersea gas pipeline from the eastern Mediterranean to southern Europe, with support from the European Union. If carried out as planned, the long-discussed \$6.2 billion (5.8 billion euro) pipeline will take gas from Israel and Cyprus's recently discovered offshore gas reserves to Europe, potentially reducing European dependence on Russian energy at a time of ongoing tensions. In a joint news conference in Israel's commercial capital Tel Aviv, energy ministers from the four nations and the EU's Commissioner for Climate Action and Energy Miguel Arias Cañete pledged their commitment to the project.



WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump meets Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi in the Oval Office of the White House yesterday. — AP

TRUMP HOSTS SISI IN LANDMARK VISIT, PRAISES 'FANTASTIC JOB'

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump put human rights controversies aside to warmly welcome Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi to the White House yesterday, the first such visit from an Egyptian president in almost a decade. Greeting Sisi in the Oval Office, Trump heaped praise on the former general's leadership and embarked on a charm offensive designed to fix ties strained by revolution and security crackdowns.

"You have a great friend and ally in the United States and in me," Trump told Sisi, sweeping aside his predecessor's concerns about democratic abuses in Egypt. "I just want to let everybody know that we are very much behind President Al-Sisi, he has done a fantastic job in a very difficult situation," Trump added. The meeting symbolizes an end to years in which the Egyptian leader had been kept at arm's length by Washington amid rights concerns.

The last time an Egyptian president was at the White House was in 2010, when Hosni Mubarak attended Middle East peace talks alongside Israeli, Palestinian and Jordanian leaders. Within months Mubarak was ousted by a popular uprising, which received tacit support from president Barack Obama. The Egypt-US relationship was strained further as a broadly Islamist and then a military government - led by Sisi - took charge.

The Obama administration froze military aid to Egypt after then-defense minister Sisi led the 2013 ouster of president Mohamed Morsi, and a bloody crackdown on his supporters. Egypt's key role as the most populous Arab nation meant that the aid was

fully reinstated in 2015, but diplomatic relations remained difficult. The catalyst for Trump and Sisi's friendship has been a common headline against militant groups, which Sisi described as "a satanic ideology" during brief remarks at the White House.

While Trump noted the United States and Egypt "have a few things" they do not agree on, he made no public airing of US concerns about human rights in Egypt. Rights groups have called for the release of Aya Hijazi, an Egyptian-American who works with street children and was arrested in May 2014 on human trafficking charges. Hijazi has been held in custody for 33 months in violation of Egyptian law, which states that the maximum period for pretrial detention is 24 months. Human rights groups have estimated that Sisi's government has detained at least 40,000 political prisoners.

A US official said Sisi would find a White House ready to soften US criticism of Egypt on human rights and to work on counter-terrorism but unwilling to provide additional aid. "He's going to get an end to finger-wagging. We're not giving him any more money," said the US official, who spoke on condition of anonymity before Sisi's meetings with Trump. "He's going to be disappointed because he wants more assistance and he's not going to get it," the official added, saying it was not yet clear whether Egypt would escape a cut in its foreign aid as part of the Trump administration's plan to cut the overall State Department budget by 28.7 percent. — Agencies

RUSSIA SUBWAY BLAST KILLS 10; SECOND BOMB...

Continued from Page 1

Witnesses said the explosion spread panic among passengers, who ran toward the exits of the station, which is 40 m underground. "Everything was covered in smoke, there were a lot of firefighters," Maria Smirnova, a student on a train behind the one where the bomb went off, told the Dozhd television channel. "Firefighters shouted at us to run for the exit and everyone ran. Everyone was panicking."

The blast occurred in a train carriage as it was travelling between the Technological Institute and Vosstaniya Square stations at 2:40 pm local time (1140 GMT), said the spokesman of Russia's anti-terrorist committee (NAK) Andrei Przhezdovsky. The NAK committee later confirmed security services had found another explosive device at the Vosstaniya Square metro station. This device did not explode and it was immediately "neutralized".

The metro network in Saint Petersburg announced it was shutting down entirely after evacuating all passengers. The Moscow metro also tweeted that it was "taking additional security measures" as required by law in such situations. NAK said in a statement carried by Russian news agencies that security was being stepped up at transportation hubs and crowded places across the country.

Saint Petersburg announced three days of mourning in the city while President Vladimir Putin, who was holding a meeting nearby in his official Strelina presidential

palace, offered "condolences" to those hurt in the blast and to the loved ones of those killed. Just hours after the blast, people began laying flowers by the Sennaya Square station. "I was shocked," said local resident Alexander Malikov. "I gathered my friends around and we came to put flowers here."

US President Donald Trump called the explosion a "terrible thing - happening all over the world - absolutely a terrible thing". EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini wrote on Twitter she was following developments "together with all EU foreign ministers" gathered for a meeting in Luxembourg. "Our thoughts are with all the people of Russia," she wrote.

Extremists have targeted Russia's public transportation systems in the past. In 2013, Russia was hit by twin suicide strikes that claimed 34 lives and raised alarm over security at the Sochi Winter Olympic Games. A bombing at the main railway station of the southern city of Volgograd killed 18 people while a second strike hit a trolleybus, killing 16. A suicide raid on Moscow's Domodedovo airport claimed by Islamist insurgents from the North Caucasus killed 37 people in Jan 2011.

Russia has intervened militarily to bolster Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad's forces in September 2015, turning the tables on the battlefield just as rebel forces were strengthening their hold on key areas. Russian bombardments helped the regime retake rebel areas in the east of the northern city of Aleppo after four years of fighting. — Agencies

ALLAH KAREEM

Continued from Page 1

Since last August - if my memory is still as sharp - this escalator has been out of order. Of course there is another one adjacent and in between proper stairs, but imagine you have your briefcase and bags and everyone is using one escalator, or have to suffer climbing down the stairs. It's OK if you are young and carrying nothing. But imagine an old man with a cane, and twice I've helped mothers struggling with their strollers, baby bags and babies, trying to get them all safely to the floor below. How much does it cost the airport maintenance department to fix one broken escalator? It's not as long as the Oxford Circus underground in London, which has hundreds of steps. And if they don't have budgets, we would be glad to publish a campaign to raise donations to fix the escalator.

After the escalator trouble, you pass through immigration. I want to just thank the Interior Ministry for all the positive improvements. I have to say immigration is

now more efficient, fast and very organized, and we have started seeing smiling faces.

But then another horror - waiting for your luggage at the baggage carousel. The only plane that landed that morning was our flight from London, and we still had to wait not less than 50 minutes for our bags. It was unbelievable. I felt sorry for the captain and his crew who were also waiting with us for their luggage. Why such a delay? It was 6 am and we were the only flight arriving at that time. There was no other action on the conveyor belts. Is it to do with a lack of workers?

I started to get edgy and grumbly - that's the nature of journalists anyway. Then a woman standing near me noticed and told me, "Relax, Allah Kareem (keep the faith in God)! They are building a new airport and I hope things will be better and faster and we will at least become as modern and updated as our brothers in the Gulf."

Well let's pray that she's right. But still this does not excuse the broken escalator.

Kuwait Times

Premier Brands

To see your ad here, call:
+965 248 35 616 / 617
 E MAIL: info@kuwaittimes.net
 ads@kuwaittimes.net
 Website: www.kuwaittimes.net

BEST PRICE

<p>Midea FS40-14BU Stand Fan</p> <p>16"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Speed choice • Height & Tilt Adjustable <p>14 <small>net 500</small></p>	<p>Midea FS40-7ARB Stand Fan</p> <p>16"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 Speed Choice & Oscillation • 8 hours timer • Remote Control <p>14 <small>net 900</small></p>	<p>Midea FS40-U3C Stand Fan</p> <p>16"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16 inch • 3 Speed • Metal Body <p>12 <small>net 500</small></p>	<p>ORCA NEF-50C Double Fan</p> <p>20"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20" Double Fan • 90° Oscillation • 1230 rpm • 3 m cord length <p>29 <small>net 900</small></p>	<p>ORCA NEF-55B Floor Fan</p> <p>22"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 22 inch • 3 Speed • Metal Body <p>16 <small>net 700</small></p>
--	---	---	--	---

best بيست
AL-YOUSIFI

• Kuwait 1 (The New str.) • Kuwait 2 (Panasonic Tower) • Hawalli 1 (Tunis str.) • Hawalli 2 (Bin Khaldon str.) • Shuwalkh (4th Ring road) • Al-Rai (4th Ring road) • Salmiya (Salem Al-Mubarak str.) • Farwaniya (Behind police Station) • Fahaheel (Opp. General Parking) • Jahra (Opp. Main Co-op.) • Airport (Departure Hall)

Shop Online www.best.com.kw Free Delivery

1809 809

OUR DEALS ARE THE BEST .. STARTING KD 35 MONTHLY !

Mazda CX-9
2012 Model

Mazda6 Ultra
2012 Model

Mazda2
2012 Model

Peugeot 301
2014 Model

Emgrand EC7
2013 Model

AS GOOD ... AS NEW

• 1 Year or 20,000 km Warranty • Low Installments • No Down Payment* • Company Serviced as per Manufacturer Recommendation

الشركة الكويتية لاستيراد السيارات ذ.م.م.
Kuwait Automotive Imports Co. W.L.L.

97390909 - 69011429 - 66884163

KAICO App.
ios & Android
Install it for free & use it!

* Subject to Credit Approval

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

Founder and Publisher
YOUSUF S. AL-ALYAN

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

EDITORIAL : 24833199-24833358-24833432
ADVERTISING : 24835616/7
FAX : 24835620/1
CIRCULATION : 24833199 Extn. 163
ACCOUNTS : 24835619
COMMERCIAL : 24835618

P.O. Box 1301 Safat, 13014 Kuwait.
E MAIL: info@kuwaittimes.net
Website: www.kuwaittimes.net

Focus

TRUMP LEARNING THE HARD WAY US PRESIDENCY WEAK

Transitioning from businessman to politician has been tough for Donald Trump. The billionaire dealmaker promised sweeping change-made-easy as president, but now finds himself facing fierce opposition in the Congress and the courts. It's a basic civics lesson most school kids know by heart but one that Trump has had to re-learn the hard way: under the US Constitution, the power of the president is checked by the legislative and judicial branches.

Those checks and balances have caused the first-time politician major setbacks to his two biggest initiatives to date, his travel ban and his attempt to overhaul the healthcare system. "Our presidency is very weak in terms of the ability to set the legislative agenda" compared to those of other democracies, Dartmouth government professor John Carey says. The White House can't introduce bills to Congress, for instance. That's the prerogative of legislators, who set their own agenda.

The opposition party's rights remain especially important in the Senate, where a qualified majority of 60 of 100 votes is required to pass a number of measures, including most tax and spending bills. "The president's power in terms of compelling legislators is mainly a power of persuasion," Carey says. "And there, Trump severely overestimated his ability." The US president's opponents also typically rely on the judicial system to oppose his decisions and sometimes successfully block them.

That's nothing new. The Supreme Court almost sank many provisions of Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal in the 1930s. But the "judicialization" of American politics has intensified in recent years. "I can't remember any president so much challenged in the courts so soon," the constitutional scholar Erwin Chemerinsky said. Those challenges are taking place in one of the most polarized contexts in history, with Trump lashing out against what he calls a politicized justice system, accusing it of encroaching on presidential powers that he is discovering are far less absolute than he imagined.

The system pushes back

The particular characteristics of Trump's presidency are amplifying the usual strains present under the constitutional separation of powers. He's the most unpopular head of state in recent history at this point in his presidency, with an approval rating of just over 40 percent. The Democrats in Congress - who worked together with the popular Ronald Reagan in 1981 and other Republican presidents when they held the majority - have very little incentive to compromise with the current leader.

Even members of Trump's own majority Republican Party are defying him. It was the hard-line conservative faction known as the Freedom Caucus that sank his effort to repeal Obamacare last week, a manifestation of a long-running internecine battle within the party. The unorthodox, impatient management style of a businessman with little apparent desire to steep himself in the details-or sometimes even the major points-of policy has increased the rancor and chaos in Washington. Having promised to "drain the swamp" of corruption in the capital, Trump has also surrounded himself with billionaires and ultraconservatives with a record of fierce ideological opposition to government but precious little experience in the political system's actual functioning. "This is the worst start for a presidency in my lifetime," Duke political science professor David Rohde said.

Not all lost

Still, at just 10 weeks into his first term, the 45th president retains prerogatives that, if used wisely, could enable him to regain the upper hand, including in a looming battle over the federal budget. His predecessors George W. Bush and Barack Obama learned to work around congressional obstruction and paralysis when possible by using their authority to enact executive orders. Although some of their initiatives ultimately failed, others have lasted.

"There's still plenty of opportunity for Trump to take really consequential action on policy through executive orders and through the regulatory process," Carey said, pointing to Trump's decision not to "waste any time" last week by rolling back Obama-era environmental protections immediately following his healthcare defeat last week. As for the judicial system, Trump will have opportunities to put his mark on it, starting with his nomination of Neil Gorsuch to a seat on the Supreme Court, which the Republican majority in Congress is poised to approve. Over the longer term, all the federal judges the president appoints will gradually influence the court system's political makeup. — AFP

All articles appearing on these pages are the personal opinion of the writers. Kuwait Times takes no responsibility for views expressed therein. Kuwait Times invites readers to voice their opinions. Please send submissions via email to: opinion@kuwaittimes.net or via snail mail to PO Box 1301 Safat, Kuwait. The editor reserves the right to edit any submission as necessary.



CAN TOUGH-TALKING TRUMP SOLVE N KOREA?

US President Donald Trump is suggesting ahead of his meeting later this week with Chinese President Xi Jinping that he can handle Washington's North Korea problem with or without Beijing's help - "totally". Is the self-proclaimed master of the deal doing what he does best - talking up his game? Even Trump said going it alone is not his Plan A. While declaring the US is ready to deal with Pyongyang on its own, Trump stressed in an interview with the Financial Times that he'd rather - much rather, actually - have Beijing on board. China, he noted, has the most influence over the North economically and politically.

But can he sway Beijing into doing more of what Washington wants? The big meeting is set to take place at Trump's Mar-a-Lago estate in South Florida on Thursday and Friday. Here's a closer look at some of the rhetoric being tossed around, by Trump in the interview released Sunday, and by a top US official:

TRUMP: "China has great influence over North Korea. And China will either decide to help us with North Korea, or they won't. And if they do that will be very good for China, and if they don't it won't be good for anyone."

THE CONTEXT: China is without doubt a lifeline for North Korea. It accounts for about 90 percent of the North's trade and is a key supplier of fuel and many of the other necessities that keep the North's economy running. If Beijing were to aggressively clamp down on all its trade with Pyongyang, the North would certainly feel the pain - and possibly collapse. The question, however, is what Trump means by "help".

Sanctions advocates in the US believe that with just the right amount of pressure, North Korea can be coerced into giving up its nuclear weapons. But that's not a certainty. Too much pressure could also lead to open conflict with a tremendously high cost in casualties and deaths, wreaking havoc on the Chinese, South Korean and Japanese - and by extension US - economies. A North Korean implosion, meanwhile, could be even more problematic, causing a massive refugee crisis. As Beijing well knows, that would impact China far more dramatically than the far-away US.

TRUMP: According to the Financial Times report, when pressed on whether the U.S. really could resolve the North Korean denuclearization problem without

China, he said, "Totally." "I don't have to say any more. Totally."

THE CONTEXT: So there it is, the tease. If Trump does have a dramatic solution to this problem, it will have to be pretty clever. And the stakes are extremely high. Back in 1994, President Bill Clinton considered a pre-emptive strike to take out North Korea's nuclear weapons' building capability. That was ruled out as too risky. He chose negotiations, and those failed, too, after George W. Bush took over.

Fast forward to today, and North Korea has a nuclear arsenal. It may already be able to hit Japan and the tens of thousands of US troops based there with nuclear warheads. It could be just a few years - if that - away from having an inter-continental ballistic missile capable of hitting the US mainland.

Whatever Trump has in mind, any change in the status quo that comes about without China's participation, or Russia's, is likely to antagonize North Korea's two nuclear-armed neighbors. Trump may not need to tell a newspaper what his plan is. But if he's got one, leaders across Asia are all ears.

AND PS, FROM YOUR UN AMBASSADOR: Trump's ambassador to the United

Nations, Nikki Haley, also had some tough talk over the weekend - but it conflicted with the president's. She said on ABC's "This Week" that China needs "to show us how concerned they are ... They need to put pressure on North Korea. The only country that can stop North Korea is China, and they know that."

THE CONTEXT: If Haley is right and China is the only country that can stop North Korea, it stands to reason the US can't resolve this issue alone. And no one expects it to. UN resolutions and unilateral sanctions imposed on North Korea have so far failed to deter it from conducting nuclear and missile tests. Last year, the North conducted two nuclear tests and two dozen tests of ballistic missiles.

During his swing through Asia last month, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said the past 20 years of US policy toward North Korea have been a failure. In fact, that could be extended all the way back to President Truman and the Korean War, which - thanks to China's decision to back the North - ended not in a peace treaty in 1953 but in an armistice.

So what would the US actually do if China doesn't cooperate? "China has to cooperate," Haley said. — AP

BIT BY BIT, TRUMP UNDOING OBAMA POLICIES

Amid the turmoil over staff shake-ups, blocked travel bans and the Russia cloud hanging overhead, US President Donald Trump is steadily plugging away at a major piece of his agenda: Undoing Obama. From abortion to energy to climate change and personal investments, Trump is keeping his promises in methodically overturning regulations and policies adopted when Barack Obama was president. It hasn't all been smooth sailing.

Trump recently failed to fulfill his pledge to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act, which continues to stand as Obama's most recognizable domestic policy achievement. Trump and House Speaker Paul Ryan couldn't persuade enough fellow Republicans to back new healthcare legislation last month. Ryan pulled the measure just before a scheduled House vote. Trump has had better outcomes in other areas.

Climate Change

Trump signed an executive order last week to deliver on his pledge to unravel Obama's efforts to curb global warming. The order launched a review of the Clean Power Plan, Obama's chief effort to curb carbon emissions by restricting greenhouse gas emissions at coal-fired power plants. Trump also lifted a 14-month-old halt on new coal leases on federal lands. The Obama administration had imposed a three-year freeze on such leases in January of last year.

The executive order covers a range of other Obama-era rules, including requirements to factor the "social cost" of carbon emissions into all regulatory actions and to crack down on methane emissions at oil and gas wells. Business groups had complained to Trump, himself a businessman, that the rules were intrusive and expensive.

Internet Privacy

Trump is expected to sign a measure soon to block online privacy regulations the Federal Communications Commission issued during Obama's final months in office. It's a first step toward allowing internet providers to sell information about their customers' browsing habits. The FCC rule was designed to give consumers more control over how companies like Comcast, AT&T and Verizon share information. Critics complained that the rule would have increased costs, stifled innovation and picked winners and losers among Internet companies. White House spokesman Sean Spicer says the rule represents the type of "federal overreach" that Trump pledged as a candidate to reverse.

Abortion/Family Planning

Trump is expected to sign legislation erasing another Obama rule, one that barred states from withholding federal family planning funds from Planned Parenthood affiliates and other clinics that provide abortions. The rule was finalized shortly before Obama left office in January. The measure cleared the Senate last week with Vice President Mike Pence, who is also president of the Senate, casting the tie-breaking 51st vote in the 100-member chamber.

Keystone XL Oil Pipeline

Trump green-lighted the long-delayed project on March 24, reversing Obama's decision less than 18 months earlier. After Trump invited TransCanada, the Canadian company building the \$8 billion pipeline, to resubmit its application, the State Department approved the project, saying it would advance US national interests. Obama had said the project would not. Approval came nearly a decade after TransCanada applied to complete the 2,735-km pipeline to carry oil from tar sands in Alberta, Canada, to refineries along the Texas Gulf Coast. Trump says the project will reduce costs and reliance on foreign oil, and create thousands of jobs. Obama had said it would undercut US credibility in international efforts to tackle climate change.

Dakota Access Pipeline

Under Obama, the Army Corps of Engineers had declined in December to allow pipeline construction under South Dakota's Lake Oahe on grounds that alternate routes needed to be considered. Native American tribes had sued to block construction, arguing that the pipeline threatened their water supply and cultural sites. The project has moved forward again under Trump, who acted shortly after taking office. In February, the Army Corps of Engineers abandoned further study and granted an easement that was needed to complete the pipeline. Energy Transfer Partners immediately began drilling under the lake.

Fuel Efficiency Standards

The Trump administration is re-examining federal requirements governing the fuel efficiency of cars and trucks. In 2012, the Obama administration set fuel economy regulations for model years 2017-2025 and agreed to complete a midterm evaluation by next year. Then, days before Obama left office, the Environmental Protection Agency decided to keep stringent requirements it had set in place for model years 2022-2025. The auto industry

balked. Trump announced in Michigan that he's putting the midterm review back on track. His decision has no immediate effect but requires the EPA to determine no later than April 2018 whether the 2022-2025 standards are appropriate.

Trans-Pacific Partnership

Obama was his administration's biggest cheerleader for the sweeping agreement involving the US and 11 other Pacific Rim nations. But the Senate needed to ratify it, and bipartisan opposition basically doomed it before he left office. As a candidate, Trump railed against this agreement and pledged to withdraw from it, saying he was a better negotiator and could strike better deals. Shortly after taking office, he directed the US trade representative to withdraw and said he would pursue individual deals with the other countries.

Abortion/Mexico City Policy

Trump reinstated a ban on providing federal money to international groups that perform abortions or provide information about them. Obama had lifted the ban when he took office in 2009. Known as the "Mexico City Policy" or, by critics, as the "global gag rule," the regulation has been a political volleyball, instituted by Republican administrations and rescinded by Democratic ones since 1984. Trump signed it one day after the 44th anniversary of the Supreme Court's 1973 Roe vs Wade decision that legalized abortion in the United States. The policy also prohibits taxpayer funding for groups that lobby to legalize abortion or promote it as a family planning method.

Personal Finance

Trump has instructed the Department of Labor to delay an Obama-era rule that would require financial professionals who charge commissions to put their clients' best interests first when advising them on retirement investments. The "fiduciary rule" was aimed at blocking consultants from steering clients toward investments with higher commissions and fees that can eat away at retirement savings. The rule was to take effect this month. The financial services industry argued that the rule would limit retirees' investment choices by forcing asset managers to steer them to low-risk options. Undoing the rule was part of a promised assault by Trump on banking rules enacted after the Great Recession. He has directed the Treasury secretary to review the 2010 Dodd-Frank financial oversight law, which he has said is a disaster. The law's aim was to keep banks from repeating practices that many blamed for the financial meltdown. — AP

BOXER MURATA FACE TO N'DAM FOR WBA CROWN

TOKYO: Japan's London Olympic champion Ryota Murata will fight Hassan N'Dam for the vacant World Boxing Association middleweight crown next month, his gym said yesterday. The 31-year-old's first title shot will take place in Tokyo on May 20 against the veteran Cameroon-born Frenchman, who is ranked number one by the WBA. "I'm grateful for the opportunity to fight for the middleweight crown here in Japan," Murata told reporters. "I expect a very tough fight but I want to leave everything out there and return the blessing of having won an Olympic gold medal." Japan's only previous middleweight world champion was Shinji Takehara, who won the WBA title in 1995. But the 33-year-old N'Dam, a former World Boxing Organisation champion who has compiled a record of 35 wins, 21 of them by knockout, against two losses, will provide a stern test for Murata. The Japanese star, who fights out of Tokyo's Teiken Gym, has won all 12 of his professional bouts, including nine by KO. —AFP

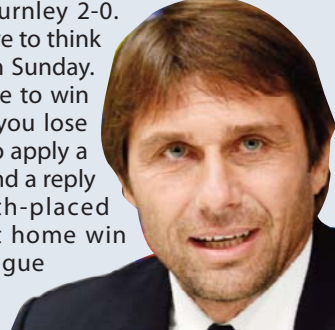


CHAMPIONS RUGBY FINAL TO BE PLAYED IN BILBAO

NEUCHÂTEL: Next year's Champions Cup rugby final will take place in the Spanish city Bilbao. The 53,289-capacity San Mames Stadium, home of the Athletic Bilbao soccer club, will stage the Champions Cup and Challenge Cup finals, European Rugby said yesterday. "We are very excited to be taking the best club rugby in the world to fans in what is largely a new market," European Professional Club Rugby chairman Simon Halliday said. "Bilbao is an excellent destination which breaks new ground for our tournaments and we see this as a big step in the expansion of our sport across the continent." Spain is ranked 18th in the world and has competed only once in the Rugby World Cup in 1999, when it lost all three group games. The country's national team annually takes part in the European Nations Cup, the highest European rugby championship outside the Six Nations tournament. There are no Spanish teams competing in either the Champions Cup or the second-tier Challenge Cup, the two top European domestic club competitions. But Bilbao is located in Spain's Basque country and borders a part of France where rugby thrives. —AP

CHELSEA'S CONTE TAKING SEASON 'STEP BY STEP'

LONDON: Premier League leaders Chelsea are focused on getting results in their remaining nine games as they fight for the title, instead of dwelling on Saturday's 2-1 loss to Crystal Palace, manager Antonio Conte said. Chelsea suffered their second loss in 10 league games, and their first home defeat in the league since September. The loss cut their lead at the top of the table to seven points after second-placed Tottenham Hotspur defeated Burnley 2-0. "There are nine games to play and we have to think step by step," Conte told British media on Sunday. "At the end (of the season), if we deserve to win the title, we will be very happy...When you lose this type of game, in your mind you try to apply a lot of questions. But it's very difficult to find a reply to this result." Chelsea host fourth-placed Manchester City tomorrow. Their last home win against the Manchester side in the league was in 2013. —Reuters



SHOOTING

SHEIKH JABER AL-ABDALLAH AL-SABAH CUP TOURNAMENT CONCLUDES

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Sheikh Jaber Al-Abdallah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah Cup tournament concluded on Sunday in the presence of tournament sponsor representative Sheikh Abdallah Al-Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah, President of Kuwait and Arab Shooting Federations Eng. Duajj Al-Otaibi, KSF and ASF Secretary General Obaid Al-Osaimi, KSSC Assistant Secretary Eng Mohammad

Misfer Al-Ghurba and board member Engineer Hussam Al-Roumi.

The tournament lasted three days with outstanding participation by club and National Guard shooters in addition to Sheikh Saad Olympic Shooting Academy, and covered the skeet, trap, double trap, 10m air pistol and rifle and Olympic archery.

Eng Al-Ghurba welcomed those present at the closing ceremony, adding that the tournament had a wide participation of

shooters who competed in a friendly atmosphere, and results were very good. He said this tournament is organized every year since the establishment of the sport of shooting unit now in recognition of the contribution of Sheikh Jaber Al-Abdallah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to the sport of shooting.

Results of the tournament are as follows:
Skeet Men: Mansour Al-Rashidi, Abdelaziz Al-Faihan, Zaid Al-Mutairi.

Trap Men: Talal Al-Rashidi, Abdelrahman Al-Faihan, Mohammad Al-Hamly.

Double Trap Men: Saad Al-Mutairi, Jarrah Al-Shuwaier, Mishal Al-Thafiri.

Skeet Women: Sheikha Al-Rashidi, Emam Al-Shamma, Afrah Abdelrahman.

10 Meter Air Rifle Men: Abdallah Al-Harby, Mohammad Abdelrahman, Sultan Al-Osaimi.

10 Meter Air Pistol Men: Hamad Al-Namshan, Hamad Al-Mulla, Saad Al-Ajmi.

10 Meter Air Pistol Women: Ghizlan Al-Hindi, Athari Qurban, Huthama Al-Baghli.

10 Meter Air Rifle Women: Mariam Erzuqi, Hiba Erzuqi, Reem Al-Bughaili.

Olympic Archery Men: Abdallah Taha, Bader Al-Shilahi, Faisal Al-Rashidi.

Olympic Archery Juniors: Mohammad Al-Haidar, Shaheen Kiti, Zaid Al-Saeed.

GUESS THE NUMBER OF FOOTBALLS FOR A CHANCE TO ATTEND UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE FINAL

KUWAOT: Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al Babbain Company (AABC), the authorized dealer of Nissan vehicles in the State of Kuwait, is delighted to kick off a competition that offers a chance for 1 lucky winner to attend the UEFA Champions League Final, started Sunday 2nd April 2017 for 10 days only.

First, all participants have to be following Nissan Kuwait Instagram account, @nissankwt. Then participants have to either come to Nissan Al Rai Showroom or watch the competition video posted on Nissan's account and estimate the number of footballs that are inside the Nissan kicks. Participants who guess or get a close guess of the actual number of footballs inside the Nissan kicks will enter an automated draw for a chance to win a ticket for two to attend the UEFA Champions League Final live.

Participants have the opportunity to win a complimentary trip to attend the UEFA Champions League Final live.

and enjoy an experience of a lifetime. The UEFA Champions League Final match will take place in the City of Cardiff, Wales on the 3rd of June, 2017. The package includes airplane tickets for two to London from June 2nd - 4th, 2017 and a 2-night stay at the Magellan Cruise Ship.

True to its promise to deliver value and excitement to its customers in a form of unparalleled service and world-class Japanese engineered cars, Nissan Al Babbain regularly strives to design offers that people simply just can't resist while creating a more memorable and enjoyable car purchasing experience. As Nissan is the official automotive sponsor of the UEFA Champions League since the 2014/15 season, Nissan Al Babbain is providing customers for the third time in a row the chance to win a trip to the most anticipated match of the year - the UEFA Champions League Final - bringing Innovation and Excitement closer to its customers as a token of appreciation.



GUESS THE NUMBER OF FOOTBALLS IN THE CAR FOR A CHANCE TO WIN A TRIP TO UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE FINAL



نيسان كيه سيه جيوه المصنوعه عند الراي ريل المصنوعه في
 Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al-Babbain Co. WLL



VIVA MANCHESTER UNITED SOCCER ACADEMY'S TRYOUTS CONCLUSION

KUWAIT: VIVA, Kuwait's fastest-growing and most developed telecom operator, concluded tryouts to choose elite players who will have the chance to participate in "VIVA Manchester United Soccer Academy" in Manchester, for the third year in a row.

The tryouts focused on different technical aspects, such as dribbling, short passing, turning and finishing. Kuwait Football Associated certified coaches shortlisted 32 players among 700 participants and 16 players were selected (to be announced soon) based on their skills and fit-

ness to go to Manchester United Soccer Camp for world-class training in England during the summer. To find out more about VIVA's partnerships, latest offers and promotions, visit one of the 73 VIVA branches, or the VIVA website at www.viva.com.kw

CRICKET

WEST INDIES BEAT PAKISTAN IN 4TH T20 TO TAKE SERIES

PORT-OF-SPAIN: Ahmed Shehzad scored 53 in 45 balls as Pakistan beat West Indies by seven wickets in the fourth and final Twenty20 match on Sunday to take the series 3-1. Pakistan reached 127-3 in 19 overs in reply to West Indies' 124-8.

The tourists won the toss at Queen's Park Oval and put West Indies into bat with Chadwick Walton top-scoring on 40 with four sixes and two boundaries. From 52-1, West Indies slumped to 83-7 as Hasan Ali (2-12) and Shadab Khan (2-16) performed economical spells. Some late hitting from Carlos Brathwaite, who made an undefeated 37 from 24 balls, gave West Indies something to bowl at but it looked unlikely to be enough.

Pakistan opener Kamran Akmal fell to Samuels for 20 but Shehzad pressed on in partnership with Babar Azam (38) to take his team to the brink of victory. With the target down to 15, both were dismissed in quick succession by Kesrick Williams, who bowled Shehzad with the last ball of one over and had Azam caught by substitute Rovman Powell with the first ball of his next.

Sarfraz Ahmed survived the hat-trick ball and Shoaib Malik was dropped before the pair saw Pakistan across the line with an over to spare. —AP

SCOREBOARD

PORT-OF-SPAIN, Trinidad: Scoreboard Sunday in the fourth and final Twenty20 between West Indies and Pakistan at Queen's Park Oval.

West Indies	Shadab Khan 4-0-16-2.	Pakistan	
Evin Lewis c Hasan Ali b Imad Wasim	7	Ahmed Shehzad b Williams	53
Chadwick Walton c Shoaib Malik b Shadab Khan	40	Kamran Akmal c Williams b Samuels	20
Marlon Samuels b Hasan Ali	22	Babar Azam c sub (R Powell) b Williams	38
Jason Mohammed b Hasan Ali	1	Shoaib Malik not out	9
Lendl Simmons run out (Hasan Ali)	1	Sarfraz Ahmed not out	3
Kieron Pollard b Rumman Raees	3	Extras: (1lb, 3w)	4
Carlos Brathwaite not out	37	TOTAL: (for 3 wickets)	127
Jason Holder c sub (Mohammad Nawaz) b Shadab Khan	0	Overs: 19.	
Sunil Narine b Wahab Riaz	9	Fall of wickets: 1-40, 2-110, 3-115.	
Samuel Badree not out	1	Did not bat: Imad Wasim, Fakhar Zaman, Rumman Raees, Wahab Riaz, Shadab Khan, Hasan Ali.	
Extras: (2lb, 1w)	3	Bowling: Samuel Badree 4-0-38-0, Jason Holder 3-0-24-0, Kesrick Williams 3-0-16-2 (1w), Sunil Narine 4-0-19-0, Marlon Samuels 2-0-11-1, Carlos Brathwaite 2-0-13-0 (2w), Jason Mohammed 1-0-5-0.	
TOTAL: (for 8 wickets)	124	Result: Pakistan wins by 7 wickets	
Overs: 20.		Series: Pakistan wins series 3-1	
Fall of wickets: 1-27, 2-52, 3-59, 4-73, 5-73, 6-82, 7-83, 8-121.			
Did not bat: Kesrick Williams.			
Bowling: Imad Wasim 4-0-25-1, Hasan Ali 4-2-12-2 (1w), Rumman Raees 4-1-25-1, Wahab Riaz 4-0-44-1,			

IOC SAYS NO SIGN OF ABUSE IN CLENBUTEROL CASES FROM BEIJING

ZURICH: The IOC said it had not detected any significant abuse of clenbuterol after finding "very low levels" of the banned substance during re-testing of samples from the Beijing Olympics.

The International Olympic Committee's comments on Monday came one day after German broadcaster ARD reported that traces of the banned substance were found in samples provided by members of the Jamaican sprint team at the games in 2008.

Jamaica won 10 medals in the sprint

events led by Usain Bolt, who took gold in the men's 100 and 200 metres. In a statement, the IOC said that "very low levels of clenbuterol" were found in the cases of athletes from a number of countries and different sports. It said the athletes were innocent and could not give any more details. Without mentioning Jamaica or the ARD allegations, the IOC said that all values were "in the range of potential meat contamination cases".

It said it "carefully deliberated" whether or not to proceed with the cases

and consulted the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA).

According to the IOC, WADA said that it could not find "any significant and consistent pattern of abuse of clenbuterol in these cases and that it would be appropriate not to take these cases any further".

The IOC stores samples for a decade to test with newer methods or for new substances. It ordered re-tests of samples from Beijing in the run-up to last year's Rio Olympics to try and root out

drug cheats. Clenbuterol is a performance-enhancing substance that is sometimes found in weight-loss pills and is on the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) banned list.

In 2011, more than 100 players tested positive for clenbuterol during the under-17 soccer world championship held in Mexico. They were also acquitted of any wrongdoing after FIFA, soccer's governing body, said they were victims of a health problem in the country.

However, double Tour de France

champion Alberto Contador of Spain was handed a two-year ban for testing positive for clenbuterol during the 2010 race, despite maintaining that he had eaten contaminated meat.

Jamaica were stripped of an eleventh Beijing sprinting medal, the 4 X 100 metres gold, in January when Nesta Carter was found in re-tests of his sample to have taken the banned stimulant methylhexanamine.

The whole team lost their medals as a result, including Bolt. — Reuters

TOP-RANKED JOHNSON, SPIETH, MCILROY TO BEAT AT MASTERS

NEW YORK: Dustin Johnson returns to this week's US Masters a different person than a year ago, more confident and comfortable, a golfer with greatness in his sights but some Everest-like mountains still to climb.

Johnson, the newly-ascended world number one, Jordan Spieth and Rory McIlroy are the three clear favourites for the year's first major championship, though at least two dozen others have a realistic chance of winning if the stars all align at the right time.

But the road to the Green Jacket will lead through Johnson, who ticks all the boxes as the man to beat. Before he is measured for a Green Jacket, however, it would be wise to remember he would not be the first favourite to be spat out by the unforgiving Augusta National layout.

The American, with victories in his past



AUGUSTA: Dustin Johnson of the United States hits a shot on the 13th hole during a practice round prior to the start of the 2017 Masters Tournament at Augusta National Golf Club yesterday in Augusta, Georgia. —AFP

three starts, has a game tailor made for Augusta, prodigiously long off the tee, con-

fident with his irons and short game and a soft putting stroke that seems to be getting better with age.

He also has a good recent Masters record - tied fourth last year and tied sixth in 2015 - and returns approaching a golfer's usual peak at the age of 32.

"I don't think I've ever gone into a major being ranked number one," he said recently, before adding to laughter: "Actually, I know I haven't."

"It's not going to be any different for me. I'm still going to prepare like I always do and go out and try to play the best I can. I played good there the last two years. I'm excited to go back when the game is in good form. I feel like everything is working pretty well."

While Johnson arrives with a spring in his step, Spieth is hardly looking forward to being reminded of his 2016 debacle, when he endured arguably the worst collapse in Masters history, giving up a five-shot lead over the final nine holes, due largely to a quadruple bogey at the 12th hole. He missed the cut in Houston on Friday, but publicly at least sounded an upbeat note. "I made strides in my putting this week, which is something I can take a lot of confidence into next week," he said. "Putting well next week obviously is important considering I didn't strike it very well last year and certainly was in position to win."

MCILROY SHARP

While Spieth's short game and putting are usually second to none, McIlroy has been working to raise those facets of the game to a level close to his ball-striking.

Perhaps only Johnson can drive the ball as long and accurately as McIlroy, whose chances often hinge on the quality of his wedge game and putter.

"I feel like that part of my game is as sharp as it has ever been going into Augusta, so that's a good thing," said McIlroy, who with a victory would become just the sixth man to win all four modern major championships. Others to watch include American veteran Phil Mickelson as he goes for a fourth Green Jacket at the age of 46, Hideki Matsuyama trying to fulfill the hopes of a nation and become the first Japanese player to win a men's major, and Jon Rahm, young, strong and fearless, whose chances maybe be hindered only by his lack of course knowledge in his Masters debut. Fellow Spaniard Sergio Garcia has the quality to end his majors drought if he can turn back the clock and putt as well as before several near-misses started to weigh him down. — Reuters



RANCHO MIRAGE: So Yeon Ryu of South Korea kisses the winner's trophy after winning the ANA Inspiration on the Dinah Shore Tournament Course at Mission Hills Country Club on Sunday in Rancho Mirage, California. — AFP

GOLF

LEXI THOMPSON'S PENALTY PUTS SPOTLIGHT BACK ON GOLF'S RULES

RANCHO MIRAGE: Lexi Thompson heard fans chanting her name as she approached the 18th green, and it moved her to the brink of tears for the second time in an hour. Although she had lost her big lead at the ANA Inspiration on a four-shot penalty for a day-old rules violation, Thompson had gained the unabashed support of a crowd desperately willing her to overcome this bizarre break.

Instead, So Yeon Ryu seized her opportunity to win the LPGA Tour's first major of the year when she birdied the only playoff hole Sunday. Thompson had to settle for second place, a check worth roughly \$155,000 less - and widespread sympathy as the latest golfer to get blindsided in a major by the peccadillos of this fussy, fastidious sport. "It's great to have the fan base that I do, and they really got me through the whole round," Thompson said. "It's unfortunate what happened. I did not mean that at all. I didn't realize I did that. I fought strong through the finish, and it was great to see the fans behind me." The fans on the Dinah Shore Course largely shared the mixture of bewilderment and anger expressed by Thompson's fellow golfers and most viewers online.

The 22-year-old US Olympian is the third major contender to be hit with a perplexing penalty for a violation of golf's stringent rules in the past year. The decision reignited the debate about this sport's baffling willingness to allow armchair refereeing - and renewed hope for common-sense rule changes that could be adopted as early as 2019.

PENALIZED

"Viewers at home should not be officials wearing stripes," Tiger Woods tweeted. "Let's go @Lexi, win this thing anyway." Thompson was penalized for marking and moving her ball less than an inch before a 1-foot putt on the 17th green during her third round at Mission Hills Country Club on Saturday. After putting down a marker and picking up the ball, Thompson swiftly put it back - but not precisely in the same place, video review showed. The minor action went unnoticed live, but a television viewer spotted it and emailed tour officials while Thompson was playing the front nine on her final round with Suzann Pettersen on Sunday.

After nearly two hours of agonizing over video of the moment, LPGA Tour rules official Sue Witters got the unpleasant job of informing Thompson about her penalty after she left the 12th green. "Is this a joke?" Thompson asked.

Even Witters understands the prevailing opinion about the ruling. "Sure, but what's my choice?" she asked. "(Allow) a violation in the rules, and then it would be the opposite story: 'Oh, they knew. Why didn't they do anything about it?' I can't go to bed tonight knowing that I let a rule slide. 'It's a hard thing to do, and it made me sick, to be honest with you.'"

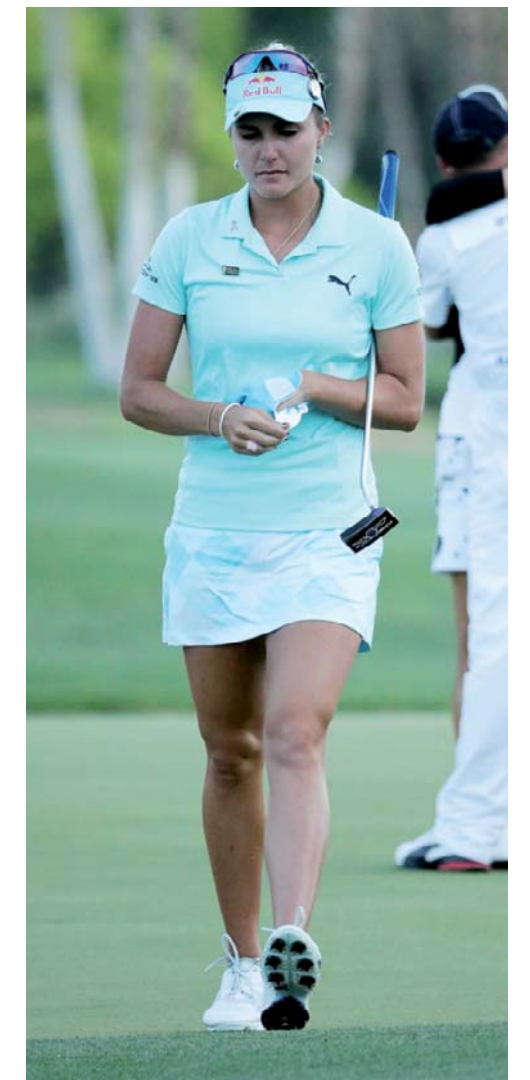
Sickening things have happened with regularity in majors lately. At the men's US Open at Oakmont last year, Dustin Johnson won despite playing the last seven holes without knowing his score. His ball had moved slightly while he lined up a putt on the fifth green, the USGA eventually hit him with a one-shot penalty after his round.

A few weeks after that at the US Women's Open, Anna Nordqvist got a delayed two-stroke penalty during a three-hole playoff for accidentally touching the sand with her club in a bunker when a television cameraman spotted it. Brittany Lang won by - you guessed it - two shots. Perhaps all of this drama only underlines the importance of what could soon happen to that centuries-old rulebook.

The two governing bodies of golf released a draft of modernized rules last month, attempting to simplify the arcane. The numerous proposed changes would eliminate some of the punishment for inadvertent mistakes and freak occurrences that don't actually give an advantage to a competitor. But those changes haven't been adopted yet, and Thompson was left with a crushing penalty for an action that easily could have been ignored under a more pragmatic interpretation of intent - a "reasonable judgment standard," under the proposed rules.

Instead of losing her composure after the ruling, Thompson incredibly birdied the next hole, burying a 25-foot putt. She made two more birdies and a bogey down the stretch, but missed a 15-foot eagle putt to win it on the last hole of regulation. Ryu nearly put her playoff approach shot into the water, but got up and down with a 6-foot birdie putt to win. Her celebration was understandably muted, but she still

took the traditional leap into Poppie's Pond. A few yards away, Thompson embraced her family and later signed dozens of autographs. She was shaken, but not deterred. "Every day is a learning process," Thompson said. "I wasn't expecting what happened today, but ... it happens, and I'll learn from it and hopefully do better." — AP



Lexi Thompson

BADMINTON

MALAYSIA'S AGEING STAR LEE FIRED UP FOR 2017

KUCHING: After a phenomenal start the year, Malaysia's ageing badminton icon Lee Chong Wei said yesterday he still has plenty of firepower as he aims for the elusive World Championship title in August.

Lee, 34, the veteran world number one, captured the All-England Open last month with a trampling 21-12, 21-10 win over China's unseeded Shi Yuqi and is primed to defend his Malaysia Open title this week. "I am still keeping good fitness, good shape and good spirit, and I still have the fire to keep on playing," Lee told AFP.

He had hinted of retiring after the 2016 Olympics, but had a change of heart and has now made the world meet in Glasgow as his biggest target this year.

Despite sweeping through 66 titles, Lee lost in the finals of the World Championships in 2013 and 2015, as well as in the Olympics in 2008, 2012 and 2016.

But fresh off his fourth All-England Open win, Lee is confident of defending his title on home turf, having skipped the India Open to prepare. The Malaysia Open begins Tuesday in Kuching, the capital of Sarawak state on Borneo island.

The badminton star on Monday looked good in training on the eve of the tournament but still had his injured left knee taped following a fall in February.

He said last month he almost didn't make it to the All-England event in Birmingham as he was unsure whether his

damaged left knee would tolerate competitive stresses.

Lee, the top seed at the Malaysia Open, won the tournament a record 11 times, making him the most successful men's singles shuttler in the history of the event.

"I will also play in the Malaysia Open next year," Lee said casting aside any plans to quit in the near future.

But Lee admitted that other players will attempt to deny him a victory. "I want to win for the 12th time. But there is some pressure because everyone wants to beat me at my home ground," he said. The other players in the tournament are second seeded Jan O Jorgensen of Denmark and third seeded Chen Long of China, while Lin Dan also of China is seventh seeded.

"I am only focused on myself," said Lee when asked about Lin, the 33-year-old three-times Olympic champion.

Lin is regarded as the greatest badminton player in history owing to his five World championships and two Olympic gold medals. But the Chinese star has never been able to win in Malaysia. Lin reached the final three times but was defeated by Lee in 2005 and 2006 and by Chen Long in 2015.

In 2006, Lin was one point away from the title, but Lee staged a shock comeback in the deciding game to win 23-21 and deny Lin the only superseries title missing from his trophy cabinet. — AFP



FEMALES ARE FACING AN OFF-ICE FIGHT AT ALL LEVELS OF HOCKEY

PLYMOUTH: The best women's hockey players in the US can now make a living playing the sport they love thanks to a landmark agreement with USA Hockey reached after a threat to boycott the world championship. The deal will likely help their counterparts north of the border make more money in their next Olympic agreement with Hockey Canada.

Even those who will benefit, though, acknowledge the off-ice fight isn't over.

At every level of female hockey, from pre-teen girls to college to post-graduate players, there are obstacles. "Women's hockey has come a long way with the amount of teams that are popping up and support and visibility," said Meghan Duggan, captain of the Americans' team playing in the world champi-

onship. "I think it has a long way to go, and I'm excited to push it ahead. I'm certainly proud to be someone standing up for women's hockey and really trying to get it to move forward. I look forward to see how far women's hockey is going go." In a border town about 300 miles north of suburban Detroit, a new USA Hockey rule appears to be having unintended consequences for girls trying to find their stride. The Soo Lady Lakers, an organization based in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, participated in the state's Tier II 14-and-under tournament with just 11 girls that were mostly from Canada and 12 years old or younger. Beginning next season a USA Hockey rule states, no player 12 years or younger is eligible to play on a team intending or declared to compete in

district or national championships.

Malory McCormick, who coached the Lakers at this year's tournament, said the girls on her team that are not old enough to play 14U hockey next year have limited options. They can drive 2-plus hours, each way, to join a 12U team in Kalkaska, Michigan; play with 12U boys in their area; participate in house hockey with girls just learning how to skate; or quit playing the sport.

"It's heartbreaking to tell the girls I don't know what our team will look like next year," McCormick said. Kristen Wright, USA Hockey's manager of girls' player development, said the new rule was put in place for safety and development reasons because girls usually hit a growth spurt at about 13. — AP

ATHLETICS

KENYAN STAR PREPARES 'CRAZY' SUB-2 MARATHON BID

KAPTAGAT: As dawn breaks over the foothills of the Rift Valley, Eliud Kipchoge's feet beat a steady rhythm along ochre trails and his mind is still, undaunted by a goal many think impossible. It is the next mythical barrier in running: smashing a sub-2 hour marathon. Kenya's Kipchoge is one of three elite runners chosen by American sportswear giant Nike to attempt to run the 42.195 kilometres (26.219 miles) distance in under two hours, combining the latest science on training, nutrition, psychology and sportswear.

eran Eritrean distance runner Zersenay Tadese are the cream of East Africa's storied running crop and each is believed to hold the potential to run 1:59.59 or faster. This means shaving nearly three minutes off the current record of 2:02.57, run by Kenyan Denis Kimetto in 2014, a mind-boggling leap that Kipchoge is convinced he can achieve.

"I didn't think it was crazy. No human being has run under two hours. And I want to be the first human being to run under two hours," he told AFP in an interview in the village of Kaptagat, a popular training site in western Kenya at an altitude of over 2,000m.

Kipchoge, a former world 5,000m champion, ran the world's third fastest marathon time of 2:03.05 when he successfully defended his London marathon title last April.

Since switching from a stellar track career to marathon running in 2013 he has won seven of eight races in which he has competed. Respected track and field magazine Runners World has predicted that, based on data analysis, the barrier would only be broken in 2075, and called Nike's bid "audacious".

"I accept the freedom of those who are pessimists," says a serene Kipchoge. "In this world there are three types of

people. Those who wait for things to happen. Those who go with the people who have started. And those who think about how to make things happen.

"I think it's possible to run under two hours. That's why I'm going for it."

ADIDAS ALSO IN RACE

In 1908, Irishman Johnny Hayes won the first marathon set at the modern distance of 42.195 kilometres (26.219 miles) in a time of 2:55:18. It took 109 years for the record to crumble to the current level run by Kimetto. Kimetto is sponsored by Adidas, who quietly referred to their own sub-2 bid in February with the

announcement of the Adidas Adizero Sub2 shoe. Nike, meanwhile, is taking everything that is known about nutrition, training and biomechanics to optimise the runners' chances.

During a half-marathon test at a Formula 1 track in Monza in Italy in March, the runners ingested core-temperature pills and taped on sensors to measure muscle oxygen and skin temperature, according to Runners World.

Kipchoge ran a promising 59 min 17 sec and was followed by Tadese, who holds the world half-marathon record but has only ever managed to run a 2:10:41 marathon. —AFP

TENNIS

FLOUR POWER AS JAPAN'S DATE RETURNS AT 46

TOKYO: As a grimacing Kimiko Date rips another forehand past a male hitting partner less than half her age, all that's missing is a cheesy Rocky-style backing track. At the ripe of old age of 46, the former world number four and part-time baker insists she's not burnt-out yet as the Japanese star prepares for her latest comeback to professional tennis after a year of injury hell.

Date, who took a 12-year hiatus from the sport after quitting at the peak of her powers in 1996, has no plans to shuffle off into retirement just yet. "Everyone just assumed I'd quietly retire when I got injured," the Kyoto native told AFP in an interview after a punishing three-hour workout. "But I didn't want to just quit because I was out hurt. I used it as motivation," added Date, who has undergone two knee surgeries and opened a Tokyo bakery since last playing in the 2016 Australian Open qualifiers. "Maybe you could call that gutsy. But I love a challenge—and I viewed this as another challenge."

A wispy, wiry 5ft 4in (1.63 metres), Date's game is a throwback to a time when tennis was as much about lobs, dinks and clever use of spin as the wham-bam of today's master blasters. And after an injury that almost dealt a knockout blow to her illustrious career, Date is once again looking to defy the odds.

"The nineties was my first career, then I came back and that was my second," said the eight-times WTA Tour singles champion, who returns to competitive tennis next month at a challenger event in Gifu, central Japan. "This is like my third time around but I know it won't be easy after a blank year," she added, sweat dripping from her brow. "But I'm not putting pressure on myself. I'm honestly not thinking about breaking records. I just want to fight my

way back to playing tour level tennis again."

TV OLYMPICS

Date, who at the 2009 Korea Open became the second-oldest player in the modern era to win a WTA singles title after Billie Jean King, refuses to say when she will call time on her career.

"I really haven't decided what age I want to continue playing until," said the former Wimbledon semi-finalist, eligible for a protected ranking of 193 on her return to tour.

"I'm sort of waiting for the moment when I feel content enough to walk away from the game," added Date, who last year divorced German racing driver Michael Krumm. "It hasn't arrived yet so I'll keep fighting."

Date's erstwhile idol Martina Navratilova retired a month short of her 50th birthday, but Date ruled out a fairytale appearance at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. "That's probably 100 percent a no," Date winced. "I'll be watching the Tokyo Olympics at home on TV." Dwarfed by today's muscular power-hitters, she is brutally honest about the future.

"Every day I have aches and pains," said Date. "Some days are better than others but I have to be careful I don't push too much. I have to hold myself back a bit and keep in control of my emotions."

But Date, who delights customers by making regular appearances at her new bakery, still packs a mean punch and left her practice partner shaking his head as her shots fizzed past. "The power and speed of tennis has evolved so much," she said. "Players are physically much stronger but I still have one or two weapons of my own. I reckon I still have a little bit more left in me—even at my age." —AFP



PHOENIX: Infielder Brandon Drury #27 of the Arizona Diamondbacks catches the ball as Eduardo Nunez #10 of the San Francisco Giants safely steals second base during the MLB opening day game at Chase Field on Sunday in Phoenix, Arizona. The Diamondbacks defeated the Giants 6-5. — AFP

BASEBALL

GIANTS LOSE 6-5 DESPITE MADISON BUMGARNER'S RECORD PERFORMANCE

PHOENIX: Madison Bumgarner hit two homers but the Arizona Diamondbacks scored twice with two outs in the bottom of the ninth inning off new San Francisco closer Mark Melancon to beat the Giants 6-5 in a wild season opener Sunday. Derailed by a dreadful bullpen last year, the Giants started this season the same way - even after trying to solve the problem by bringing in Melancon on a \$62 million, four-year contract. They wasted a record-breaking performance by Bumgarner, who retired his first 16 batters and became the first major league pitcher to hit two home runs on opening day. Arizona got a double and three singles after Melancon (0-1) retired his first two hitters in the ninth. A.J. Pollock singled in the tying run and Chris Owings dumped a base hit into right field to end it. New Diamondbacks closer Fernando Rodney (1-0) gave up a run in a shaky ninth but got the victory. San Francisco took a 5-4 lead when Joe Panik led off the ninth with a triple and scored on pinch-hitter Conor Gillaspie's sacrifice fly. Bumgarner struck out 11 with no walks in seven innings. He gave up three runs and became the first Giants pitcher to go deep twice in one game since Jim Gott in 1985.

CARDINALS 4, CUBS 3

Randal Grichuk hit a two-run homer in the eighth inning and a game-ending RBI single in the ninth, helping the St. Louis Cardinals top the Chicago Cubs in a wild prime-time opener on Sunday night. Jose Martinez sparked the winning rally with a pinch-hit double against Mike Montgomery, who closed out Chicago's World Series championship in November. Yadier Molina then was awarded the first no-pitch intentional walk in major league history, part of baseball's off-season rule changes designed to speed up the

Baseball results/standings

ST. LOUIS 4, Chicago Cubs 3; ARIZONA 6, San Francisco 5; TAMPA BAY 7, NY Yankees 3.

American League Eastern Division				GB	National League Eastern Division				
W	L	PCT	Washington		Philadelphia	NY Mets	Miami	Atlanta	
Tampa Bay	1	0	1.000	-	0	0	0	-	
Toronto	0	0	0	0.5	0	0	0	-	
Boston	0	0	0	0.5	0	0	0	-	
Baltimore	0	0	0	0.5	0	0	0	-	
NY Yankees	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	-	
Central Division				St. Louis	Central Division				
Minnesota	Kansas City	Detroit	Cleveland		Chicago White Sox	1	0	1.000	-
Minnesota	0	0	0	-	Pittsburgh	0	0	0	0.5
Kansas City	0	0	0	-	Milwaukee	0	0	0	0.5
Detroit	0	0	0	-	Cincinnati	0	0	0	0.5
Cleveland	0	0	0	-	Chicago Cubs	0	1	0	1
Chicago White Sox	0	0	0	-	Western Division				
Western Division				Arizona	1	0	1.000	-	
Texas	Seattle	Oakland	LA Angels		Houston	San Diego	LA Dodgers	Colorado	San Francisco
Texas	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0.5	
Seattle	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0.5	
Oakland	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0.5	
LA Angels	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0.5	
Houston	0	0	0	-	0	1	0	1	

game. With two outs and the bases loaded, Grichuk lined a 1-2 pitch into the gap in left-center for his second career game-ending hit. He was mobbed as he rounded first in the rain, and what was left of a sellout crowd of 47,566 cheered wildly. The Cardinals appeared set for a tidy 3-0 win before the Cubs rallied in the ninth. Ben Zobrist was hit by a pitch from Seung-hwan Oh and Jason Heyward singled before Willson Contreras hit a drive to left for a tying homer.

RAYS 7, YANKEES 3

Chris Archer pitched seven solid innings and Tampa Bay won the first game of the major league season, roughing up New York ace

Masahiro Tanaka. Evan Longoria and Logan Morrison homered and drove in three runs apiece before a sellout crowd of 31,042 at Tropicana Field on opening day. Tanaka (0-1), who had baseball's best ERA in spring training, was tagged for a career-worst seven earned runs in 2 2/3 innings. A first-time All-Star in 2015 who lost an AL-leading 19 times last season, Archer (1-0) limited New York to two runs and seven hits. He narrowly escaped a bases-loaded jam and turned a five-run lead over to a revamped bullpen. Alex Colome replaced rookie Austin Pruitt with the bases loaded in the ninth, yielding a sacrifice fly to pinch-hitter Chris Carter before finishing for a save. —AP



TOKYO: This picture taken on March 31, 2017 shows Japanese tennis player Kimiko Date taking part in a training session in Tokyo. At the ripe of old age of 46, Date, the former world number four and part-time baker, insists she's not burnt-out yet as the Japanese star prepares for her latest comeback to professional tennis after a year of injury hell. —AFP

RUGBY

S AFRICA'S ACKERMANN SUCCEEDS FISHER AS GLOUCESTER COACH

LONDON: South Africa's Johan Ackermann is to become the new head coach of Gloucester in time for the 2017/18 season, the English Premiership side announced yesterday.

Ackermann, 46, is currently in charge of the Lions but will leave the Johannesburg-based club at the end of the current Super Rugby season. He will replace Laurie Fisher at Kingsholm after the Australian resigned from his post with southwest club Gloucester last month. Former lock Ackermann, who won 13 South Africa caps, has previous experience of the Premiership from a spell with Northampton. He led the Lions to promotion to Super Rugby in 2013 and to the Super Final last season where they were beaten by New Zealand's Hurricanes. But he believes moving to England will help improve him as a coach, telling the Lions' Facebook page: "I have come to a crossroad in my career and believe that my coaching journey needs to change in order for me to grow." Meanwhile Gloucester director of rugby David Humphreys said

in a club statement: "We're all delighted that Johan has agreed to become the next head coach of Gloucester Rugby."

"He is one of the top coaching talents in world rugby, and it's a significant coup for the club to recruit someone of his calibre. "When we first spoke to Johan, we were struck by the enthusiasm and energy he displayed to take up the challenge at Gloucester but, once we had met with him, we knew he was the person we wanted to take the club forward." Gloucester were one of England's leading clubs when rugby union was an amateur sport but have had generally mediocre results in the professional era. This is despite boasting one of the most passionate home crowds in the Premiership and being the centre of sporting attention in a city without a major soccer club.

But former Ireland fly-half Humphreys believes Ackermann can oversee a revival in the Cherry and Whites' fortunes.

"We were particularly impressed by his proven

ability to take a team that has under-performed, and turned them into Championship contenders," Humphreys said.

"Their year on year progression has been impressive and they are continuing that upward trend this season."

"The way that the Lions play in Super Rugby under his leadership has attracted many admirers around the world, as they have managed to create a winning brand but are also capable of playing an attractive style of rugby." Fisher quit after Gloucester somehow squandered a 12-point lead in the closing nine minutes of an eventual 30-27 loss at home to Harlequins in the Premiership last month, tweeting afterwards: "Unbelievable capitulation. Clearly not good enough. My responsibility."

For all that they have failed to make much of an impression upon the Premiership this season, Gloucester did get through to the semi-finals of Europe's second-tier Challenge Cup with a 46-26 win at home to Cardiff Blues on Saturday. — AFP



CLERMONT-FERRAND: RC Toulon's South African winger Bryan Habana (C) falls during the European Champions Cup match between Clermont (ASM) and Toulon at Michelin Stadium in Clermont-Ferrand on Sunday. — AFP

KUWAIT TIMES NBA POWER RANKINGS

By Ahmad Jabr

KUWAIT: In addition to its usual coverage of the NBA, Kuwait Times introduces a new feature this year: the NBA Power Rankings. It is a weekly list ranking each team based on its performance during the week. Top playoff contenders have already punched their tickets to the post-season as lower-seed teams battle for the remaining spots. (For any comments or suggestions, e-mail the writer at: a.jabr@kuwaittimes.net)



1- Golden State Warriors (63 - 14) Last week: 1 - The Warriors used strong defense and showcased their offensive prowess to overcome last week's test which included a game against the Spurs, two meetings with the Rockets and a match against the Wizards. They are on an 11-game winning streak and look prepared for a deep playoff run.



2- San Antonio Spurs (59 - 17) Last week: 2 - A loss to the Warriors last Wednesday prevented the Spurs from what would have been an eight-game winning streak entering today, but a 7-1 record in their last eight games is not bad either.



3- Boston Celtics (50 - 27) Last week: 4 - Boston might be first in the Eastern Conference's standings, but they struggle to score when Isaiah Thomas is on the bench. This means that any defensive plan that limits Thomas' production in the playoffs could spill an early postseason exit for the Celtics.



4- Toronto Raptors (47 - 30) Last week: 7 - DeMar DeRozan won his franchise-record fourth Player of the Week award, after which he scored 40 points in Friday's win over the Pacers; his seventh 40-point game of the season, and his 30th game of 30 points or more this season, tying Vince Carter's 2000-01 franchise mark.



5- Houston Rockets (52 - 25) Last week: 3 - The Rockets lost three straight games after they beat the Thunder on March 27, including two games against the Warriors in which their commanding offense was neutralized by Golden State's suffocating defense.



6- Cleveland Cavaliers (49 - 27) Last week: 6 - LeBron James passed Shaquille O'Neal for seventh place on the NBA's all-time scoring list, but there is no time to celebrate after the Cavs lost the top spot in the East's standings following losses to the Wizards, Spurs and Bulls last week.



7- Washington Wizards (46 - 31) Last week: 5 - The Wizards clinched their first Southeast Division title since 1979, ending the longest active division-title drought not only in the NBA, but in all four major sports in North America.



8- Los Angeles Clippers (47 - 31) Last week: 10 - The Clippers had a perfect week in which they scored an average of 124 points per game in three wins over the Wizards, Suns and Lakers. Chris Paul and Blake Griffin have each scored over 25 points in each of those games.



9- Utah Jazz (47 - 30) Last week: 8 - Gordon Hayward is Utah's leading scorer and a key reason for their success this season, which is why the team's management should probably be concerned with the All-Star's impending free agency, especially with recent rumors indicating that Miami could lure him this summer.



10- Portland Trail Blazers (38 - 38) Last week: 12 - Jusuf Nurkic battered his former team for a career-high 33 points and 15 rebounds, putting Portland in position to seal the eighth and final playoff-qualifying spot in the West's standings. However, Nurkic fell to injury and will be out at least two weeks.



11- Oklahoma City Thunder (43 - 33) Last week: 9 - Russell Westbrook recorded his 40th triple-double of the season on Sunday, which is one shy of Oscar Robertson's single-season record. He also passed the 15,000-point career scoring mark during that game; which the Thunder still lost to the Hornets.



12- Milwaukee Bucks (40 - 37) Last week: 11 - Several players have stepped up for the Bucks since Jabari Parker fell to injury, including Tony Snell, Giannis Antetokounmpo, and Thon Maker; who scored 26, 22 and 23 points respectively in wins over the Hornets, Celtics and Pistons last week.



13- Chicago Bulls (38 - 39) Last week: 16 - The Bulls are suddenly back in the playoff picture, riding a four-game winning streak behind Jimmy Butler's dominant scoring. A major part of this success can be attributed to Butler's current scoring surge and being placed as the center focus in Chicago's offense, which makes Dwyane Wade's injury seem like somewhat of a blessing in disguise.



14- Memphis Grizzlies (42 - 35) Last week: 17 - There was a sequence of plays that stood out during Friday's win over the Mavs which started with 40-year-old Vince Carter blocking the virtually unblockable fade-away jumper of Dirk Nowitzki before the Grizzlies made a three pointer at the other end of the floor.



15- Miami Heat (37 - 40) Last week: 13 - The Heat's two losses in their last two games moved them to a tie with



Indiana for eighth and final playoff-qualifying spot in the East's standings, and their hopes are not looking too good as they play their remaining games against the Hornets, Raptors, Wizards (twice) and Cavaliers.



16- Denver Nuggets (36 - 40) Last week: 14 - The Nuggets' playoff hopes got a boost following their victory over the Heat on Sunday. They remain two games behind Portland for eighth place in the West's standings.



17- Indiana Pacers (37 - 40) Last week: 15 - Desperate to make it to the playoffs (and keeping Paul George happy), the Pacers signed their former starter Lance Stephenson, but it remains to be seen whether he provides the spark that they need or continues to show the disappointing performance he showed in the past couple of years.



18- Charlotte Hornets (36 - 41) Last week: 21 - The Hornets kept their playoff hopes alive after lodging impressive wins over the Raptors, Nuggets and Thunder last week, but still have a lot to overcome to secure a position in the postseason.



19- New Orleans Pelicans (33 - 44) Last week: 20 - DeMarcus Cousins made sure to let his former team know what they are missing after trading him. In his first game against the Kings, he scored 37 points and grabbed 13 rebounds to lead the Pelicans to victory.



20- Atlanta Hawks (39 - 38) Last week: 18 - Paul Millsap finally came back from injury with much hope that his return would end Atlanta's recent struggles suffered in his absence. But his return was still not enough to beat the Nets on Sunday.



21- Dallas Mavericks (32 - 44) Last week: 19 - The Mavs were officially eliminated from the playoffs after the Blazers beat the Suns on Saturday. The last time they did not play in the post-season was in 2000.



22- Detroit Pistons (35 - 42) Last week: 22 - The Pistons have lost six of their last seven games, and it seems highly unlikely that they will make it to the postseason as they play four of their remaining five games this season against playoff contenders.



23- Brooklyn Nets (18 - 59) Last week: 25 - The Nets are showing some fight as the regular season is winding down, first losing by a small margin against both of the Pistons and 76ers, before surging to beat the Magic and Hawks the following two games.



24- Minnesota Timberwolves (30 - 45) Last week: 26 - Minnesota were officially eliminated from playoff contention with their loss to the Kings on Saturday. They turn their attention to the offseason where Tom Thibodeau will have a chance to reevaluate his roster.



25- Sacramento Kings (30 - 47) Last week: 27 - One day after losing to DeMarcus Cousins' Pelicans on Friday, the Kings defeated the Wolves behind 22 points from Buddy Hield; one of the main pieces that Sacramento got in return for their former All-Star center.



26- New York Knicks (29 - 48) Last week: 28 - The Knicks are officially out of the playoffs; a far cry from the aspirations that surrounded the team following their last summer acquisitions. The main questions now surround the future of Carmelo Anthony and Derrick Rose with the team.



27- Philadelphia 76ers (28 - 49) Last week: 24 - Already without injured center Joel Embiid, the 76ers have shut down Jahliel Okafor and Robert Covington for the rest of the season due to injuries as well. The injury-riddled Sixers will miss the playoffs for the fifth straight season.



28- Orlando Magic (27 - 50) Last week: 23 - New NBA Hall of Fame inductee Tracy McGrady had his best days as a scorer as a member of the Magic. He led the league in scoring in the 2002-03 and 2003-04 seasons as a member of Orlando.



29- Los Angeles Lakers (22 - 55) Last week: 29 - After a strong season with the Lakers this year, Nick Young remains undecided whether to pick up his player option and remain with the team for one more year, or become a free agent this summer.

30- Phoenix Suns (22 - 56) Last week: 30 - The Suns have lost their last 12 games. They play the next two matches against the Warriors and Thunder before they close the season with games against the Mavs and Kings respectively, hoping to secure a win that prevents closing the season on a 16-game losing streak.



CLEVELAND: Indiana Pacers' Paul George, right, drives against Cleveland Cavaliers' LeBron James during the second half of an NBA basketball game, Sunday, in Cleveland. The Cavaliers won 135-130 in double overtime. — AP

BASKETBALL

JAMES MAKES BIG 3 POINTER IN OT TO HELP CAVS BEAT PACERS

CLEVELAND: LeBron James made a big 3-pointer in the final minute of the second overtime and scored 41 points to offset 43 by Indiana's Paul George, and the Cleveland Cavaliers opened their April schedule with a 135-130 win Sunday over the Indiana Pacers, who remain on the outside of the playoff picture in the Eastern Conference. James added 15 rebounds and 11 assists in 52 minutes for the defending NBA champions, who ended the game with some drama as Tristan Thompson and James angrily exchanged words during a timeout in the second OT. Kyrie Irving made four free throws in the final 16.5 seconds and Kevin Love had 20 points and 12 rebounds as Cleveland stayed within a half-game of Boston for the top spot in the East. The Cavs visit the Celtics tomorrow night. George was magnificent in defeat, scoring 19 straight points for Indiana in the overtime sessions and adding nine rebounds and nine assists. But he couldn't prevent the Pacers from their eighth straight road loss.

ROCKETS 123, SUNS 116

Patrick Beverley scored a career-high 26 points and the Houston Rockets sent the Phoenix Suns to their 12th straight loss with a 123-116 victory despite not having James Harden in the lineup. Harden was ruled out with acute viral syndrome, the team announced before the game. He had not missed a game all season and entered Sunday tied for second in the league in scoring at 29.2 points per game. Beverley played despite a sore right ankle and scored 11 of his points in the third quarter. Lou Williams scored 16 of his 23 points in the fourth quarter, and Troy Williams, called up from the D-League early Sunday, scored 18 of his career-high 21 points in the first half. Williams, who last appeared in an NBA game on Dec. 16 with Memphis, shot 5 of 7 from 3-point range in the first 20 minutes. Tyler Ulis finished with a career-high 34 points for the Suns, who were swept in a season series by the Rockets for the first time in franchise history. At 22-56, Phoenix has the West's worst record by a half-game below the Los Angeles Lakers. Ulis added nine rebounds and nine assists, and Devin Booker scored 27 for the Suns.

WARRIORS 139, WIZARDS 115

Stephen Curry hit nine 3-pointers and scored 42 points, also dished out eight assists, and Golden State moved closer to locking up the Western Conference's top playoff seed by beating Washington. Draymond Green had his 19th career triple-double and fifth this season with 11 points, 13 assists and 12 rebounds. Curry scored 10 points over the final 1:52 of the first half and shot 15 for 22, including 9 of 14 on 3s, in the Warriors' 11th straight victory. It was his 26th career 40-point game and fourth this season. John Wall had 15 points and 11 assists for the Wizards, who couldn't make it two wins over the mighty Warriors in just more than a month's time. He set the single-season franchise assists record with No. 802 in the third quarter, topping Rod Strickland in 1997-98.

CELTICS 110, KNICKS 94

Isaiah Thomas scored 19 points in just 24 minutes and Boston

remained atop the Eastern Conference with its 50th victory, beating New York. Jaylen Brown added 16 for the Celtics, who will be no worse than tied with Cleveland for the best record in the East when they host the defending NBA champions on Wednesday. Boston is off until that showdown, while the Cavaliers were set to play two games in between. Boston secured its first 50-win season since going 56-26 in 2010-11 and did it easily, shooting 55.6 percent and getting 14 points apiece from Marcus Smart and Al Horford. Courtney Lee scored 16 points and Kristaps Porzingis had 14 for the Knicks, who announced during the game that Derrick Rose will have season-ending surgery to repair torn cartilage in his left knee. They also played without Carmelo Anthony (sore lower back).

HORNETS 113, THUNDER 101

Kemba Walker scored 29 points to help Charlotte overcome Russell Westbrook's sixth straight triple-double and beat Oklahoma City. Westbrook finished with 40 points, 13 rebounds and 10 assists. It was Westbrook's 40th triple double of the season, putting him one behind Oscar Robertson's NBA record of 41, set during the 1961-62 season. It was Westbrook's first career triple-double against Charlotte. Frank Kaminsky had 18 points and Michael Kidd-Gilchrist added 16 for Charlotte, which entered the day in 10th place in the East, two games behind Chicago, Indiana and Miami, who were tied for seventh. Walker went 6 of 12 from 3-point range. It was the 14th time this season Walker hit five or more 3-pointers in a game.

SPURS 109, JAZZ 103

Kawhi Leonard had 25 points and seven assists, and San Antonio held off Utah in a matchup of postseason-bound teams. The Jazz closed to 102-98 on Joe Johnson's 16-footer with 2:06 remaining that capped a 10-0 run. Leonard then blocked a shot by 7-foot-1 center Rudy Gobert to help San Antonio preserve the victory. Gobert had 19 points, 14 rebounds and six blocked shots. Boris Diaw scored 19 points, making all nine of his shots against his former team. Utah (47-30) leads the Los Angeles Clippers (47-31) by a half-game for the Western Conference's No. 4 seed and home-court advantage in the opening round. San Antonio (59-17) is second in the West behind Golden State.

NUGGETS 116, HEAT 113

Danilo Gallinari scored 29 points, Nikola Jokic and Wilson Chandler each added 19, and Denver topped Miami. Emmanuel Mudiay scored 17 for Denver (36-40), which got back within two games of Portland for the final playoff spot in the Western Conference. Gallinari hit two straight jumpers late in the fourth to push a one-point Denver lead out to six, and the Nuggets held on at the end to deal Miami's playoff hopes another blow. Goran Dragic scored 22 points for the Heat (37-40).

BULLS 117, PELICANS 110

Jimmy Butler scored 39 points and Chicago sustained its playoff push with a victory over recently resurgent New Orleans. Butler made 14 of 26 shots, including all three of his 3-point shots, to help the Bulls

win for the fifth time in six games. Chicago entered the day in a tie for seventh in the Eastern Conference with Miami and Indiana. Butler's final points came on a step-back jumper with 20 seconds left stem a late Pelicans run. Bobby Portis scored 21 points and Joffrey Lauvergne 15 for the Bulls, while Rajon Rondo added 10 points, nine assists, nine rebounds and three steals. Anthony Davis had 30 points and 11 rebounds for New Orleans, while DeMarcus Cousins added 26 points and 18 rebounds.

RAPTORS 113, 76ERS 105

Serge Ibaka scored 24 points and DeMar DeRozan added 17 as Toronto registered its ninth straight home victory over Philadelphia. DeRozan tied his season high with nine assists, and Jonas Valanciunas had 14 points for the Raptors, who closed out a four-game homestand by going 3-1. The last time the 76ers won in Toronto was Nov. 10, 2012. Rookie Timothe Luwawu-Cabarrot had a career-high 23 points and Dario Saric added 16 for the 76ers, who lost their third straight.

MAVERICKS 109, BUCKS 105

Harrison Barnes scored 15 of his 31 points in the fourth quarter to lift Dallas over listless Milwaukee. The Mavericks played as if they still had a chance at the playoffs, while the Bucks frittered away an opportunity to cement their hold on the fifth spot in the Eastern Conference. Dirk Nowitzki and J.J. Barea each had 17 points as the Mavericks snapped a four-game losing streak. Yogi Ferrell had 13 filling in for the ailing Seth Curry. Giannis Antetokounmpo had 31 points and 15 rebounds for the Bucks, fresh off a 14-4 record in March. That was the franchise's third-most wins in a month and best mark since the 1970-71 NBA championship team went 16-2 in February.

LAKERS 108, GRIZZLIES 103

D'Angelo Russell scored 28 points and three Lakers had double-doubles in a victory over Memphis. Memphis fell to 42-35, 1 1/2 games back of Oklahoma City for the sixth spot in the Western Conference with five games to play. Mike Conley had 20 points and had 12 assists for the Grizzlies, but missed a 3-pointer with 6.3 seconds left that would have tied the score. Troy Daniels also had 20 points for Memphis. Julius Randle had 18 points and 11 rebounds for the Lakers, while Larry Nance Jr. added 12 points and 14 boards. Thomas Robinson finished with 12 points and 10 rebounds, the first time the Lakers had three double-doubles in a game since Dec. 16, 2014 (Wesley Johnson, Jordan Hill and Ed Davis).

HAWKS 91, NETS 82

Brook Lopez scored 29 points, Jeremy Lin had 15, and Brooklyn spoiled Paul Millsap's return to the lineup by beating Atlanta. Rondae Hollis-Jefferson added 11 points for the Nets, who have won two straight games. Dennis Schroder scored 16 points, while Millsap and Tim Hardaway Jr. each had 14 for the Hawks, who have lost two straight. Millsap returned after a seven-game absence with a left knee injury but Atlanta fell to 39-38, just a game ahead of seventh place in the Eastern Conference. — AP

PREVIEW

WE'RE COMING FOR YOU, POCHETTINO TELLS CHELSEA

LONDON: Mauricio Pochettino has warned Chelsea that his Tottenham side are ready to capitalise on any more slips from the Premier League leaders. Tottenham closed the gap on Chelsea to seven points on Saturday as they won 2-0 at Burnley while their London rivals were crashing to a shock 2-1 home defeat against lowly Crystal Palace.

With nine games remaining, Pochettino's second-placed team suddenly find themselves with a chance to put real pressure on Chelsea for the first time this season.

The title fight could swing further in Tottenham's favour tomorrow

evening as Chelsea face a tough fixture against Manchester City at Stamford Bridge, while Tottenham travel to struggling Swansea.

With Chelsea showing signs of vulnerability, Pochettino stressed Spurs must take full advantage if they stumble again. "It's now seven points, it's completely different to 10," he said.

"But there's still a lot of work to do. It's not dependent on us; it's dependent on if Chelsea fail. But in that moment if they fail we need to do our job. "If we do our job we can be there until the end of the season and try to fight for the title.

"We are at seven points now and it is

important to be there if Chelsea fail. We are there fighting for the Premier League." Despite that rare home defeat against Palace, Chelsea still have the fate of the title in their own hands.

They require 21 points to be certain of lifting the trophy, but Antonio Conte acknowledged it is far too soon to start planning any celebrations.

"Anything can happen, above all in England," he said. "Every game is very tough against a strong team like Manchester City. "It's important to prepare in the right way for this game. Another difficult game."

Fourth-placed City need the points

themselves as they look to cement Champions League qualification via a top-four finish.

FORMIDABLE

Pep Guardiola's team twice squandered the lead in Sunday's 2-2 draw at Arsenal and are without a win in their last three league games.

City have a five-point lead over fifth-placed Manchester United, who have a game in hand on their local rivals.

Guardiola admitted playing back-to-back away games against two such formidable opponents is a major test.

"We play against a team who is stable

in what they do. We don't have too much time to prepare but we go back to Manchester now and recover and then come back to London," Guardiola said.

Still, City ended their trip to the Emirates Stadium with more satisfaction than Arsenal, who are in sixth place, seven points behind fourth-placed City.

With Arsenal fans once again calling for Arsene Wenger to resign during a pre-match protest march, the Gunners boss desperately needed a dominant display from his team.

Instead, Arsenal twice had to come from behind to avoid a third successive league defeat.—AFP

MISFIRING UNITED GET IBRAHIMOVIC BOOST

MANCHESTER: Zlatan Ibrahimovic's return from suspension may be just the lift that Manchester United need as they attempt to improve their Premier League home form against Everton on Tuesday.

The former Paris Saint-Germain striker, United's leading scorer this season, has missed three domestic matches through suspension - in which time Jose Mourinho's team have been knocked out of the FA Cup and lost ground in the race for a top-four finish. Ibrahimovic was certainly missed on Saturday as United drew at home in the league for the eighth time this season, as they were held 0-0 by West Bromwich Albion. Time after time, Mourinho's men have dominated possession at Old Trafford against visiting teams, yet failed to make their superiority count.

So it was at the weekend, as United enjoying 75 per cent of the possession yet managed only three shots on target.

In United's defence, they were without not only Ibrahimovic, but also Ander Herrera, who was suspended too, plus injury victims Paul Pogba, Juan Mata, Chris Smalling and Phil Jones, yet it was still a hugely disappointing display.

Mourinho was particularly angry with his front four of Jesse Lingard, Henrikh Mkhitaryan, Anthony Martial and Marcus

Rashford, and may make changes beyond bringing back Ibrahimovic.

This is a busy period for United, who are scheduled to play nine matches during April. If there is no sign of improvement in Premier League form against Everton or at Sunderland this coming Sunday, Mourinho has indicated that he will put his focus on winning the Europa League, and securing a Champions League place that way.

"After Sunderland, the Europa League comes, and then I don't know," he said.

"Then, it's possible that you see me play in the Premier League with a team where I'm going to protect the players that I consider fundamental for the Europa League. "But only, only if the results in the next matches put us in a situation where mathematically, it becomes almost impossible to do it."

HEAVY CRITICISM

France midfielder Pogba should return against Everton, having been able to take part in a training session on the pitch after Saturday's match.

He was left out of the squad against West Brom as a precaution because of the hamstring injury that kept him out of France's matches against Luxembourg and Spain during the recent international break. Herrera is also available after his ban, but Mata, Smalling and Jones will be longer-term absentees; the Spanish winger is expected to miss the remainder of the season following groin surgery last week.

Everton are seeking improvement themselves, having performed poorly in losing 3-1 at Liverpool in Saturday's Merseyside derby. Ross Barkley has come in for particularly heavy criticism in the media, having been very fortunate not to be sent off at Anfield for a dangerous challenge on Dejan Lovren when already on a booking.

Everton manager Ronald Koeman did say in public after the game that he was proud of his team's performance.

But they have played much better than that over the last three months, losing just two of their last 13 league matches and looking comfortable in seventh place. Koeman is short of defensive options, with Seamus Coleman recovering from a broken leg and Ramiro Funes Mori set to miss the final weeks of the season after suffering a knee injury while playing for Argentina.

A back three of Matthew Pennington, Ashley Williams and Phil Jagielka did not work too well at Anfield, but Koeman may have to stick with that set-up.

"We won't be taking too many positives from Saturday, but we've got a big game on Tuesday," said Jagielka. — AFP



NICE: Nice's French goalkeeper Yvan Cardinale (C-R) stops the ball during the French L1 football match between Nice (OGCN) and Bordeaux (GDB) at Allianz Riviera Stadium in Nice on Sunday. — AFP

SOCCER

BALOTELLI SPOT ON AS NICE EDGE BORDEAUX

PARIS: Mario Balotelli scored a penalty as Nice recovered from a goal down to defeat Bordeaux 2-1 on Sunday and close the gap on Ligue 1 leaders Monaco to four points.

Gaetan Laborde struck with just nine minutes gone to give Bordeaux the lead in Nice, but Balotelli quickly levelled from the spot after a foul on Arnaud Souquet.

Valentin Eysseric rifled home the winner from the edge of the area on 27 minutes as Nice kept alive their outside title hopes after back-to-back draws had stalled their challenge. Nice are third in the table on 67 points but have played a game more than both Monaco and reigning champions Paris Saint-Germain, who thrashed Leonardo Jardim's side 4-1 in Saturday's League Cup final. Serious knee injuries to Alassane Plea and then Wylan Cyprien have robbed Nice of two key players, but Lucien Favre's men are all but assured of qualifying for next season's Champions League.

Nice haven't lost at the Allianz Riviera since February 2016, but that record looked under threat when Laborde seized on a defensive lapse from Dante and slotted through the legs of goalkeeper Yvan Cardinale. The hosts replied just seven minutes later though, with Balotelli notching his 11th goal of the season—all of which have come at home after Jeremy Toulalan was adjudged to have impeded Souquet. And Nice led before the half hour as Balotelli found Eysseric with his back to goal just outside the box, the midfielder taking a touch before smacking beyond the outstretched dive of Cedric Carrasso. Maxime Le Marchand's sliced clearance forced Cardinale to tip over as Bordeaux again pressed forward, and the Nice keeper then produced a stunning save to deny Valentin Vada from point-blank range. Francois Kamano spurned a pair of excellent chances to equalise in the second half, first ballooning over from just two yards out and then hastily lashing wide after Le Marchand miscontrolled. Ricardo Pereira could have sealed the points for Nice just past the hour as Carrasso struggled to cope with Balotelli's searing drive, but the Portuguese fluffed the follow-up with the goal gaping.

LYON FRUSTRATED

Earlier, Firmin Mubele struck a fine late equaliser as Rennes held Lyon to a 1-1 draw despite playing 85 minutes with 10 men. Remy Bensebaini was sent off with just five minutes played at Roazhon Park after handling Sergi Darder's goal-bound shot.

Rennes goalkeeper Benoit Costil diverted Alexandre Lacazette's penalty onto the post, although Lyon eventually opened the scoring through Maxwell Cornet on 52 minutes.

But substitute Mubele powered in from the edge of the area nine minutes from time, and Rennes nearly snatched all three points as Sanjin Prcic fired into the side netting after following up his initial strike. "Taking everything into account, we should have picked up three points. So yes, this draw is like a defeat," groaned Lyon

coach Bruno Genesio. "It's a match that sums up our season well. With what we showed today, we don't deserve to be fighting for the top three."

Lyon remain fourth and a distant 16 points behind Nice in the final Champions League spot with just eight games left to play. Benjamin Moukandjo netted his 10th goal of the season as

Lorient won 1-0 at home to Caen to climb off the bottom, while Prejude Nakoulma netted twice as Nantes defeated Angers 2-1.

Andy Delort's first-half strike earned Toulouse a 1-0 victory at Montpellier as the visitors were forced to wear an all-white uniform provided by their opponents to avoid a kit clash. —AFP

LEICESTER GOOD START BEYOND WILDEST DREAMS: SHAKESPEARE

LEICESTER: Leicester City manager Craig Shakespeare admitted even he was surprised after inspiring the champions to the brink of Premier League safety.

Four straight wins for the managerial novice in the league combined with a historic victory in the Champions League have restored smiles and confidence at the King Power Stadium in a remarkable transformation following the sacking of Claudio Ranieri.

Three more points at home to a doomed Sunderland side on Tuesday would take Leicester to 36 and leave them seemingly all but safe, while defeat for the visitors would be another nail in Sunderland's relegation coffin.

"At the moment it's gone much better than I could have thought or dreamed of, but I have to make sure we keep focus," said Shakespeare, who was Ranieri's assistant before the Italian's axing in February. "I'm not looking at the points, other than getting three points out of every game," added Shakespeare, who became the first Englishman to win his first four games as a Premier League manager when Leicester beat Stoke City 2-0 on Saturday. "We want to make sure that not only are we safe, but that we climb up the league and the only way to do that is to approach every game as if it's a cup final, in a way that shows we know the importance of it."

"Sunderland are coming on Tuesday and

they'll be up for it because they need the points and are running out of games." Leicester will again be without captain Wes Morgan as he continues to nurse a back injury. But the emergence of Yohan Benalouane during Morgan's two games so far on the sidelines has given Shakespeare another reason for confidence.

SUNDERLAND IN DEEP TROUBLE

David Moyes insists Sunderland can still pull off their latest escape despite his side looking increasingly likely to drop into the Championship. A 1-0 defeat at Watford at the weekend was Sunderland's fourth loss in the last five games and leaves them bottom of the table.

The Black Cats have orchestrated successful end-of-season escapes in each of the past four campaigns, but having failed to score in the last five matches and winning only once in the past 11 games, the chances of a repeat this time appear slim. "We're in a position the club has found itself in for several seasons, but we're capable of winning games and going on a positive run, even at this late stage of the season," said Moyes, who has indicated that he wants to remain in charge next season even if they are relegated. Lee Cattermole is in contention for his first appearance following more than six months out through injury, after the midfielder was an unused substitute at Vicarage Road. —AFP

Live Matches on TV
(Local Timings)

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE		
Burnley v Stoke City	21:45	beIN SPORTS HD 7
Watford v West Bromwich	21:45	beIN SPORTS HD 9
Leicester City v Sunderland	21:45	beIN SPORTS HD 8
Manchester United v Everton	22:00	beIN SPORTS HD 2
SPANISH LEAGUE		
Athletic de Bilbao v Espanyol	20:30	beIN SPORTS HD 13
Real Betis v Villarreal	22:30	beIN SPORTS HD 13
de Madrid v Real Sociedad	22:30	beIN SPORTS HD 4
GERMAN BUNDESLIGA		
SV Werder Bremen v Schalke 04	21:00	beIN SPORTS
Borussia Dortmund v Hamburger	21:00	beIN SPORTS HD 4
FC Koln v Eintracht Frankfurt	21:00	beIN SPORTS
Hoffenheim v Bayern Munich	21:00	beIN SPORTS HD 5

MOYES 'DEEPLY REGRETS' SLAP THREAT TO FEMALE REPORTER

LONDON: Sunderland manager David Moyes said yesterday he "deeply regrets" threatening to slap a female BBC reporter.

Earlier yesterday, Premier League strugglers Sunderland had issued an apology on behalf of Moyes for the remarks he made to Vicki Sparks after a goalless Premier League draw at home to Burnley on March 18.

Moyes, speaking at a press conference yesterday, said: "It was in the heat of the moment. I deeply regret the comments I made. "That's certainly not the person I am. I've accepted the mistake. I spoke to the BBC reporter, who accepted my apology."

Sparks had asked if Sunderland owner Ellis Short's presence at the Burnley game meant Moyes was under additional pressure, with the Black Cats yet again involved in a battle against relegation.

Video footage published by the Daily Star newspaper showed Scottish boss Moyes replying, "No, none at all" before the interview concluded.

However, the former Everton and Manchester United manager, believing he was off camera, added: "You were just getting a wee bit naughty at the end there, so just watch yourself. You still might get a slap even though you're a woman. "Careful the next time you come in."

Both Moyes and Sparks were seen laughing at this point and the reporter herself did not make a complaint.

Former England striker turned television football broadcaster Gary Lineker was among those who took to Twitter on Monday to criticise Moyes's behaviour, saying: "Moyes incident highlights a tendency for some managers to treat interviewers with utter disdain. Pressured job. Well



David Moyes



LONDON: File photo shows West Ham United's manager Slaven Bilic, left, and Leicester City manager Craig Shakespeare chat prior to the English Premier League soccer match between West Ham and Leicester City at London Stadium. —AP

Sports

Lexi Thompson's penalty puts spotlight back on golf's rules



Flour power as Japan's Date returns at 46



TUESDAY, APRIL 4, 2017

MOYES 'DEEPLY REGRETS' SLAP THREAT TO FEMALE REPORTER

Page 19



PITTSBURGH: Sebastian Aho #20 of the Carolina Hurricanes skates with the puck against the Pittsburgh Penguins at PPG PAINTS Arena on Sunday in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. —AFP

PENGUINS MOVE TO SECOND SPOT IN DIVISION

PITTSBURGH: Jake Guentzel and Conor Sheary scored power-play goals and Scott Wilson picked up his eighth of the season as the Pittsburgh Penguins held off the Carolina Hurricanes 3-2 on Sunday. Matt Murray finished with 33 saves for the Penguins, who moved into second place in the Metropolitan Division with a week to go in the regular season. Jeff Skinner collected his 33rd goal of the season for Carolina and Justin Faulk's 17th of the year halfway through the third period gave the Hurricanes momentum but Pittsburgh tightened up in front of Murray to beat Carolina for the seventh straight time. Eddie Lack made 23 stops for the Hurricanes in his first start since being taken to the hospital with a strained neck last week. The loss inched Carolina closer to missing the playoffs for an eighth consecutive season.

CAPITALS 3, BLUE JACKETS 2

Braden Holtby stopped 35 shots, Andre Burakovsky had a goal and an assist and Washington held on to beat Columbus. T.J. Oshie and Matt Niskanen also scored for the Capitals, who improved to 8-1-1 in their last 10 games. Washington, with a league-best 112 points, leads Pittsburgh by five points in the Metropolitan Division. The Blue Jackets are another point back in third. Holtby's 41st win of the season also tied him with his Blue Jackets counterpart Sergei Bobrovsky for best in the league. Bobrovsky finished with 27 saves, and Jack Johnson and Kyle Quincey scored in the third period for Columbus, which has lost three straight games for the first time this season.

RANGERS 4, FLYERS 3

Oscar Lindberg and Chris Kreider scored 2:09 apart midway through the third period, and New York held on for its first home win in six weeks. Mika Zibanejad and Brendan Smith scored in the first period, and Henrik Lundqvist stopped 20 shots to help the Rangers win at Madison Square Garden for the first time since beating Washington on Feb. 19. New York was 0-5-3 on home ice since. The Rangers are guaranteed to fall no lower than the first wild card in the Eastern Conference. They are fourth in the Metropolitan Division, trailing third-place Columbus by six

points. New York has three games remaining and Columbus has four. Valtteri Filppula had two goals and Brayden Schenn also scored for Philadelphia. Anthony Stolarz finished with 20 saves.

DUCKS 4, FLAMES 3

Logan Shaw scored with 3:06 left in the third period to lift Anaheim past Calgary. Patrick Eaves, Jakob Silfverberg and Korbinian Holzer also scored for the Ducks, who moved ahead of Edmonton into sole possession of first place in the Pacific Division. Ryan Kesler finished with three assists and Jonathan Bernier made 18 saves to improve to 10-0-2 in his past 12 games. Kris Versteeg had two goals and Michael Frolik also scored for Calgary. T.J. Brodie and Mark Giordano each had two assists and Brian Elliott finished with 30 saves. On the winning goal, Shaw swatted a rebound past Elliott for just his third of the season - and second against the Flames - to help the Ducks bounce back from a 3-2 overtime loss at Edmonton the previous night.

BLUES 4, PREDATORS 1

Alexander Steen scored the tiebreaking goal early in the second period, David Perron had a goal and two assists, and St. Louis prevented Nashville from clinching a playoff berth. Vladimir Tarasenko and Joel Edmundson also scored, and Jake Allen stopped 35 shots as St. Louis earned at least a point for the ninth straight game (7-0-2). Allen improved to 9-1-2 with two shutouts and 16 goals allowed his past 12 starts. Ryan Johansen scored for Nashville and Juse Saros finished with 21 saves. The Predators had won four of the last five meetings with St. Louis. Nashville needed one point in the game to clinch a postseason spot, but can still qualify if Los Angeles doesn't win against Arizona later Sunday.

ISLANDERS 4, SABRES 2

Anders Lee scored third-period goals a little more than five minutes apart, and New York overcame the absence of captain John Tavares to stay in the playoff hunt. Cal Clutterbuck and Joshua Ho-Sang also scored and Jaroslav Halak stopped 35 shots to improve to 3-1 since being recalled from the minors. With four games left, New York

earned its 86th point to inch within five of Ottawa for the Eastern Conference's second wild card. It was the Islanders' first game since Tavares was sidelined by a left hamstring injury in a 2-1 win over New Jersey on Friday.

BRUINS 3, BLACKHAWKS 2

Backup goalie Anton Khudobin made 41 saves and Boston held on for its fifth straight win. Ryan Spooner, Patrice Bergeron and Kevan Miller scored for the Bruins, who jumped over idle Toronto and Ottawa into second place in the Atlantic Division. Boston began the day in wild-card position, four points ahead of Tampa Bay for the final playoff spot in the Eastern Conference. Chicago's Artemi Panarin extended his goal-scoring streak to four games with his 29th. Jordin Tootoo also scored for the Blackhawks, who got 26 saves from Corey Crawford in their final regular-season home game. The Blackhawks clinched first place in the Central Division and Western Conference on Saturday when Minnesota lost at Nashville. Chicago is assured of home-ice advantage through the first three playoff rounds.

LIGHTNING 6, STARS 3

Adam Erne scored twice and Ondrej Palat added a power-play goal and two assists as Tampa Bay beat Dallas. Brayden Point scored the go-ahead goal in the third period to break a 2-2 tie, and Brayden Coburn and Anton Stralman also had goals for Tampa Bay. Backup Peter Budaj made 23 saves to help the Lightning move within three points of the idle Ottawa Senators, who hold the second wild-card spot in the Eastern Conference. Gemel Smith, Jason Spezza and Brett Ritchie scored for Dallas, and Esa Lindell assisted on all three goals.

WILD 5, AVALANCHE 2

Erik Haula had a goal and assist, Devan Dubnyk stopped 30 shots and Minnesota beat Colorado. Martin Hanzal, Jared Spurgeon, Zach Parise and Jordan Schroeder also scored for Minnesota, which recovered from a tough 3-0 loss at Nashville a day earlier with a resounding win against the NHL's worst team. The Wild remained seven points ahead of St. Louis for second place in the Central Division and closed to within seven points of first

NHL results/standings

Arizona 2, Los Angeles 1; Anaheim 4, Calgary 3; NY Rangers 4, Philadelphia 3; San Jose 3, Vancouver 1; Minnesota 5, Colorado 2; Tampa Bay 6, Dallas 3; Washington 3, Columbus 2; Pittsburgh 3, Carolina 2; St. Louis 4, Nashville 1; NY Islanders 4, Buffalo 2; Boston 3, Chicago 2.

Western Conference							Eastern Conference						
Central Division							Atlantic Division						
W	L	OTL	GF	GA	PTS	W	L	OTL	GF	GA	PTS		
Chicago	50	22	7	239	202	107	Boston	43	30	6	228	207	
Minnesota	46	25	8	254	201	100	Toronto	38	24	15	238	226	
St. Louis	43	28	7	219	204	93	Ottawa	41	27	9	199	203	
Nashville	40	28	11	231	217	91	Tampa Bay	39	29	10	222	218	
Winnipeg	37	35	7	237	249	81	Florida	33	34	11	201	227	
Dallas	32	36	11	213	250	75	Buffalo	32	34	12	195	225	
Colorado	21	54	3	154	264	45	Detroit	31	35	12	196	234	
Pacific Division							Metropolitan Division						
Anaheim	43	23	13	212	196	99	Washington	52	18	8	254	178	
Edmonton	44	25	9	231	200	97	Pittsburgh	48	19	11	266	221	
San Jose	44	28	7	213	195	95	Columbus	49	21	8	239	180	
Calgary	44	31	4	220	214	92	NY Rangers	47	26	6	252	213	
Los Angeles	37	34	7	188	191	81	NY Islanders	37	29	12	228	237	
Vancouver	30	39	9	174	228	69	Carolina	35	29	14	204	220	
Arizona	29	41	9	190	251	67	Philadelphia	38	33	8	212	229	
Atlantic Division							New Jersey						
Montreal	45	24	9	216	191	99	New Jersey	27	37	14	175	229	

Note: Overtime losses (OTL) are worth one point in the standings and are not included in the loss column (L).

place Chicago. Gabriel Landeskog and Mikko Rantanen scored for Colorado, which has lost eight of nine overall and 10 in a row on the road. The Avalanche have a league-low 45 points this season. Calvin Pickard started in goal for Colorado but was pulled after allowing four goals on 16 shots. Jeremy Smith made 11 saves in relief.

SHARKS 3, CANUCKS 1

Tomas Hertl scored twice in the first period and Martin Jones made 29 saves as San Jose beat Vancouver after losing Joe Thornton to an apparent injury to his left leg. Patrick Marleau scored an empty-netter and Jannik Hansen picked up an assist in his return to Vancouver for the Sharks, who have won 11 straight regular-season games at Rogers Arena dating back to Jan. 21, 2012. Sven Baertschi scored for the Canucks and Ryan Miller finished with 22 saves. Already missing center Logan Couture because of a facial injury, Thornton crumpled to the ice with about three minutes left

in the first when he ran into Vancouver forward Michael Chaput from behind. The 37-year-old managed to get to the San Jose bench under his own power, but couldn't put any weight on his left leg and had to be helped to the locker room.

COYOTES 2, KINGS 1

Anthony Duclair scored 3:09 into the second period, Mike Smith made 34 saves and Arizona ended Los Angeles' slim playoff hopes. Alexander Burmistrov scored a power-play goal and Oliver Ekman-Larsson had two assists for the Coyotes, who followed up an impressive 6-3 win over Presidents'Trophy-leading Washington by guaranteeing the Kings would miss the postseason for the second time in three seasons. Alec Martinez was credited with a power-play goal and Jonathan Quick made 13 saves for Los Angeles, which needed to win its final five games and have Nashville lose each of its last three in regulation to reach the playoffs. —AP

JUVE HOLD OUT FOR TENSE DRAW AT NAPOLI

MILAN: Serie A leaders Juventus withstood prolonged pressure as they held out for a tense 1-1 draw at third-placed Napoli in an absorbing match on Sunday. Sami Khedira gave Juve a seventh-minute lead before Marek Hamsik finished off a flowing exchange of passes to score a superb equaliser on the hour and give Napoli a deserved point.

Gonzalo Higuain was given a hot reception by Napoli fans on his return to the San Paolo stadium following his acrimonious move last July but made little impact on the game. There was plenty of drama elsewhere, with AC Milan's European hopes suffering a setback in a 1-1 draw at basement side Pescara after a rare mistake by 18-year-old keeper Gianluigi Donnarumma. Genoa fans turned their backs to the pitch in protest during a 5-0 home defeat by Atalanta and Diego Falcinelli injured himself celebrating after his late goal in a 2-1 triumph at Chievo gave Crotona their first-ever Serie A away win.

Juventus, who have 74 points from 30 games, remained 10 points clear of Napoli although their advantage over AS Roma is down to six after the second-placed side's 2-0 home win over Empoli on

Saturday. Juve silenced the home fans when Khedira picked up a loose ball, played a one-two with Miralem Pjanic, and scored with a shot which went under the arms of Napoli keeper Rafael, who was standing in for the injured Pepe Reina.

After that, it was all Napoli as they penned Juve into their own half and managed 13 shots on goal to their opponents' three. Napoli were forced to play the ball around in midfield for long periods probing for openings but their patience was eventually rewarded.

After a long exchange of passes, the ball found Hamsik who played a quick one-two with Dries Mertens, got free of the defence and side-footed his shot wide of Gianluigi Buffon. Napoli were nearly gifted a second goal when Mertens intercepted Kwadwo Asamoah's backpass but could only shoot against the foot of the post from a narrow angle.

Milan gifted Pescara an early goal when Donnarumma missed the ball completely as he tried to control Gabriel Paletta's back pass and it flew straight into the net for an own goal. Mario Pasalic levelled before halftime but, despite dominating the second half, Milan failed to find a winner and were

left seventh with 54 points. They dropped four behind fifth-placed Atalanta, who were sent on their way when defender Andrea Conti met Leonardo Spinazzola's cross with a superb overhead kick after 25 minutes. Alejandro Gomez helped himself to a hat-trick, including a penalty, and Mattia Caldara also scored while Genoa had Mauricio Pinilla sent off just after the hour. Genoa's hardcore Ultra fans turned their backs to the pitch after the third goal.

Crotona's Falcinelli curled in an exquisite effort in the 82nd minute to give his side a famous win which put them five points behind 17th-placed Empoli and the safety zone. Falcinelli was so excited that he tried to jump over an advertising hoarding to celebrate but slipped and had to be carried off on a stretcher, though he said later that he had merely suffered a cut to his knee. Torino's Andrea Belotti hit the post twice before finally scoring in the 83rd minute to secure a 2-2 draw at home to Udinese and take his season's tally to 23 goals in the mid-table clash.

Palermo's troubles continued as they lost 3-1 at home to Cagliari, putting them second-bottom and seven points adrift of the safety zone. —Reuters



NAPOLI: Napoli's Spanish forward Jose Maria Callejon (L) vies with Juventus' forward from Croatia Mario Mandzukic during the Italian Serie A football match SSC Napoli vs Juventus FC on Sunday at the San Paolo Stadium. —AFP

Kuwait Times **BUSINESS**

TUESDAY, APRIL 4, 2017

ANNIVERSARY
55
YEARS

**EQUATE group announces
\$679m net profit for 2016**

Page 22

**US manufacturing
activity pulls
back as orders drop**

Page 23



**Mohammed Basher
Abdullatef wins KD 250,000
in NBK's Al-Jawhara draw**

Page 25

Page 26

GCC MARKETS RETREAT AS STOCKS GO EX-DIVIDEND



TOKYO: White-collar workers enjoy their lunch break underneath cherry blossom trees at a park in Tokyo yesterday. The Bank of Japan's Tankan report—a quarterly survey of more than 10,000 companies—showed a reading of 12 among major manufacturers, rising from 10 in the previous survey. — AFP (See Page 25)

QATAR TO BOOST PRODUCTION FROM VAST GAS FIELD

QP CHIEF DOWNPLAYS POTENTIAL FOR DISPUTE WITH IRAN OVER NEW VENTURE

DOHA: Qatar laid out plans yesterday to boost production from a vast underwater natural gas field by 10 percent, giving the energy-rich Gulf nation potential new revenue as it pursues ambitious infrastructure plans. Qatar is a small but wealthy member of OPEC that generates most of its income from natural gas rather than crude oil. It exports the gas by chilling it to a form known as liquefied natural gas, or LNG, that can be shipped on tankers to customers around the world.

State-run Qatar Petroleum said a new gas project on the southern portion of the North Field would give the 2022 World Cup host capacity to export some additional 2 billion cubic feet of gas per day. Current production from the field is around 21 billion cubic feet daily, QP President and CEO Saad Sherida Al-Kaabi said. "Our aspiration is to remain the leader in

LNG export, whether it's from Qatar or elsewhere," he told The AP announcing the project in the Qatari capital, Doha. "We will remain the dominant force in LNG for a very long time."

Al-Kaabi said the planned project follows studies and the drilling of exploratory wells that began in 2005.

Work on the project is expected to begin in the coming few months, and could take five to seven years to complete. Qatar is in the midst of a massive building boom as it prepares to host soccer's biggest tournament in five years' time. Its finance minister told reporters in February that the country is spending nearly half a billion dollars each week preparing for the games.

Qatar shares control of the North Field with Iran, which lies on the other side of the Gulf. The two countries sit on opposing sides of a number of regional conflicts, including the war



DOHA: President and Chief Executive Officer of Qatar Petroleum Saad Sherida Al-Kaabi speaks during a press conference in Doha yesterday. — AFP

in Syria, though they maintain diplomatic relations. Al-Kaabi downplayed the potential for any dispute with Iran over its plans to increase output from the field.

"Iran and Qatar have an excellent political relationship, for us as technicians we have an excellent technical relationship. We have a committee that meets regularly to discuss what both sides are doing," he said. "So there's a mutual understanding of what is happening," he continued. "They're free to do what they want on their side of the field and we're free to do what we want on our side of the field."

Partnerships

Iran is also looking to boost output from the shared field, which it calls South Pars. Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Zanganeh said late last month that his country aims to inaugu-

rate several projects valued at \$20 billion over the next year. Qatar's gas industry is dependent on partnerships with major international energy companies, including ConocoPhillips Co. and Total SA. The former head of one of the companies Qatar is closest to, Exxon Mobil Corp, is now the top US diplomat under US President Donald Trump.

In the interview with the AP, Al-Kaabi heaped praise on US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, someone he called a "good friend" that Qatar has gotten to know well during his time at the head of Exxon Mobil.

"He's an excellent man who stands for ethics, integrity and (is) a great business leader," Al-Kaabi said. "I think he will do a great job in his job there because he has always been in cooperation with many leaders around the world to promote his business." — AP

MANUFACTURING GROWTH CAPS STRONG Q1, LED BY CHINA

LONDON/HONG KONG: Factories across Europe and much of Asia posted another month of solid growth in March, rounding off a strong quarter for manufacturers, even though exporters fear a rise in US protectionism could snuff out a global trade recovery. China led the way, with an official manufacturing index expanding at the fastest pace in nearly five years. Surveys yesterday also showed encouraging growth in Europe, Japan, India and much of emerging Asia.

In the euro zone, IHS Markit's final manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index rose to its highly in nearly six-year high of 56.2 in March, far above the 50 mark that separates growth from contraction.

However, British manufacturers lost some momentum last month, as export orders grew more slowly and rising inflation cut into consumer demand. Sterling's tumble following June's vote to leave the European Union helped manufacturers enjoy their fastest annual growth in three years during the final quarter of 2016 but the sector's PMI suggested growth slowed in the first three months of this year.

"Greater optimism about global growth prospects appears to be providing a boost, while the fall in the value of the pound post-Brexit is helping new orders," James Smith at ING said of the British PMI.

"Whilst the near-term outlook for manufacturing looks encouraging, it's possible that

Brexit uncertainty will start to weigh more heavily on sentiment over coming months."

Trump trade

The official Chinese PMI on Friday rose to 51.8 in March from 51.6, thanks to a months-long construction boom which is helping to boost resources prices around the world. That was the strongest reading since April 2012, though a private survey focusing on smaller companies suggested a more cautious outlook, raising questions about whether the export recovery can be sustained.

Julian Evans-Pritchard, an economist at Capital Economics, said the strength in China won't last - measures to cool its overheated property market and tighter central bank policy is likely to curb investment and industrial activity in coming quarters. But the biggest risk for China may be brewing halfway across the world. US President Donald Trump is due to hold his first meeting with his Chinese counterpart, Xi Jinping, in Florida later this week and those talks may be tense.

On Friday, Trump sought to push his crusade against US trade deficits and for more manufacturing jobs back to the top of his agenda, by ordering a study into the causes of the trade deficits and a clampdown on import duty evasion. The failure of the new US administration to push through healthcare reforms last month has also added to global worries Trump will

struggle to pass the tax cuts and spending plans he promised, which could boost demand in the world's largest economy.

Delays to the re-flationary plans could see US orders and global investment slow in coming months as businesses grow more cautious. China has strong domestic demand to fall back on, at least for now, but other export-reliant Asian economies are more vulnerable if Trump goes on a trade offensive.

Japanese factory activity expanded at a solid clip in March, though the pace slowed from the previous month as growth in new export orders and output slowed.

In South Korea, where exports account for half of the economy and domestic demand is similarly weak, readings have been decidedly mixed. On a more upbeat note, India's manufacturing activity grew at the fastest pace in five months as output and new orders accelerated.

The findings suggested the world's fastest-growing major economy has largely recovered from Prime Minister Narendra Modi's decision in November to ban high-value currency notes, which caused huge disruptions to the largely cash-based economy.

"Asia's economic backdrop remains solid with most countries remaining above the key threshold level of expansion, though US trade protectionism fears is the biggest uncertainty for now," said Aidan Yao, an economist at AXA Investment Managers. — Reuters

FRANKFURT STOCKS APPROACH RECORD PEAK, INDIA SOARS

LONDON: The German stock market rose close to a record pinnacle yesterday, buoyed by bright eurozone economic data, dealers said. On the first trading day of April—which is the first trading day of the second quarter—Frankfurt's benchmark DAX 30 index climbed as high as 12,375.58 points. That was a whisker away from its all-time peak of 12,391 that was set on April 10, 2015. The DAX later stood just above 12,360.

Indian stock markets closed at record highs yesterday, buoyed by increased investor confidence in the domestic economy and in line with rises across Asia. Analysts said traders were betting on economic reforms following the Indian government's recent massive victory in a key state election, while the indices were also being lifted by recent rallies in some international equities.

"The Uttar Pradesh election is a factor and demonetization is behind us. Most importantly GST (goods and services tax) will get approved in July and that's positive," Rahul Shah, an equities analyst at Motilal Oswal Securities, told AFP.

"But it's not just India. There's a global effect. All these things together is why the markets are touching new highs. Economically I don't see any major challenges which might spoil the party right now," he added.

The Eurostat statistics agency said the jobless rate in the 19-nation single currency area fell to 9.5 percent, with sustained drops in

Spain and Portugal also a factor. By country in February, Europe's top economy Germany had one of the lowest eurozone jobless rate at 3.9 percent. Data firm Markit meanwhile reported that factory orders in the eurozone were fueling the recovery in jobs. In its closely watched survey, Markit said the eurozone manufacturing PMI hit 56.2 points in March, up from 55.4 in February, the fastest growth in six years. A reading above 50 points line indicates economic expansion.

'April hits ground running'

"April hits the ground running this Monday," noted Spreadex analyst Connor Campbell. He added: "The eurozone-wide manufacturing PMI came in at an effective six-year high, largely thanks to the huge improvements seen in Germany and Italy, while the region's unemployment now sits at an eight-year low. All of this only worked in the DAX's favour; rising by half a percent, the German index just needs to scrounge together another 40 points and it will be at a fresh all-time high," Campbell said.

The Bombay Stock Exchange's (BSE) benchmark Sensex index rose 0.98 percent, or 289.72 points, to end the day at 29,910.22. That surpassed its previous closing high of 29,681.88 set in January 2015. Meanwhile, the Nifty on India's National Stock Exchange (NSE) closed above the 9,200-point mark for the first time ever. — AFP (See Page 24)

GLOBAL MARKETS GET A SMALL DOSE OF REALISM

NBK MARKETS REPORT

KUWAIT: The first quarter of the year saw the January inauguration of a new US president, the unconventional Donald Trump, and the advent of a more "normal" or perhaps more "aggressive" Federal Reserve. The Fed also raised its target rates in March when the earlier expectation had been for June 2017.

These events and others (including the disappointing performance of anti-establishment voices in the Dutch election) were taken in stride by most markets, and were in line with expectations. The markets were looking for rising equity markets, a rising USD, and higher US interest rates. That is more or less what they got, except for the USD, which continues to baffle many, and especially against major currencies.

In the case of Mr. Trump and his agenda for a friendlier business environment, the expected gains are many (deregulation, tax cuts, infrastructure spending), and stocks had a very strong run after the election of 8 November. By quarter's end (Q1), US stocks were up 13 percent (Dow Industrials) and 10 percent (S&P 500) since the US election and

some 4-5 percent year-to-date (ytd). Moreover, after a long stint of daily gains, US politics and the US legislative process finally caught up with markets late in Q1. Some (overdue) adjustment finally weighed in, primarily on the USD and US equities, especially after the Trump administration failed to secure enough support to pass its priority health care reform legislation. According to the broad consensus of late 2016, the USD was supposed to rise in 2017, at least in the first part of the year. That view was based on three arguments:

- The stronger US economy would imply a still tighter Fed policy stance, certainly relative to the eurozone and the ECB (and other countries).

- Trump's economic agenda would further pump up the US economy.

- Political and election risk in Europe would weigh on the euro and help the USD.

These three factors remain in play but appear to have been largely discounted already. Furthermore, expectations are turning less supportive of the USD, in all three cases. EU economic numbers are relatively solid, and

the days of aggressive ECB easing action may well be numbered. In fact, the eurozone outgrew the US in 2016 for the first time since the financial crisis (1.7 percent to 1.6 percent, in the US, real GDP growth). On the second point, the agenda of Trump and the Republicans is indeed in the pipeline but the rosy view of a smooth and timely policy unfolding has bumped into reality: Congressional votes have to be rounded; different groups and factions need to be satisfied, parliamentary rules get in the way, etc.

Finally, point-three above was deflated by the results of the Dutch election. These saw the far-right party do well but underperform expectations. Now fresh French polls show support for the mainstream candidates, so far, for the April-May presidential election.

So, the USD, which always had an extremely difficult time breaking the 1.05 level to the euro, was trading above 1.08 recently (euro up 3 percent ytd). Similarly, the JPY had a good run and traded near 111, or up 5.5 percent ytd. Many analysts revised their USD numbers lower for 2017.

For the Fed and interest rates, US rates are

up roughly 40-50 basis points (bps) since the two rate hikes of December 2016 and March 2017 (two 25 bp hikes of the federal funds target). The 10-year note is currently around 2.4 percent after flirting briefly with the 2.6 percent level. European levels are moving in the same direction, when not impacted by flight-to-quality. At the same time, their low yields (sub-50 bps for Bunds), as well as near zero-yield Japanese 10-year notes are preventing US rates from rising too fast or too far.

Trump economic agenda

Like equities and the USD, US rates also corrected slightly late in the quarter, driven in part by the more realistic expectations for the Trump economic and tax agenda. Trump and the Republicans (currently with zero help from the Democrats) were intent on, in that order: repealing and replacing Obamacare, cutting taxes, and pushing infrastructure spending.

The first part, health care reform, has now been postponed, or scrapped, for lack of sufficient Congressional support. This should further weigh on expectations ahead. The US

House of Representatives' failure to pass the American Health Care Act (ACHA, to replace Obamacare) was seen as a crucial first test of Mr. Trump's leadership in Washington and of his influence on his own party. Markets have thus turned more cautious in their anticipation of the other expected economic "goodies" (tax cuts, infrastructure spending) down the road.

Meanwhile, regional GCC economies are showing signs of growing moderately, led by Kuwait and Qatar and the UAE. Oil prices have helped finances and sentiment by spending a good deal of time near \$55 per barrel. Prices were pressured lower more recently, by strong US (shale-led) production, now exceeding 9 million barrels per day. The major story in the region the past few months has been the massive issuance of sovereign debt, more recently by Kuwait (\$8 billion) and Oman (\$5 billion) in what were very successful issues (in terms of both interest and pricing). Following 4Q16 issuance, Saudi Arabia is now looking to issue international sovereign sukuk. These issues are also helping relieve any liquidity pressures in the GCC countries.

TURKISH INFLATION HITS HIGHEST RATE IN 8 YEARS

ANKARA: Turkey's inflation in March hit its highest annual rate in over eight years, reaching over 11 percent, according to official data yesterday. Consumer prices rose 11.3 percent in March from the same period in 2016, the highest annual rate recorded since October 2008, the state statistics agency said. Monthly inflation meanwhile was 1.0 percent in March from February, it added, with food, transport and alcohol prices showing strong rises.

The rise was sharper than expected, after a tentative recovery in the value of the Turkish lira following heavy losses earlier this year. Economists said that the figures indicated that inflation was still worryingly stuck in double-digit territory and made a mockery of the central bank's nominal inflation target of five percent.

Ozgur Altug, chief economist at Istanbul-based BGC Partners, warned there was a "high" risk of seeing 12 percent annual inflation in the next two months and would "remain at double-digit level throughout 2017" but fall to 8.6 percent in December.

William Jackson and Liam Carson of London-based Capital Economics predicted the data would not prompt an interest rate hike by the central bank, partly due to government unwillingness to risk subduing growth. "The

recent rise in the lira, last month's rate hike, and renewed pressure from the government to reverse the tightening cycle make this unlikely."

But they added: "Nonetheless, there is no scope to loosen policy." One of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's advisors Bulent Gedikli suggested on Twitter there would be better figures later in the year as the government seeks to allay fears over the economy before the April 16 referendum. "It is possible to say the inflation data is due to the exchange rate effect and it is temporary, that we will see the reflections of measures taken after the second quarter," Gedikli said. Meanwhile, Economy Minister Nihat Zeybekci insisted inflation would decline after May, in an interview with CNN Turk broadcaster.

In less than two weeks, Turks will decide whether to boost Erdogan's powers under a new system that would see the role of the premier axed and replaced with one or more vice presidents.

The economy—which has shown significant signs of weakness for the first time under Erdogan's rule—is set to be a key issue in the poll but the government was gladdened by stronger than expected 2016 growth of 2.9 percent. — AFP



A picture taken yesterday shows megayachts mooring outside the "Grande Forme", a 200mx60m drydock to refit and repair megayachts during its opening ceremony at the La Ciotat shipyards, southern France. German yacht builder Lurssen and Spanish leading superyacht refit centre, MB92, will jointly manage the new dry dock. —AFP

EQUATE GROUP ANNOUNCES \$679M NET PROFIT FOR 2016

GROUP SUCCESSFULLY ISSUED A TOTAL OF \$2.25BN BONDS

KUWAIT: The EQUATE Group, a global producer of petrochemicals, announced yesterday \$679 million in total net profit for the fiscal year ending 31 December 2016.

The EQUATE Group combines EQUATE Petrochemical Company, its subsidiaries, and The Kuwait Olefins Company (TKOC). EQUATE Group's CEO Mohammad Husain said, "At all levels, 2016 was an extremely difficult year with prices dropping by more than 14 percent and the feedstock was limited during the first half of the year for our Group as a whole.

Despite these difficulties, the group made several achievements; we became the world's second largest producer of Ethylene Glycol (EG) with a total production capacity of 2.4 million metric tons annually (MTA). We made excellent progress on our new 750,000 MTA EG plant in the US Gulf Coast (USGC) with advantaged feedstock. Construction commenced in the fourth quarter of 2016. The project is on time, on budget, and will be ready to start our operations during 2019."

Husain added, "While securing investment grade ratings by S&P (BBB+) and Moody's (Baa2), the Group successfully issued a total of \$2.25 billion bonds. This issuances made us the first non-financial and non-banking Kuwait-based enterprise to tap into such capital market products."

"The petrochemical market witnessed several challenges during 2016. The average price for crude oil was around \$42 in comparison with an

average of \$50 in 2015. Despite those developments, the Group, with strong focus on operational efficiency and cost control, was able to maintain its solid profitability and cash flow, achieving \$1.2 billion EBITDA and an EBITDA margin of 33 percent," noted Husain.

On the outlook for the petrochemical industry in 2017, Husain said, "Despite high feedstock limitation in some of our locations and fluctuating oil prices, impacting all other business sectors, we expect demand for our products to increase around 4.5 percent for PE and 4 percent for EG. EQUATE Group participates in certain downstream segments. So, the support of our employees, shareholders and customers allows us to grow at these rates on the basis of sustainability, reliability and innovation."

Regarding EQUATE Group's current strategic focus, Husain said, "Our two main focus areas are completing our USGC EG plant on time in 2019, and achieving maximum operational efficiency through the holistic integration of MEGlobal. These steps are critical for our strategic expansion plans as an international petrochemical enterprise with operations in Kuwait, the Americas and Europe. In addition, towards the end of 2017, we will have a major Turnaround (TA) for our Kuwait-based plants, which will include ethylene, ethylene glycol and other units. It will be one of the biggest TAs for petrochemicals in the Middle East & Africa."

In conclusion, Husain extended overall appre-

ciation and gratitude to EQUATE Group's employees, shareholders, customers and other stakeholders for being "Partners in Success."

The EQUATE Group is a global producer of petrochemicals that create a better world. The Group combines EQUATE Petrochemical Company (EQUATE), its subsidiaries and The Kuwait Olefins Company (TKOC). The EQUATE Group is the world's second largest producer of Ethylene Glycol (EG) with industrial complexes in Kuwait, North America and Europe that produce Ethylene, EG, Polyethylene (PE) and Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET). The products are marketed throughout Asia, the Americas, Europe, the Middle East and Africa. As a leading global enterprise, the EQUATE Group strongly pursues sustainability principles and best practices wherever it operates through partnerships with various stakeholders including employees and customers as well as societies as a whole in fields that includes human development, environment, education, health and public awareness. The EQUATE Group's shareholders include Petrochemical Industries Company (PIC), The Dow Chemical Company (Dow), Boubyan Petrochemical Company (BPC) and Qurain Petrochemical Industries Company (QPIC). The Group provides reliable services and solutions that enables global customers and stakeholders to grow and attain the success they seek by being "Partners in Success." www.equate.com

HEDGE FUNDS SQUARE UP THEIR RECORD BULLISH POSITION IN OIL

LONDON: Hedge funds have continued liquidating their large bullish position in crude amid doubts about the pace and timing of any rebalancing in the oil market.

Hedge funds' net position in Brent and WTI has been cut to 642 million barrels, down from a record 951 million barrels on Feb. 21. The spread of risks between further long liquidation and new short covering now looks more balanced than at any point since OPEC's production deal was announced at the end of November.

Hedge funds and other money managers cut their net long position in the three major futures and options contracts linked to Brent and WTI by a further 41 million barrels in the week to March 28.

Fund managers have cut their net long position for five consecutive weeks by the equivalent of 309 million barrels, according to an analysis of records published by exchanges and regulators. Managers have reversed more than half of the extra 529 million barrels of net long positions accumulated between the middle of November and the middle of February.

Hedge funds have cut long positions by

170 million barrels over the last five weeks while adding 139 million barrels of extra short ones.

The result is that the ratio of long to short positions in Brent and WTI has fallen to 3.7:1, down from a recent high of 10.3:1 on Feb 21. The buildup of a record concentration of hedge fund long positions prior to Feb. 21 became a major downside risk to oil prices in January and February.

The liquidation of long positions and establishment of fresh shorts likely contributed to the sharp drop in oil prices starting on March 8. But by the end of March 28, the previous congestion of hedge fund long positions in the oil market seems to have dissipated.

The squaring up of positions coincided with an easing of persistent selling pressure, with Brent and WTI prices staging a modest recovery from March 28 through March 31. With most but not all long positions liquidated, and a moderate number of short positions already in the market, the outlook for oil prices now appears more balanced than at any time in the last three months. — Reuters

EXCHANGE RATES

AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

ASIAN COUNTRIES	
Japanese Yen	2.748
Indian Rupees	4.717
Pakistani Rupees	2.918
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.012
Nepali Rupees	2.956
Singapore Dollar	219.880
Hongkong Dollar	39.356
Bangladesh Taka	3.806
Philippine Peso	6.102
Thai Baht	8.929
GCC COUNTRIES	
Saudi Riyal	81.614
Qatari Riyal	84.059
Omani Riyal	794.828
Bahraini Dinar	812.670
UAE Dirham	83.327
ARAB COUNTRIES	
Egyptian Pound - Cash	20.250
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	16.815
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.228
Tunisian Dinar	135.480
Jordanian Dinar	431.990
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.039
Syrian Lira	2.181
Morocco Dirham	30.894
EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES	
US Dollar Transfer	305.850
Euro	328.180
Sterling Pound	385.830
Canadian dollar	230.480
Turkish Lira	84.610

Swiss Franc	306.920
Australian Dollar	234.280
US Dollar Buying	304.650
GOLD	
20 Gram	255.550
10 Gram	130.070
5 Gram	66.190

DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

Rate for Transfr	Selling Rate
US Dollar	305.500
Canadian Dolla	230.040
Sterling Pound	384.717
Euro	327.087
Swiss Frank	306.082
Bahrain Dinar	810.284
UAE Dirhams	83.569
Qatari Riyals	84.793
Saudi Riyals	82.358
Jordanian Dinar	430.789
Egyptian Pound	16.970
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.014
Indian Rupees	4.714
Pakistani Rupees	2.913
Bangladesh Taka	3.830
Philippines Peso	6.086
Cyprus pound	168.592
Japanese Yen	3.739
Syrian Pound	2.426
Nepalese Rupees	3.928
Malaysian Ringgit	69.919

Chinese Yuan Renminbi	44.784
Thai Bhat	9.883
Turkish Lira	84.390

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
Europe		
British Pound	0.377040	0.387040
Czech Korune	0.004060	0.016060
Danish Krone	0.039816	0.044816
Euro	0.320900	0.329900
Norwegian Krone	0.031570	0.036770
Romanian Leu	0.084764	0.084764
Slovakia	0.009167	0.019167
Swedish Krona	0.030107	0.035107
Swiss Franc	0.299860	0.309860
Turkish Lira	0.078729	0.089029
Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.224097	0.236097
New Zealand Dollar	0.207605	0.217105
America		
Canadian Dollar	0.224066	0.233066
Georgina Lari	0.138139	0.138139
US Dollars	0.301750	0.306150
US Dollars Miint	0.302250	0.306150
Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003467	0.004051
Chinese Yuan	0.042918	0.046418
Hong Kong Dollar	0.037267	0.040017
Indian Rupee	0.004102	0.004790

Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002658	0.002838
Kenyan Shilling	0.002962	0.002962
Korean Won	0.000264	0.000279
Malaysian Ringgit	0.065569	0.071669
Nepalese Rupee	0.002961	0.003131
Pakistan Rupee	0.002730	0.003020
Philippine Peso	0.006002	0.006302
Sierra Leone	0.000038	0.000044
Singapore Dollar	0.213565	0.223565
South African Rand	0.016754	0.025254
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001641	0.002221
Taiwan	0.009956	0.009121
Thai Baht	0.008571	0.009121
Arab		
Bahraini Dinar	0.804702	0.813202
Egyptian Pound	0.014549	0.020457
Iranian Riyal	0.000085	0.000086
Iraqi Dinar	0.000197	0.000257
Jordanian Dinar	0.425719	0.434719
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000152	0.000252
Moroccan Dirhams	0.020121	0.044121
Nigerian Naira	0.000398	0.001033
Omani Riyal	0.787994	0.793674
Qatar Riyal	0.083198	0.084648
Saudi Riyal	0.080473	0.081773
Syrian Pound	0.001297	0.001517
Tunisian Dinar	0.130924	0.138924
Turkish Lira	0.078729	0.089029
UAE Dirhams	0.081847	0.083547
Yemeni Riyal	0.000994	0.001074

RBS RISING FROM RUINS AS SHADOW OF FORMER SELF

LONDON: Nine years after the beginning of a 45-billion-pound (\$56 billion) bailout by the British government, Royal Bank of Scotland is emerging from its restructuring process a shadow of what was once the biggest lender in the world. RBS had a balance sheet of 2.4 trillion pounds in 2008 - almost double Britain's annual economic output at the time - having staged a meteoric rise from being a small Scottish lender in the early 1990s.

Since the bailout it has offloaded billions of pounds of assets a week, as it tries to shrink down to being a simple UK-focused lender. Later this year RBS will shut its Capital Resolution division, which has sold off large chunks of its huge stockpile of unwanted assets. The closure will mark a milestone in the bank's road to recovery, with its balance sheet around 1.6 trillion pounds lighter than when its great sell-off began.

"For the first time in a long time there is a distinction between yesterday and tomorrow," Mark Baillie, who runs the unit told Reuters in an interview at the lender's ultra-modern glass-and-steel offices in London's financial district. RBS has undergone a huge asset sale, ranging from a fleet of aircraft in Beijing and the largest hospital in Sydney, to a golf course 110 km from the nearest road in Florida, and a graveyard in the US Deep South.

The steep and ongoing asset-shedding, plus the deep staff and IT systems overhaul still to come, mean the future shape of RBS and its growth potential are still unknown propositions for investors, according to shareholders and analysts.

"I think it is not investable at the current time. There is just too much more work to be done," said Julian Chillingworth, chief investment officer at Rathbone Brothers, which holds some RBS shares.

Britain's government has ruled out reducing its stake in the bank until it resolves a multi-billion pound US fine for mis-selling toxic mortgage-backed securities and resolves its state aid requirements.

The bank's relatively small size now and the cost of its nine-year overhaul is raising questions from politicians and industry experts over whether taxpayers - who already face a paper loss of 29 billion pounds on their investment - will see the kind of stellar RBS growth needed to retrieve all their cash.

Few in the banking sector or government believe rescuing and reducing RBS was the wrong decision, given the risks it posed to the wider financial system. A collapse could have triggered a run on every bank in Britain.

Still, RBS's story illustrates the perils of bailouts at a time when state intervention

is back in focus in Europe; while EU regulations have been tightened to make state bailouts a last resort, the Rome government is nonetheless seeking permission from European authorities to bail out debt-laden Monte dei Paschi di Siena and two smaller Italian banks.

An RBS spokesman directed queries on whether taxpayers would retrieve their money to comments by Chief Executive Ross McEwan last year when he said it was possible the state would not get its full investment back. A spokesman for the Treasury said any future sale of its stake is dependent on market conditions, and that the government will seek value for money for taxpayers.

90 billion bill

It was three weeks after the collapse of Lehman Brothers crippled global credit markets in 2008 that Britain's then finance minister Alistair Darling had to make a snap decision to buy RBS. The giant bank was hurtling towards bankruptcy so fast no one in government had a chance to find out exactly what it owned or how to value it. Reuters calculations based on RBS's financial statements going back to the crisis show how extreme the turnaround has been since then.

RBS's management has been selling or running off on average 3 billion pounds worth of assets every week, according to the analysis which tracked the size of the bank's balance sheet from 2008 onwards. That's the equivalent of selling London's Shard - Western Europe's tallest skyscraper - every five days. In total about 1.6 trillion pounds of assets have been stripped out of RBS's balance sheet - equivalent to the economic output of Brazil.

Baillie, 44, a qualified accountant, was tasked with shedding much of these unwanted assets.

"You had an unsustainable balance sheet, an unsustainable culture and an unsustainable cost base and, therefore, I do think it will be the biggest turnaround ever done," he said. Much is yet to be done, according to the other senior RBS source who said the bank had three to four years of cutbacks ahead.

Tasks range from reducing the number of payment systems from 140 to 10, and mortgage processing systems from five to one, to cutting thousands of back-office staff, said the source, who declined to be named as he is not authorized to speak publicly.

Reuters calculations also put a final cost on RBS's lending losses in terms of write-offs, plus the writedowns on assets, as well as restructuring costs, legal bills and fines. It tops 90 billion pounds. —Reuters



CHICAGO: Construction workers are silhouetted as they work on a building project just south of Chicago's Loop. The Commerce Department reported on US construction spending in February. —AP

US MANUFACTURING ACTIVITY PULLS BACK AS ORDERS DROP

CONSTRUCTION SPENDING RISES 0.8% IN FEB

WASHINGTON: An index of manufacturing activity retreated from a 2-1/2-year high in March amid modest declines in new orders and production, but a surge in manufacturing jobs indicated that the sector's energy-led recovery was gaining momentum.

Other data yesterday showed construction spending rising to a near 11-year high in February amid robust gains in home building investment. The reports pointed to strong economic fundamentals, despite growth appearing to have slowed sharply in the first quarter. The Institute for Supply Management (ISM) said its index of national factory activity slipped to a reading of 57.2 last month from 57.7 in February, which was the highest since August 2014.

A reading above 50 indicates an expansion in manufacturing, which accounts for about 12 percent of the

US economy. The manufacturing recovery is being driven by the energy sector as steady increases in crude oil prices boost drilling activity. A report from energy services firm Baker Hughes on Friday showed US drillers added 137 rigs in the first quarter, the most since the second quarter of 2011. That has fueled demand for machinery, resulting in business spending on equipment rising in the fourth quarter for the first time in a year.

Last month, the ISM survey's production sub-index decreased 5.3 percentage points to 57.6. A gauge of new orders fell to 64.5 from a reading of 65.1 in February. But a measure of factory employment jumped 4.7 percentage points to 58.9, the highest reading since June 2011.

Manufacturers reported paying more for raw materials, more evidence that inflation pressures are steadily

building up. A report on Friday showed a key consumer inflation measure in February recorded its biggest annual gain in nearly five years.

The ISM's prices index rose 2.5 percentage points in February to 70.5, the highest reading since May 2011, the dollar rose against the yen on the data, while prices for US government bonds were little changed. US stocks were trading marginally lower.

In a separate report, the Commerce Department said construction spending increased 0.8 percent to \$1.19 trillion in February. That was the highest level since April 2006 and followed an upwardly revised 0.4 percent drop in January. Economists polled by Reuters had forecast construction spending rebounding 1.1 percent in February after a previously reported 1.0 percent decline the prior month. Construction spending increased 3.0 percent from a

year ago. In February, private construction spending rose 0.8 percent to its highest level since May 2006 after being unchanged in January. Spending on residential construction surged 1.8 percent to its highest level since July 2007. Investment in homebuilding has now increased for five straight months.

Spending on private nonresidential structures fell 0.3 percent in February, declining for a second consecutive month. In February, public construction spending rebounded 0.6 percent after three straight months of decreases. Outlays on state and local government construction projects rose 0.9 percent. It was the first increase in state and local government construction spending in three months.

Federal government construction spending fell 2.8 percent after tumbling 5.6 percent in January. —Reuters

KIB CONCLUDES GLOBAL MONEY WEEK 2017 CAMPAIGN

KUWAIT: As part of the Bank's strategy to promote financial education and awareness across all segments of the community, Kuwait International Bank (KIB) recently organized an awareness campaign entitled "With KIB, I learnt how to spend and save". The multi-channel campaign was held as part of the Bank's participation in the sixth annual Global Money Week (GMW) celebrations, which took place this year under the theme "Learn. Save. Earn".

GMW is an annual global initiative which seeks to promote financial literacy amongst youth and children worldwide. The annual celebrations are spearheaded by Child and Youth Finance International (CYFI), an organization dedicated to economically and socially empowering children and youth around the world. This year, GMW featured a diverse range of events and activities aimed at inspiring children and youth to learn about money, saving, creating livelihoods, gaining employment and becoming entrepreneurs.

Speaking about the KIB's participation in GMW, Nawaf Najia, Manager of the Corporate Communications Unit at the Bank, said: "KIB was one of the first banks in the region to have partnered with CYFI, highlighting our strong belief in the importance of spreading financial literacy and economic education amongst children and youth. We have always considered financial literacy to be one of the focal points of our social responsibility program, and we have sought through a comprehensive program to promote awareness of the importance of good money management amongst every segment of the population."

This year KIB chose to celebrate GMW with a dedicated, multi-platform campaign, which focused on educating youth about the basics of saving and the fundamentals of good money management, as well as encouraging parents to teach their children about the values of saving starting at an early age. "With KIB, I learnt how to spend and save" featured a social media awareness cam-

campaign which ran throughout GMW. The education-focused campaign also included the distribution of an educational flyer - along with a specially designed piggy bank and a "Habboub Account" educational coloring book - to children and parents at the Avenues Mall over the course of the GMW weekend.

As part of its social responsibility program, KIB aims to draw on its vast experience in the financial sector to educate the Kuwaiti community in all areas of finance, business and economics. Within this context, and in line with its efforts to promote financial education amongst children and youth, KIB maintains an ongoing program of school visits throughout the year. The Bank also continues to support "My Business", the entrepreneurship program targeting school and university students; hosting participants of the program and offering them internship and training opportunities to hone their professional skills and provide them with practical real-world experiences.

BANK RUNS AND FREXIT: LENDERS PREPARE FOR LE PEN SURPRISES

PARIS: From bank runs to credit crunches, regulators and investors are asking French banks about their preparations for any market ructions that might be caused by Marine Le Pen faring better than expected in the presidential election, banking sources said.

Far-right leader Le Pen has said that if she becomes president she would call a referendum on ditching the euro, dubbed "Frexit", finance state spending through central bank money-printing, force commercial banks to lend small firms and halve the maximum rates that banks can charge clients.

Opinion polls indicate she has a good chance of coming out on top of the first round of voting on April 23, with her share of the vote projected at 25-30 percent. But they see her losing to centrist Emmanuel Macron in a May 7 runoff. Regulators and investors are unwilling to rule out any surprises following the Brexit and U.S. presidential votes last year which confounded pollsters' expectations.

After French bond yields spiked in February on poll gains by Le Pen, ECB supervisors have sought to ensure banks have fully sized up the risks of the unexpected, four senior bankers told Reuters, speaking on condition of anonymity due to the political sensitivity of the matter.

"We've been asked what's our plans for different scenarios including Frexit," one of the bankers said. The ECB declined to comment.

One scenario lenders have been asked about is the possibility of Le Pen scoring higher than predicted in the first round, thus increasing her chances of winning the presidency in the runoff two weeks later.

"For a fortnight we'd be absolutely fine to get through

any difficulties," said a second banking executive, speaking about a possible short-term liquidity squeeze in credit markets. The industry could easily weather a bout of brief volatility, the banker added.

Banks are taking the requests in their stride since ECB officials are including the questions in their regular surveillance checks, rather than asking them to separately compile and submit detailed plans.

The lenders are also having to outline their preparations to foreign investors, according to the sources. In some cases they have had to explain how the election process works, with the first round serving to whittle down a wide field of candidates to just two hopefuls, who will contest the runoff.

"Foreign investors are asking a lot of questions. We have to keep explaining that there are two rounds," said a third senior executive at French bank. Some Paris-based lawyers said they were getting questions from investors about whether it was legally possible for France to dump the euro, how the Frexit process might work and what the state could do if a bank run resulted.

"What's sure is that if there is a risk of a bank run and something needs to be done, the state can do it by decree," one lawyer said, citing the example of Cyprus implementing capital controls when its banks faced collapse in 2013. Meanwhile, retail French investors are keeping their money liquid with popular tax-free regulated savings accounts seeing large inflows in the last three months, said Pierre-Rene Lemas the head of the state-backed Caisse des Depots, which collects the money deposited in such accounts at banks. —Reuters



5 Awards

in 2016

Success

Built On Your Trust



Fastest Growing
Islamic Bank
MENA 2016



Corporate Social
Responsibility Award
2016



Best Islamic Bank
in the GCC 2016



Best Banking
Vision 2016



Best Sharia
Compliant Bank
MENA 2016



ثقافة ويسر

www.kib.com.kw | 1 866 866

alDawliBank

بنك الكويت الدولي
KUWAIT INTERNATIONAL BANK
بنك يعمل بنسبة 100% متوافقة مع الشريعة الإسلامية

Q2 OFF TO A FIRM START FOR STOCKS

LONDON: World stock markets and the US dollar started the second quarter on a positive note yesterday, although caution also set in as the first meeting between US President Donald Trump and China's Xi Jinping loomed.

European shares touched a 16-month high, tracking Asian shares up after generally upbeat economic data. German manufacturing growth reached an almost six-year high in March, Markit's Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) for manufacturing showed yesterday. Manufacturing activity in France and Italy also rose, adding to signs of a pickup in momentum in the global economy. A private survey on China's manufacturing on Saturday came in below market expectations but still showed a healthy expansion after a similar survey by the government on Friday pointed to strong growth in the sector. The Bank of Japan's "tankan" survey showed that business sentiment improved, albeit slightly less than expected.

MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan rose 0.2 percent, while Japan's Nikkei gained 0.8 percent after hitting a seven-week low on Friday. US stock futures were flat, indicating a note of caution as focus turned to earnings and a meeting on Thursday and Friday between the US and Chinese presidents. "Despite the solid gains seen so far this year, there is some evidence that the rally in US markets is looking a little tired given President Trump's trials and tribulations in Congress," said Michael Hewson, chief market analyst at CMC Markets. "The reflation trade is likely to face a new test this week when President Trump entertains the Chinese leader Xi Jinping at his Mar-a-Lago golf course in Florida, which in the words of President Trump himself could be a little 'difficult'."

A failure to push through healthcare reforms last month has added to concerns that Trump may struggle to pass highly anticipated tax cuts and infrastructure spending bills. Trump held out the possibility on Sunday of using trade as a lever to secure Chinese cooperation against North Korea and suggested Washington might deal with Pyongyang's nuclear and missile programs on its own if need be. On Friday, the US president sought to push his crusade for fair trade and more manufacturing jobs back to the top of his agenda by ordering a study into the causes of US trade deficits and a clampdown on import duty evasion.

and Chinese presidents. "Despite the solid gains seen so far this year, there is some evidence that the rally in US markets is looking a little tired given President Trump's trials and tribulations in Congress," said Michael Hewson, chief market analyst at CMC Markets. "The reflation trade is likely to face a new test this week when President Trump entertains the Chinese leader Xi Jinping at his Mar-a-Lago golf course in Florida, which in the words of President Trump himself could be a little 'difficult'."

A failure to push through healthcare reforms last month has added to concerns that Trump may struggle to pass highly anticipated tax cuts

and infrastructure spending bills. Trump held out the possibility on Sunday of using trade as a lever to secure Chinese cooperation against North Korea and suggested Washington might deal with Pyongyang's nuclear and missile programs on its own if need be. On Friday, the US president sought to push his crusade for fair trade and more manufacturing jobs back to the top of his agenda by ordering a study into the causes of US trade deficits and a clampdown on import duty evasion.

benefit, however, if the differences grows even further, then it spells more problems for the dollar," said Naem Aslam, chief market analyst at Think Markets UK.

The dollar index, which measures the dollar's value against a basket of other major currencies, was up 0.28 percent at 100.63 - above four-month lows hit last week. US monetary policy also remained in focus with US jobs data due out on Friday, while in Europe April marked the start of a fall in the European Central Bank's monthly asset purchases to 60 billion euros from 80 billion euros. Governments and other economic actors need to get ready for higher borrowing costs after years of record lows, ECB Executive Board member Benoit Coeuré said yesterday.

The euro was little changed at around \$1.06, but 0.4 percent firmer against sterling, which fell after data showed British manufacturing lost momentum last month. —Reuters

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report

Monday 03 April 2017

Index	Change	Closing	Last Closing	High	Low
Price Index	▼ -22.14	6,999.23	7,021.37	7,021.43	6,934.46
Weighted Index	▼ -0.69	414.72	415.41	415.60	411.63
KSX 15	▼ -2.10	943.23	945.33	945.33	934.09

Security	Trades						
	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
MARIN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	64	▲ 0.0
IPG	410	410	10	4	1	410	▲ 0.0
NAPESCO	1,220	1,180	32,057	37,948	23	1,220	▲ 20.0
ENFRGYH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	39.0	▲ 0.0
GPI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	47.0	▲ 0.0
ABAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	84	▲ 0.0
Oil & Gas			32,067	37,953	24	968.44	▲ 7.66
KFOUC	315	310	68,000	21,220	6	310	▲ 0.0
BPCC	580	580	500	290	1	580	▲ 10.0
ALKOUT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	700	▲ 0.0
ALQURAIN	345	340	106,014	36,054	20	345	▲ 5.0
Basic Materials			174,514	57,564	27	1331.38	▲ 11.56

Security	Trades						
	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
KCEM	485	485	520	252	1	485	▼ -5.0
CABLE	475	455	17,455	7,957	9	470	▲ 0.0
SHIP	222	216	55,020	12,044	10	222	▲ 4.0
PCEM	980	960	59,030	56,669	4	970	▲ 10.0
PAPER	425	410	16,005	6,565	6	425	▼ -10.0
MRC	77	69	14,927	1,040	3	77	▲ 3.0
ACICO	300	300	100,000	30,000	5	300	▼ -5.0
HCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	216	▲ 0.0
KBMM	128	108	5,102	553	5	126	▲ 8.0
NICBM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	216	▲ 0.0
EQUIPMENT	58	55	1,280,939	72,255	34	57	▲ 1.0
NCCI	110	110	111,301	12,243	27	110	▼ -10.0
GYSUM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	95	▲ 0.0
SALBOOKH	70	87	304,964	20,783	20	89	▼ -1.0
AGLTY	640	630	154,092	97,079	18	640	▲ 0.0
EDU	290	270	12,255	3,309	2	290	▲ 20.0
CLEANING	51	49.0	593,260	29,311	22	50	▲ 0.0
KGL	69	65	1,440,678	96,409	47	65	▼ -2.0
KCCP	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	184	▲ 0.0
HUMANSOFT	3,120	3,100	173,352	537,391	20	3,100	▲ 40.0
NAFAIS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	230	▲ 0.0
GFC	62	61	255,485	15,590	9	62	▼ -1.0
MAYADEEN	30.5	29.5	644,600	19,316	45	30.5	▲ 0.5
CGC	510	500	45,722	22,870	12	510	▲ 0.0
MTCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	56	▲ 0.0
UPAC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	750	▲ 0.0
ALAFCO	244	244	58,000	13,884	3	244	▲ 0.0
MUBARRAD	80	79	908,492	72,530	22	80	▼ -1.0
LOGISTICS	72	71	1,990,700	142,255	55	72	▲ 1.0
GCEM	96	95	2,408,689	230,240	52	96	▲ 2.0
SCEM	88	88	567,000	49,896	15	88	▲ 0.0
QIC	82	81	49,148	4,007	6	82	▼ -4.0
FCM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	92	▲ 0.0
RKWC	98	97	2,678	262	3	98	▼ -2.0
SPEC	89	86	304,400	26,374	17	89	▲ 0.0
Industrials			11,571,814	1,580,865	472	1731.94	▼ -22.70

Security	Trades						
	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
KSH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	188	▲ 0.0
NSH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	55	▲ 0.0
PAPCO	110	100	10,005	1,001	2	110	▲ 6.0
CATL	212	204	50,510	10,304	7	204	▼ -10.0
DANAH	91	89	1,748,064	156,521	74	91	▲ 1.0
FOOD	2,520	2,500	5,467	13,688	3	2,500	▼ -60.0
Consumer Goods			1,814,646	181,513	86	1153.12	▼ -5.43
MHC	385	345	1,710	590	3	385	▲ 15
ATC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,040	▲ 0.0
YIACO	270	250	5,010	1,253	2	270	▼ -5
Health Care			6,720	1,843	5	1548.55	▲ 27.46

Security	Trades						
	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
KCIN	1,380	1,380	98,821	136,173	4	1,380	▲ 0
KHOT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	260	▲ 0
SULTAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	67	▲ 0
CABLETV	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	22.5	▲ 0
EYAS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	390	▲ 0
IFAHR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	182	▲ 0
OLAFUEL	130	124	1,747,262	218,949	88	126	▼ -4
MUNTAZAHAT	88	84	509,030	43,125	17	86	▲ 0
JAZEERA	570	570	2,230	1,271	2	570	▼ -10
SOOR	130	126	273,412	34,995	27	126	▼ -2
FUTUREKID	120	120	35,000	4,200	4	120	▼ -4
ALRAI	176	172	129,774	22,480	12	176	▲ 2
ZIMAH	61	58	3,210,256	190,172	81	59	▼ -2
Mozzan	1,020	1,020	34,244	34,929	6	1,020	▲ 0
Consumer Services			6,040,029	686,294	241	929.58	▼ -6.62

Security	Trades						
	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
ZAIN	465	455	2,503,254	1,150,116	68	460	▲ 0
OOREDOO	1,120	1,120	2,086	2,338	3	1,120	▲ 0
HITSTELEC	49.5	48.0	4,418,144	215,597	79	49.0	▲ 0
VIVA	920	880	367,038	328,007	72	910	▲ 0
Telecommunications			7,290,522	1,696,057	222	654.56	▲ 0.00
NBK	680	670	1,074,755	723,878	38	680	▲ 0
GBK	246	246	127,253	31,304	10	246	▼ -2
CBK	440	425	8,600	3,705	3	425	▼ -25
ABK	305	300	200,500	60,153	4	305	▲ 0
ALMUTAHED	455	450	14,698	6,661	3	455	▼ -5
KIB	240	238	64,250	15,292	2	240	▲ 0
BURG	335	330	659,020	217,575	24	335	▲ 0
KFIN	540	520	7,345,616	3,850,652	178	530	▲ 0
BOUBAYAN	410	405	168,677	68,369	19	405	▼ -5
AUB	218	214	2,354,333	506,189	86	218	▲ 4
ITHMR	55	51	49,533,404	2,613,256	516	52	▲ 1
WARBANK	260	255	213,819	54,526	51	255	▲ 0
Banks			61,764,925	8,151,564	934	947.71	▼ -0.73

Security	Trades						
	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
KINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	265	▲ 0
GINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	550	▲ 0.0
AINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	495	▲ 0.0
WINS	100	96	10,252	1,024	2	100	▲ 1.0
KUWAITRE	194	194	500	97	1	194	▲ 0.0
FTI	62	57	2,587	151	3	62	▲ 4.0
WETHAQ	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	55	▲ 0.0
BKIKWT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	355	▲ 0.0
Insurance			13,339	1,272	6	1090.92	▲ 8.89

Security	Trades						
	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
SOKOUK	47.5	46.0	9437246	444,316	144	47.0	▲ 0.5
KRE	67	65	3,732,501	245,960	35	67	▲ 0.0
URC	106	102	14,578	1,499	3	104	▲ 2.0
NRE	102	100	424,410	42,481	10	102	▲ 0.0
SRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	375	▲ 0.0
TAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	445	▲ 0.0
AREFC	172	172	450	77	1	172	▲ 4.0
MASSALEH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	50	▲ 0.0
ARABREC	40.0	37.5	4,906,486	189,939	118	39.5	▲ 1.5
ERESCO	44.5	43.0	4,397,720	192,562	114	43.5	▲ 0.0
MABANEE	830	820	18,948	15,587	6	830	▲ 0.0
INJAZZAT	93	91	185,188	17,056	11	93	▲ 0.0
INVESTORS	28.5	27.5	5,555,995	154,704	66	28.0	▼ -0.5
IRC	37.5	35.5					

GCC MARKETS PULL BACK AS STOCKS GO EX-DIVIDEND

KUWAIT: Large-cap stocks in the GCC went ex-dividend during March-17 adding to the softer market sentiments in the GCC markets. The decline was also reflected in the MSCI GCC index that declined by 1.3 percent during the month. A total of 43 percent of the companies by market cap have gone ex-dividend by the end of March-17. Bahrain and Saudi Arabia were the only two positive performing market with an index return of 0.5 percent and 0.4 percent, respectively. On the other hand, Dubai witnessed the biggest monthly decline of 4.1 percent as large-cap indices, including Bank and Real Estate, declined. Lower oil prices added to the market pressure as crude slid almost 6 percent during the month on the back of rising production in the US, although talks of an extension to the ongoing OPEC production agreement provided interim relief to falling prices.

Trading activity continued to decline for the second consecutive month with total value traded down by 7.4 percent to reach \$ 28.4 billion. Qatar and Bahrain were the only markets that recorded higher value traded during the month with increase of 53 percent and 35 percent, respectively. On the other hand, Dubai recorded the steepest decline of 39 percent. Volume traded on the GCC exchanges also declined by almost a third to 18.9 billion shares during the month as compared to February-17.

On the economic front, Fitch ratings slashed Saudi Arabia's credit rating by one notch to A+ with a Stable Outlook. As reasons for the downgrade, the agency highlighted continued deterioration of public and external balance sheets, wider-than-expected fiscal deficit in 2016 with the low oil prices being the key underlying factor. On the regulatory front, the Kingdom took another step towards its efforts to join the MSCI Emerging Market index. The Saudi exchange said it would extend the period for settling trades and introduce short-selling on April 23. In addition, Kuwait also announced similar efforts including introduction of T+3 settlement, a reorganization and a new benchmark by next year.

Boursa Kuwait

Boursa Kuwait retracted during March-17 amid a broader sell-off in the GCC. The Weighted index dropped 2.5 percent during the month but continued to trade above the 400 points support level to close at 413.27 points. Contrastingly, the Price Index surged during the month by 3.6 percent indicating demand for small cap stocks in the market as against blue chips. In terms of YTD-17 performance, the Kuwait Price index leads in the GCC with a return of 22.3 percent whereas the Weighted index reported a rise of 8.7 percent, third in the GCC. The monthly performance of the weighted index reflected a decline in most major sectoral indices including Banks and Telecom that declined by 3.5 percent and 3.1 percent, respectively. The banking index performance primarily reflected 10.8 percent and 13.1 percent fall in shares of NBK and Kuwait Finance House, respectively, while AUB and Burgan Bank were the only banking stocks that reported positive performance during the month. Moreover, 8 out of the 10 banks went ex-dividend during the month which also reflected the poor sector performance. In the Telecom sector, Viva was the only positive per-

forming stock with a return of 10.6 percent, while Zain and Ooredoo dropped 5.2 percent and 4.8 percent, respectively. The Technology index recorded the steepest decline of 7.7 percent, while the Healthcare index topped monthly performance with a surge of 8 percent. Trading activity continued to drop for the second consecutive month.

Monthly volumes traded on the exchange declined by almost 20 percent to 7.1 billion shares as compared to 8.6 billion shares during the previous month. Value traded also declined at an even higher pace of 25 percent to KD 653 million as compared to KD 866 million during February-17. In terms of stocks, Alimtiazi topped the monthly value traded chart with KD 58 million worth of shares traded during the month followed by KFH and Zain with KD 44.8 million and KD 41.8 million worth of shares changing hands, respectively. The monthly gainers chart primarily included small-cap stocks that was also reflected in the positive performance of the price index. Shares of NCCI and Amwal more than doubled during the month followed by 60 percent gain in shares of REAM and 32 percent gain in shares of Educational Holding.

On the regulatory front, Kuwait completed the long awaited sovereign international bond sale during the month achieving a pricing that was better than that of Qatar, Abu Dhabi and Saudi Arabia. According to reports, the government sold \$ 3.5 billion in 5-year notes at 75 bps over corresponding US Treasuries and \$ 4.5 billion in 10-year bonds at a 100 bps spread after receiving bids worth \$ 29 billion, more than three times the total issuance size. On the regulatory front, the CMA Kuwait announced key reforms in its bid to qualify as an emerging market. The regulator said it would extend trade settlement cycle to 3 days by the end of April from the current 2 days for foreigners, whereas local traders trades would be settled the same day. The CMA also plans to introduce short-selling and derivative products allowing tradable rights issues and ETFs next year. The exchange would also group companies in segregated markets based on market cap and volumes.

Saudi Arabia (Tadawul)

After two consecutive months of decline, TASI recorded marginal gains of 0.4 percent during March-17 as the positive performance of banks and telecom stocks were partially offset by a decline in energy stocks. The benchmark mostly traded below the 7,000 mark during the month only to surge 0.8 percent and regain this key support level on the last trading session to close at 7,001.63 points. Food, Healthcare and Retail were the best performing sectors during the month in addition to 2.8 percent return for the Telecom index and 1 percent for the Banks index. On the decliners side, Insurance and Utilities indices recorded the steepest monthly decline of 4.2 percent each, while the Energy index declined by 3.1 percent as oil prices were under significant pressure during the month led higher production in the US. Monthly trading activity declined in line with the rest of the GCC mar-

kets. Monthly volume declined by 12.6 percent to 3.6 billion shares as compared to 4.2 billion shares during the previous month.

Monthly value traded also declined but at a significantly lower pace of 3.6 percent to reach SAR 72.5 billion in March-17 as compared to SAR 75.2 billion during the previous month. Alinma Bank topped the monthly value traded chart recording trades worth SAR 8.2 billion during the month followed by SABIC and Al-Tayyar Travel recording trades worth SAR 6.8 billion and SAR 3.3 billion, respectively.

Abu Dhabi Securities Exchange

ADX followed broad GCC market cues and retraced lower in March-17 after closing mostly flat in the first two months of the year. The index

performing market for the month that passed. For March-17, DFM was down by 4.1 percent and closed at 3480.43 points. Sectoral trends were mixed, but was skewed towards losers. The Financials pack plunged as Banks were down by 6.3 percent m-o-m, Insurance was down by 6.2 percent m-o-m, while Investment & Financial Services dropped by 5.3 percent. The Consumer Staples & Discretionary sector index also declined by 6.2 percent m-o-m, mostly due to DXB Entertainments losing ground by 5.6 percent. The Real Estate & Construction continued to slip in March-17 similar to February-17, as it fell by 2.5 percent m-o-m. Indices, which witnessed higher levels, were led by Industrials, which was up 6.9 percent m-o-m, single-handedly due to National

declines in Union Development and Barwa (-10.3 percent m-o-m). In corporate ratings related action Capital Intelligence Ratings announced that it has affirmed Doha Bank's Financial Strength Rating (FSR) at 'A'. Key drivers supporting the rating were the Bank's good capital base, currently being further augmented by a rights issue and good overall asset quality.

Bahrain Bourse

Bahrain All Share Index continued as one of the best performing markets YTD -2017, and was the best performing market in the GCC in March-17. The index rose, albeit marginally and closed 0.5 percent higher on a m-o-m basis. The index closed at 1355.99 points at the end of the month. Sectoral performance was mixed as there were indices which gained and receded.

Market breadth for the index was positive, as 9 stocks gained ground, while 7 stocks witnessed declines in their share prices. Industrials was the main sector which drove the index up as the sector was up 37.8 percent for the month, singlehandedly pushed up by Aluminum Bahrain which was the best performing index in the overall index.

The Hotels & Tourism sector went up as well by 3.6 percent, followed by Insurance names which went up by 1.6 percent m-o-m in March 17. Services stocks and Commercial Banks were the two sectors which were key laggards for the index as it went down by 3.0 percent and 2.3 percent respectively for the current month. In earning releases, Al Ahlia Insurance reported a net profit of BHD 31,808 for FY 2016 as compared to a net loss of BD 622,699 for FY 2015.

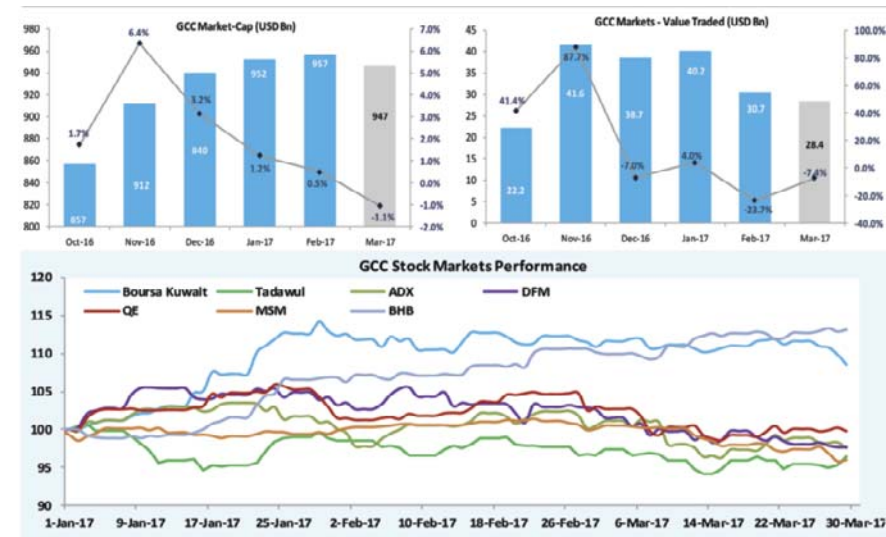
Muscat Securities Market

After minimal volatility since the start of the year with the index being flat at the end of the first two months of the year, the MSM30 index recorded the second highest monthly decline of 4 percent during March-17. The decline was broad-based as seen in declines in all the three sectoral indices with Services sector falling by 4.1 percent followed by 4.0 percent decline in Financial index and 1.3 percent decline in the industrial index.

Al Anwar Holding was the only Financial stock in the regular market that closed with a gain of 5.7 percent during the month. Banks in particular had a weak month with Bank Muscat, the largest stock on the exchange, recorded a decline of 19.7 percent, the second-highest fall during the month. The stock going ex-dividend added to the already weak trends in the sector. Shares of NBO also declined by 8.9 percent due to the cash dividends announced during the month.

Banks in the Sultanate continue to face tight liquidity conditions, in line with most of the other GCC countries. According to the latest monthly report from the Central Bank of Oman (CBO), the prevailing liquidity conditions has led to an increase in average interest rates with lending rate rising by as much as 34 bps year-on-year in January-17 and deposit rates increasing by 63 bps. However, the funds raised in the international market has alleviated some pressure from the domestic banking system.

KAMCO GCC Markets Monthly Report



was down 2.4 percent m-o-m and closed at 4,443.53 points, as most major sectoral indices closed lower. Investment & Financial Services was the worst performing index as it plunged by 12.1 percent m-o-m, followed by Energy & Real Estate indices, that declined by 7.7 percent and 7.3 percent, respectively. Waha Capital largely led the decline of the Investment & Financial Services index as it went down by 12.2 percent m-o-m, while large-cap Aldar Properties declined by 5.8 percent and pulled the Real Estate index down. In terms of gainers, the Telecom index led all indices with a monthly gain of 2.6 percent, as Etisalat was up by 2.6 percent m-o-m. The Insurance index followed and moved up 1.8 percent m-o-m.

In prominent earnings, Etisalat reported FY 2016 revenues of AED 52.4 billion, a 2 percent y-o-y increase from 2015, despite a 1 percent decline in subscriber base to 162 million. Consolidated EBITDA came in at AED 26.3 billion, a 1 percent y-o-y decline in 2016 driven mainly by unfavorable FX in Egypt, competitiveness pressure in Morocco and non-telecom operations. Net Income came in at AED 8.4 billion which increased by 2 percent y-o-y.

Dubai Financial Market

DFM continued its declining trends from February-17 into March-17, and was the worst

Cement Company, which was up by 6.9 percent as well. Telecom also moved higher by 1.3 percent, driven by DU (+1.3 percent).

In prominent earnings, Arabtec reported revenues of AED 8.2 billion for FY 2016, up 7.1 percent y-o-y from FY 2015. The company announced that order backlog stands at AED 18 billion, which is more than two years of book-to-bill based on current year revenues.

Qatar Exchange

The QE 20 index reversed its positive trends exhibited in the first two months of the year to decline in March-17, as the index receded by 2.9 percent m-o-m, and closed at 10390.60 points. The Qatar All Share index dropped by a lower 1.4 percent for the third month of 2017, while sectoral trends were mixed. Indices such as Transportation, Telecoms and Insurance were among the main laggards for the month of March-17. Transportation index was the index, which receded the most as all stocks in the index declined, witnessing an average drop of 9.7 percent. Ooredoo was responsible for the decline in the Telecoms index as the stock declined by over 8.8 percent m-o-m. Amongst the indices which gained during the month was the Real Estate index which gained by 1.0 percent m-o-m for the month as Ezzan (+3.8 percent m-o-m) was able to negate the



White-collar workers walk on a crosswalk in Tokyo yesterday. The Bank of Japan's Tankan report a quarterly survey of more than 10,000 companies showed a reading of 12 among major manufacturers, rising from 10 in the previous survey. —AFP

EASA AL-YOUSIFI CHARITY FOUNDATION INKS MOU

KUWAIT: On 27 March 2017, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the late Easa Al-Yousifi Charity Foundation, represented by Dr Adel Al-Yousifi; and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, represented by Lukasz Wyrowski and Rebecca Huang.

The Easa Al-Yousifi Charity Foundation will fund and create interactive web page for the roads signs and signals because both sides believe that this page will be important and it will allow all those con-

cerned with traffic safety with their diversity, including the traffic departments, drivers, driving schools, road construction companies, schools and universities throughout the world to benefit from this page as it contains valuable information on road signs and signals showing their objections and missions. The web page will allow users to design and print the road signs in accordance with the laws of their countries, without contravention to the international standards approved by the United Nations.

ICELAND GOVT CAN'T AGREE ON HOW TO CURB KRONA

REYKJAVIK: Iceland's government appeared to be in disagreement yesterday over how to rein in the surging krona with Prime Minister Bjarni Benediktsson slapping down a suggestion by his finance minister that it could be pegged to the euro or pound sterling. The Icelandic currency is booming as a result of the island's spectacular recovery after the 2008 economic collapse, which forced authorities to nationalize three failing banks and impose capital controls.

When these controls were lifted in March, analysts hoped the krona would depreciate. Instead, a number of factors keep the currency at high levels, such as booming tourism, robust consumption and comparatively high interest rates, which are attracting investors.

Iceland is basking in good times right now: alongside the explosion in tourism, the fisheries sector is thriving, and the economy grew by an impressive 7.2 per-

cent in 2016, with 11 percent in the last quarter alone.

The one dark cloud is its currency, the krona, which hit its highest level in almost a decade in early March. "Is the status quo untenable? Yes. Everybody agrees on that. We'd like to have a policy that would stabilize the currency," Finance Minister Benedikt Johannesson told the Financial Times in an interview yesterday.

The Icelandic krona should therefore be pegged to a strong currency for advantages comparable to those of Denmark, which has long bound its kroner to Deutschemark and then to the euro, according to Johannesson.

But Prime Minister Benediktsson subsequently told Bloomberg that he preferred to keep a variable exchange rate, which would allow Iceland to better adapt to crises. "The krona's role in the collapse and subsequent resurrection is undisputed," Benediktsson said. — AFP

JAPAN BUSINESS OUTLOOK UPBEAT, THOUGH IMPROVEMENT MODEST SENTIMENT AMONG MANUFACTURERS IMPROVES: SURVEY

TOKYO: Encouraged by stronger export orders, Japanese manufacturers are feeling a bit more upbeat than they were late last year, according to a quarterly survey by the Bank of Japan released yesterday. The central bank's "tankan" report put sentiment among large manufacturers at 12, up from 10 in December. Medium-sized and small companies also were more optimistic. The survey's findings fell slightly below economists' forecasts. But they were seen as a sign that the improved exports are underpinning growth in the world's No. 3 economy as China's economy stabilizes.

Masamichi Adachi of J P Morgan described the results as a "B," or "not good but not bad." The improvement is "basically consistent with our bullish view on the current Japanese economy," Adachi said in a research note.

"Some improvement of business sentiment with persistent cautiousness is probably in line with the BOJ's view, as well," he said. For the current April-June quarter, firms of all sizes forecast a slight deterioration in operating conditions, which is typical when conditions are favorable, said Marcel Thieliand of Capital Economics.

"The survey suggests that growth will remain strong for now," Thieliand said. A separate, monthly survey of purchasing managers, Nikkei Japan Manufacturing, also showed improved conditions. The latest reading of 52.4 was down slightly from March's reading of 53.3 on a scale where 50 marks the cutoff between expansion and contraction. Japan's exports to the rest of Asia, especially China, have recovered as Chinese factory activity has picked up amid a prolonged slowdown. But Japan's own recovery remains vulnerable: Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has twice delayed a sales tax increase to avoid shocks to the economy. The BOJ, meanwhile, is injecting tens of billions of dollars a month into the economy through purchases of assets, mainly Japanese government bonds.

The weak links in the strategy have been lower-than-expected corporate investment and consumer spending. While unemployment sank to a 22-year low last month of 2.8 percent, companies have so far kept wage increases to a minimum. The BOJ's survey showed large manufacturers intend to increase spending on factories and equipment by only 0.6 percent in this fiscal year, which began April 1. Overall, companies plan to cut such capital spending by 1.3 percent. But capital outlays often increase during the year, Thieliand noted.

The survey of 10,799 companies was conducted from late February to the end of March. Readings are based on the difference between those surveyed who say conditions are good and those who say they are unfavorable. — AP



White-collar workers walk on a crosswalk in Tokyo yesterday. The Bank of Japan's Tankan report a quarterly survey of more than 10,000 companies showed a reading of 12 among major manufacturers, rising from 10 in the previous survey. — AFP

MADE IN SENEGAL? INDUSTRIAL PARK WOOS CHINESE FIRMS

DAKAR: Four new factory buildings rise up from fields on the outskirts of Senegal's capital, the first phase of a government plan to woo Chinese companies shifting low-end manufacturing to Africa as wages in East Asia rise. African countries are vying for millions of jobs that China is expected to shed. So far Ethiopia is ahead of the pack, with a fledgling shoe and garment-making sector that has made it one of Africa's rising stars.

Now Senegal, a country with a tiny manufacturing base and main exports including fish and peanuts, hopes to replicate that success with a new industrial park and a deal with the Chinese businesswoman whose shoe factory kickstarted Ethiopia's nascent industrial revolution. Senegal's stable democracy and Atlantic Ocean port make it a natural candidate for export-based industry, but it ranks 147 out of 190 countries on the World Bank's ease of doing business index due to problems with electricity access and bureaucracy.

The 85 billion CFA franc (\$138.59 million) project in the town of Diamniadio is gambling on hopes it resuscitate a manufacturing sector that has languished for decades.

If it works, this will be one of the first cases of Chinese industry spreading to Francophone West

Africa. The stakes are high. Senegal suffers chronic underemployment that sends millions abroad in search of a better life. "Lots of Chinese companies are discovering Senegal for the first time," Mines and Industry Minister Aly Ngouille Ndiaye told Reuters in a phone interview. "In the industrial domain, we have everything to learn from China."

Kenya, Tanzania and Rwanda are among the other African countries that are chasing Chinese textiles investment and have launched or planned new industrial zones in the last three years. None, however, are as far along as Ethiopia. China has also invested in manufacturing in Ghana and Nigeria, West Africa's top economies, but its activity in the French-speaking countries has been centered around more traditional areas like infrastructure and mining.

C&H Garments, a Chinese company active in Ethiopia and Rwanda, plans to hire 5,000 workers at Diamniadio and export clothes to the U.S. and Europe, said co-owner Helen Hai. Hai expects the plant to open this year.

Around 20 other companies from Senegal, North Africa, Europe and Asia have applied for factory space and are awaiting selection, Ndiaye told Reuters, although Senegal still needs to pass new tax laws for the special economic zone. — Reuters

US EQUITIES FLAT; EUROZONE LARGEST GAINER

NBK Capital Monthly Global Markets Review

KUWAIT: Global equities ended the month of March with mixed performances. The MSCI All Country Index was slightly positive at 1.0 percent. The eurozone was the largest gainer followed by Emerging Markets. US equities were flat for the month with a minimal loss of 0.04 percent, as measured by the S&P 500. The Fed increased interest rates signaling the economy was sound but equities held back as Trump was unable to secure the necessary votes to repeal and replace Obamacare which caused some to worry he would be unable to deliver on other campaign promises. Commodities for the month of March were as follows, Gold up 0.06 percent and Brent Oil down 4.96 percent.

US Manufacturing PMI and US Services PMI, preliminarily, are down for the month of March compared to the previous month, yet still showing signs of growth at 53.4 and 52.9, respectively. The Consumer Price Index for the month of February increased by 0.1 percent compared to the previous month, while initial jobless claims came in slightly above expectations at 258,000 for the month of March. Durable goods orders fell to 1.7 percent in February from 2.3 percent

in January. Housing starts grew in February by 3 percent from the previous month to 1.288m, although building permits dropped by 6.2 percent. Existing home sales also saw a drop in February to 5.5m from January's 5.7m. In retail, sales were flat at 0.1 percent and lower than the prior month. Consumer confidence was up with a reading of 125.6 in March vs 116.1 in February.

UK markets

In the UK, the Markit Manufacturing PMI for February came in at 54.6 which is slightly below the previous month's reading of 55.9. The Services PMI for February also came in slightly below the previous month's reading at 53.3. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the month of February came in significantly higher at 0.7 percent compared to last month's reading of -0.5 percent. On a year on year basis, the CPI increased from 1.6 percent in January to 2.0 percent in February. Retail sales bounced back up to 1.4 percent in February from -0.5 percent in January, while March's consumer confidence reading held stable at -6 unchanged from the previous month's reading.

UK equities ended the month up 0.8 percent, as measured by the FTSE 100.

Manufacturing and services activities in the Eurozone area continue to grow month on month. The Eurozone Markit Manufacturing PMI preliminary reading for March is 56.2 compared to 55.4 in February, while the preliminary reading for the Eurozone Markit Services PMI came in at 56.5 compared to last month's 55.5. Consumer confidence in March was unchanged from the previous month at -5. The Consumer Price Index for

er hand grew year on year in February by 1.2 percent which is lower than January's reading of 8.5 percent. The Nikkei Manufacturing PMI preliminary reading for March indicates continued growth with a reading of 52.6 yet slightly lower than the previous month's reading of 53.3. Housing starts, year on year for the month of February, was reported as -2.6 percent compared to January's positive growth rate of 12.8 percent.

reported a trade deficit of CNY 60.4B compared to the surplus in January of CNY 345.5B. The Consumer Price Index came in at -0.2 percent for the month of February compared to the 1 percent in January. The Consumer Price Index, year on year, for February was reported at 0.8 percent coming in below expectations and the previous month's reading of 2.5 percent.

The MSCI Emerging Market Index was positive for the month of March gaining 2.4 percent, while Chinese equities, as measured by the Shanghai Stock Exchange Composite, closed in the red 0.6 percent. The GCC equity markets for the most part ended the month in red.

The MSCI GCC Countries Index was down 1.3 percent. Dubai's market was the largest loser at -4.1 percent followed by Qatar at -2.9 percent, Kuwait at -2.5 percent, and Abu Dhabi at -2.4 percent.

Two regional markets closed out the month with positive performance; Bahrain with a gain of 0.5 percent and Saudi Arabia with a gain of 0.4 percent.

For the month of March, Egypt reversed its negative performance in February with a gain of 8.4 percent.

NBK CAPITAL

the month of March on a year on year basis had decreased to 1.5 percent compared to the previous month's 2.0 percent. European equities closed up for the month by 2.9 percent as measured by the Stoxx Europe 600.

Japan's exports

Japan's exports in February increased 11.3 percent year on year compared to the 1.3 percent in January. Imports on the other

Japanese equities were down in March, as measured by the Nikkei 225, decreasing 1.10 percent. China's imports, measured in local currency, increased by 44.7 percent in February on a year on year basis compared to last month's reading of 25.2 percent. Exports also grew during the month of February by 4.2 percent, significantly lower than the growth recorded in January at 15.9 percent. For the month of February, China



MOHAMMED BASHIER ABDULLATEF WINS KD 250,000 IN NBK'S AL-JAWHARA DRAW

KUWAIT: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) announced the winner of the KD 250,000 Al-Jawhara quarterly draw, Mohammed Bashier Abdullatef, during a special event held at Marina Mall last Thursday. The draw was conducted live on Marina FM through Refresh Program with Ali Nagem on Thursday 30th March and under the supervision of Abdulaziz Ashkanani, Ministry of Commerce and Industry representative. The Executive Manager of Communications and PR at NBK, AbdulMohsen Al-Rushaid, announced the name of the proud winner, who is the fourth winner for the month of March, where 3 lucky customers each have won KD 5,000 in Al-Jawhara's weekly draws: Mohammed Amin Nasimi, Mahmoud Murad Ashkanani and Abdulmajid Ahmad Albouhassan.

On this occasion, NBK held an exciting game "Al-Jawhara Challenge" in Marina Mall- Main Dome, where participants had to look for Al-Jawhara to win instant prizes. Besides, NBK's booth was installed for three consecutive days to serve cus-



tomers and answer their queries. Since the start of the Al-Jawhara program, more than 11,000 winners have already been announced. Al-Jawhara continues to be the most popular prize-giving account in Kuwait and prizes are automatically credited to the winners' accounts the day after the draw.

NBK customers have chances to win KD 5,000 weekly, KD 125,000 monthly and a grand prize of KD 250,000 quarterly. Each KD 50 in a customer's account entitles them one entry into the draw, thus more money in an account means more chances into each draw.

This feature enables Al-Jawhara Account holders to double their chances when maintaining their balance without withdrawing.

Customers can easily calculate their number of chances in the draw by accessing a customized calculator on nbk.com. Al-Jawhara account is available for both Kuwaitis and expats and can be opened at any of NBK's numerous branches around Kuwait, or safely and easily through NBK's website for existing customers.

FORD CELEBRATES TRIPLE WIN AT 2017 MIDDLE EAST CAR OF THE YEAR AWARDS

DUBAI: Ford came up winner in three different segments at the Middle East Car of the Year awards ceremony, held in Abu Dhabi over the weekend. An extensive panel of judges, comprising 15 expert automotive journalists from nine GCC and Levant countries, awarded Ford's new Edge the "Compact SUV" title for 2017 - emulating the award it received from wheels magazine earlier this month - with Ford Ranger claiming the "Best Midsize Truck" award. To round off a stellar day, the inimitable compact Ford Figo took the crown for "Best Hatchback".

Edge has proved to be exceptionally popular in the Middle East since its launch, having already topped the judges' wish list in its segment for Lebanon's Automobile Car of the Year, Oman's Automan Car of the Year, EVO Middle East's Car of the Year, and earlier this month, wheels magazine's "Crossover of the Year" award, making it the region's most-nominated and recognised CUV.

The Ranger pickup truck delivers rugged design and superior comfort. When you consider how customers use their vehicles, it's important that a Ranger not only looks tough, but functions as a dependable tool and offers the comfort and convenience drivers need. The award-winning truck's impressive performance, capability, payload and towing capacity are made possible thanks to the latest generation of powerful, more refined and fuel-efficient Duratorq TDCi diesel engines, as well as the proven Duratec petrol unit.

Ford's Figo benefitted from a bumper 2016 in Saudi Arabia, seeing a tremendous five-fold boost in its sales, proving that bigger isn't always necessarily better. Buoyed by exceptional demand in the region, and new levels of sophistication, smart technology and safety in a hatchback, Figo was a shoe-in for the MECOTY trophy. "At Ford, we strive to build vehicles that offer a blend of all-round performance and everyday usability," said Thierry Sabbagh, Managing Director, Ford Middle East. "Seeing that the region's industry experts at MECOTY, have named three different Ford models as best-in-class in 2017 is testament to the great vehicles we are producing year-on-year."

Ford Edge

The all-new Ford Edge upscale crossover utility vehicle (CUV) delivers premium levels of comfort, sophisticated driver assistance features and class-leading driving dynamics to a greater number of customers in the cities of the Middle East region. The all-new Ford Edge cuts a bold, sporty and imposing figure on the roads. Wheels pushed out to each corner give a wide, aggressive stance and help maximise interior space. Raised ground clearance enhances off-road capability, and delivers a seating position for a commanding view of the road.

A fun-to-drive, responsive and agile character is enhanced with the sophisticated Ford Adaptive Steering system, which changes the ratio between the steering and road wheels according to vehicle speed. At lower speeds, such as when pulling into a parking space or maneuvering in tight quarters, the system makes the vehicle more agile and easier to turn. At higher speeds, it enables the Edge to react more smoothly and precisely to driver input. Edge features three engine options, two of which are new powertrains - a standard twin-scroll 2.0-litre EcoBoost four-cylinder engine producing 253 PS and 378 Nm of torque, and a 2.7-litre EcoBoost V6 producing 340 PS and 542 Nm of torque. A normally aspirated 3.5-litre V6 engine which boasts 283

Ford Ranger

The new Ford Ranger Pickup has proven itself as one of the toughest and most capable vehicles in its class. With an exceptional 800 mm water wading depth, and with 230 mm of ground clearance, it is designed and engineered to handle the most extreme terrains with ease. Thanks to a 28-degree approach angle and 25-degree departure angle, drivers in the new Ranger can feel confident when taking on steep obstacles. The new Ranger proudly takes this legacy even further with upgraded engines, the adoption of electric power steering and improved ride quality and comfort.

The new, modern look lends a powerful presence on the road, and immediately conveys a sense of capability. The design is defined by a strong new trapezoidal grille, flanked by imposing chiselled projector headlamps that are shaped to flow into the front wings. This clearly accentuates the width and strong stance, thus making the new Ranger instantly recognisable with a bold, technical look. The Ranger Pickup's impressive performance, capability, payload and towing capacity are made possible thanks to the latest generation of powerful, more refined and fuel-efficient Duratorq TDCi diesel engines, as well as the proven Duratec petrol unit. The Ford Ranger is available in a wide range of models and specification levels such as Base, XL, XLT, Limited, and the range-topping WildTrak to cater to customer needs whether for work or play. Ranger is available in single cab, Rap Cab and Double Cab variants.

Ford Figo

The Figo offers new levels of sophistication, smart technology and safety in a compact saloon. The Figo is the first compact saloon with standard driver and passenger airbags to help protect occupants in collisions and with up to six airbags available for even greater protection. For the ultimate combination of performance and fuel economy, the Figo is also available with a refined and sophisticated 1.5-litre Ti-VCT petrol engine, offering an impressive 112 PS of power and 136 Nm of torque at 4,250 rpm.

To explore these award-winning 2017 models from Ford and more, please visit the Alghanim Auto New Vehicle Showroom in the Shuwaikh Industrial Area, opposite from the Classical Car Museum and Sirrb Circuit. The showroom working hours are Saturday through Thursday from 9am to 8pm.

BURBERRY LICENSES BEAUTY BUSINESS TO COTY IN NEW DRIVE TO EXPAND

LONDON: British luxury brand Burberry said yesterday it would license its fragrances and cosmetics to Coty in a deal totalling \$225 million that will help it develop new products and benefit from the US group's distribution.

Known for its British-made trenchcoats, Burberry's beauty range is led by fragrances My Burberry and Mr Burberry, and includes cosmetics to help introduce its brand to new consumers. The company, which brought the perfume business in house in 2013, said it would retain creative control while Coty, which counts Gucci, Hugo Boss and Calvin Klein in its portfolio, would bring its global distribution network to the table. Chief Financial Officer Julie Brown said Burberry had repositioned the business by cutting secondary-channel sales, and it was now the time to

partner the premium fragrance leader. "Coty has very broad experience of working closely with other luxury brands," she said in an interview. "We will benefit from their deep beauty industry expertise and also their first class distribution."

Coty will pay 130 million pounds for the long-term licence, plus about 50 million pounds for inventory and other assets, Burberry said. It will also pay royalties from October. Beauty contributed 7 percent of Burberry's revenue in the first half of its 2016/17 financial year, down 17 percent on the prior period, partly as a result of the repositioning. It launched men's fragrance Mr Burberry a year ago and young British model Iris Law has promoted its cosmetics. Chief Operating Officer John Smith said there was an opportunity to grow cosmetics sales, which cur-

rently account for about 8 percent of beauty sales against an industry average of a third.

"Make-up is a key recruitment tool for a luxury brand, in that the price points are a lot lower than any other product," he said. "As a means of recruiting people into the brand, it's perfect."

Shares in Burberry were trading up 1 percent at 1,739 pence. Analysts at Exane BNP Paribas said they welcomed the choice of a first class partner to appropriately develop the business. "In fact, we never liked the idea of Burberry managing its beauty business directly, as beauty is an FMCG (fast moving consumer goods) business where you win on the back of global reach," they said. Burberry said the deal would be broadly neutral to adjusted profit before tax in 2017/18 and accretive the following year. — Reuters

GULF BANK ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF AL-DANAH DAILY DRAWS

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank held its Al-Danah daily draws on 2 April 2017 announcing the names of its winners for the week of 26 March - 30 March 2017. The Al-Danah daily draws include draws each and every working day for two prizes of KD 1,000 per winner.

The winners are:

(Sunday 26/3): Latifa Mohammed Bader Al-Bader, Fahad Abdulaziz Al-Hamad Al-Thwaikh (Monday 27/3): Abdelshakur Abdelhameed Ibrahim, Sadeq Abdulreda Makee

(Tuesday 28/3): Soud Abdulaziz Mohammed Sherif Al-Shrifi, Majed Hashem Al-Tamey (Wednesday 29/3): Salah Sulaiman Othman Al-Nasralla, Mohammad Fayrouz Abed Ali Karam (Thursday 30/3): Waleed Mohammad Abdullah Al-Ali, Hashem Abdulsoul Askar Al-Saffar

Gulf Bank's Al-Danah 2017 draw lineup includes daily draws (Two winners per working



day and each receive KD1000). Al-Danah's 2nd Quarterly draw for the prize of KD250,000 will be held on 29 June and the 3rd quarterly draw for the prize of KD500,000 will be held on 28 September. The final Al-Danah draw for KD1 million will be held on 11 January, 2018 whereby the Al-Danah millionaire will be announced.

Five reasons why the Al-Danah account is the best:

- 1) Kuwait's single biggest yearly cash prize of KD 1 million
- 2) Kuwait's biggest quarterly cash prizes, up to KD500,000
- 3) Two winners of KD1,000 every working day

- 4) The most chances to win
- 5) Only Bank that transfers your chances to win from year to year

Only Al-Danah makes millionaires. Al-Danah also offers a number of unique services including: the Al-Danah Deposit Only ATM card which helps account holders deposit their money at their convenience; as well as the Al-Danah calculator to help customers calculate their chances of becoming an Al-Danah winner.

Gulf Bank's Al-Danah account is open to Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti residents of Kuwait. Customers who open an account and/or deposit more will enter the draw within two days. To take part in the Al-Danah 2017 upcoming quarterly and yearly draws, customers must have an Al-Danah account containing at least KD 200; customers can visit one of Gulf Bank's 56 branches, transfer on line, or call the Customer Contact Center for assistance and guidance.



DUBAI POLICE SAY THEY ARREST HACKERS AFTER WHITE HOUSE STAFF

DUBAI: Dubai police have arrested foreign hackers who targeted five senior White House officials in a blackmail email scam, state-owned media reported yesterday. The Arabic-language Al-Bayan newspaper and the television channel Dubai One reported the arrests, while Dubai police did not answer repeated calls for comment. The arrests come as the

United Arab Emirates, which hosts some 4,000 US troops fighting the Islamic State group, remains a crucial regional ally.

Al-Bayan quoted Maj. Saud Al-Khalidi of Dubai police as saying an "African gang" broke into the emails of the five senior officials and "got highly confidential information." He said the US asked

Dubai police for assistance. Al-Khalidi was quoted as saying that investigators tracked down the gang to an apartment in the emirate of Ajman and arrested three suspects.

Those arrested are between 24 and 26 years of age and had a list of "5 million bank accounts," as well as hacking software and millions of dollars in

assets, he said. The major said the three people had entered the UAE on visitor visas a few years ago. The reports did not identify the White House officials targeted. Al-Khalidi reportedly said those suspects would be handed over to the United States for possible criminal trials. The US Embassy in Abu Dhabi did not respond to requests for comment.—AP



LOS ANGELES: This file photo shows a sign posted on the exterior of a Tesla service center in Los Angeles, California.—AFP

TESLA TOPS FIRST QUARTERLY SALES FORECAST

WASHINGTON: Tesla sold more than 25,000 vehicles in the first quarter, a record that beat analysts' forecasts, the electric carmaker said Sunday. The Palo Alto, California-based carmaker saw deliveries bounce back by 69 percent compared to a rough first quarter in 2016. Tesla produced 25,418 vehicles, a bit above its prior record in the third quarter of 2016. That puts Tesla on track to meet its target of 50,000 units in the first half of the year.

In the first quarter it delivered 13,450 of the Model S and 11,550 of the larger Model X. Its upcoming Model 3 is priced at a moderate \$35,000 in the United States, far below the price of its initial Models S and X vehicles. The Model 3 was designed from

the outset to be more efficient to make, a move intended to avoid production stumbles. CEO Elon Musk voiced confidence in February that Tesla electric car production would climb to 500,000 next year.

Tesla in January began mass production of energy-saving batteries that it vows will take electric cars mainstream. A "Gigafactory" created by Tesla and Panasonic is cranking out lithium-ion battery cells, which will be used in Tesla's energy storage products and the Model 3, according to the carmaker's website. The Gigafactory, located in the western state of Nevada, is also working on residential energy storage technology that could be used to power homes with solar energy.—AFP

KNPC SELECTS DELL EMC TO FUEL AGILE BUSINESS GROWTH

KUWAIT CITY: Dell EMC yesterday announced that the Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC), one of the largest oil refining companies in the region, has successfully deployed Dell EMC's industry leading storage solutions to drive an agile and future-ready business. Through these deployments, KNPC aims to support rapid data growth and create a highly available foundation for round the clock service delivery.

KNPC selected Dell EMC's VMAX3 enterprise storage systems, Vplex Metro and VNX unified storage arrays to create the right storage environment to support data mobility across KNPC's three data centers. With an aim to optimize storage efficiencies, KNPC further reinforced this deployment with solutions from Dell EMC's leading data protection and availability division.

With Dell EMC data protection software stack and Data Domain protection storage platforms, KNPC is able to protect the integrity of data and application services while enabling continuous data protection and disaster avoidance capabilities. Additionally, KNPC deployed EMC's ViPR controller and ViPR SRM to develop advanced storage automation capabilities to drive cost efficiency and simplify operational management.

Customer Benefits

Improved performance: Dell EMC's VMAX3 and VNX unified storage arrays have enabled KNPC to consolidate its storage infrastructure, to increase the level of data availability and enhance the performance of mission critical applications.

Hyper-Scale data protection: KNPC achieved hyper-reduplication for its backups by a factor exceeding 130 times, which helped protect over 14 Petabytes of critical data backups on Data Domain. This allowed KNPC to meet compliance and data retention requirements with minimum data center footprint. Furthermore with Data Domain KNPC minimized dependence on tape media. The 14+ PB of data backups would have resulted in 5,000 tapes with massive cost, management overhead and risks and this is what Dell EMC was able to successfully address with its Data protection software and Data Domain.

Increased Efficiency: Using Dell EMC's enterprise storage solutions KNPC has successfully optimized data storage utilization, total cost of ownership (TCO), rack space and power by 50%.

Enhanced Trust: With Data Protection solutions, KNPC drives a unified backup, recovery and archiving environment to

protect critical data and applications, simultaneously meeting internal governance and compliance requirements.

Business continuity: With Vplex Metro, two of KNPC's data centers can ensure continuous service availability to assure uptime for their business critical applications. This is a major evolution from legacy approaches of disaster recovery to disaster avoidance. Simplified Management: Advanced automation capabilities offered by ViPR Suite allow KNPC to easily manage applications and data across multiple storage environments, reducing IT complexities.

Customer Challenges

Established in 1960, KNPC is largely responsible for maximizing the value of hydrocarbons found in Kuwait and is considered the driving force behind boosting the country's economy. In order to reach new markets, KNPC has pioneered clean fuel projects and plans to multiply its oil refining capacity. In addition, KNPC aimed at establishing a truly connected storage infrastructure to effectively manage its data that can serve as a competitive advantage in this era of massive oil-price fluctuations.

In order to meet this objective, KNPC deployed Dell EMC's VMAX3, VNX unified storage arrays and Vplex Metro to enhance data storage utilization and effectively manage traditional and next generation business applications. Supplementing its efforts to create an agile storage environment, KNPC deployed Dell EMC's NetWorker, Data Domain and Avamar to create an integrated backup and archiving infrastructure to fuel its data availability and recovery performance.

With this deployment, KNPC observed major improvements on shorter backups and data compression reduction rates. This has resulted in efficient storage optimization, providing more room to sustain data growth. This also helps KNPC to sustain its business services availability against unforeseen data loss that can impact customer experience and its overall brand equity.

KNPC came full circle with its transformational journey with the deployment of ViPR controller and ViPR SRM that eliminates the need to adopt multiple storage systems, allowing automation of applications and services through centralized management and enabling the company to deliver storage-as-a-Service. KNPC has successfully created a truly connected, next generation storage infrastructure that is resilient to support the needs of a rapidly changing economy.

INDUSTRY, ACADEMIC PARTNERS TEAM UP TO FIGHT FAKE NEWS

FACEBOOK, GOOGLE STEP UP TO ROOT OUT MISINFORMATION

WASHINGTON: A global alliance of tech industry and academic organizations unveiled plans yesterday to work together to combat the spread of "fake news" and improve public understanding of journalism. The News Integrity Initiative will launch with \$14 million from Facebook, the Ford Foundation, Mozilla and others, based at the City University of New York's journalism school, which will coordinate research, projects and events. "We want to bring the conversation past just talking about media and to bring the public in," said Jeff Jarvis, who heads CUNY's Tow-Knight Center for Entrepreneurial Journalism.

"We want to go beyond the fake news discussion and get to what I hope is a flight to quality." Fake news became a serious issue in the US election campaign, when clearly fraudulent stories circulated on social media, potentially swaying some voters. Concerns have been raised since then about hoaxes and misinformation affecting elections in Europe, with investigations showing how "click farms" generate revenue from online advertising using made-up news stories.

Better tools

Facebook and Google have stepped up efforts to root out misinformation, Jarvis said, adding that helping the public understand the difference between fraudulent news and serious journalism will constitute an important element of the effort. "We have to equip the public with better tools and better discussions," he said. The initiative's mission is "to advance news literacy, to increase trust in journalism around the world and to better inform the public conversation," a statement said.

The founding funders include Facebook and the Craigslist founder Craig Newmark's philanthropic fund along with the Ford



CALIFORNIA: In this file photo, a man walks past a mural in an office on the Facebook campus in Menlo Park, California.—AP

Foundation, the John S and James L Knight Foundation, the Tow Foundation, AppNexus, Mozilla and Betaworks. Campbell Brown, a former NBC and CNN journalist hired early this year to head the Facebook news partnerships team, said the social network is looking at the issue "holistically." "We think news literacy is a global concern. It is important for people to be able to identify misleading news content, be discerning about the news that shows up on Facebook and everywhere else," she said.

"This is not a problem that we could ever solve alone." Facebook and Google have already taken steps to cut off advertising revenues to news sites promoting misinformation. Facebook has also ramped up efforts to flag news sto-

ries that may be false, and has launched a "journalism project" that aims to support the news ecosystem. "We have to look at this globally, so we are going to be supporting a lot of organizations around the world addressing the challenges," Brown said.

Facebook joined the project as part of its effort toward "helping people make more informed decisions when they do encounter false news," she said. Other partners include Arizona State University, the International Center for Journalists, the News Literacy Project, the Trust Project, and the public relations group Weber Shandwick. Denmark's Constructive Institute at Aarhus University is also taking part, along with the European Journalism Centre in the Netherlands, the

Colombia-based Fundacion Gabriel Garcia Marquez para el Nuevo Periodismo

Iberoamericano, the Hamburg Media School and Hans-Bredow-Institut in Germany, the Polis media department at the London School of Economics, France's Sciences Po university, the Hong Kong-based Society of Publishers in Asia, the Walkley Foundation in Australia, Wikipedia founder Jimmy Wales and UNESCO.

The move is one of many efforts to crack down on fake news. In February, a group of 37 French and international media outlets, supported by Google, launched "CrossCheck," a fact-checking platform aimed at detecting fake information that could affect the French presidential election.—AFP

EUROPE OVERTAKES US AS INTERNET CHILD ABUSE HUB

LONDON: Europe overtook North America last year as the world's biggest host of websites containing child sexual abuse images, according to a study by a British internet watchdog group published yesterday. Europe as a whole, including Russia and Turkey, accounted for 60 percent of such sites, a 19 percentage point increase from 2015, the UK-based Internet Watch Foundation's annual report said. North America hosted 37 percent of the world's child pornography websites, down from 57 percent in 2015.

The study found the highest number —

20,972, or 37 percent of the total—were in the Netherlands, followed by the United States with 12,492 (22 percent), Canada with 8,803 (15 percent), France with 6,099 (11 percent) and Russia with 4,176 (7 percent). "The global picture isn't good," IWF's chief executive Susie Hargreaves said in a statement. "Internet companies and large businesses who are doing nothing, or too little, to address online child sexual abuse imagery need to step up and work with us," she said.

While the study noted advances in tracking technology to identify criminals online, it said

that the number of reports it received had nearly doubled to 8.2 million in 2016 from 4.4 million in 2015.

The organization, an alliance of tech companies and law enforcement based in Cambridge in England, also said that new website domains being released into the marketplace were being used to host these images. It found a 258-percent increase in the purchase and abuse of new domains compared to 2015, as well as an increase in "masking techniques" used by criminals to hide abuse images and videos on the internet.—AFP



IN SPACE: This handout photo taken from the European Space Agency website shows an artist's impression depicting the separation of the ExoMars 2016 entry, descent and landing demonstrator module, named Schiaparelli, from the Trace Gas Orbiter, and heading for Mars.—AFP

HACKED NEW YORK POST APP SENDS OUT HEIL PRESIDENT ALERT

NEW YORK: The New York Post app has been hacked on April Fools' Day, sending out push alert notifications that included "Heil President Donald Trump." The Post apologized Saturday night, shortly after its app sent out a series of alerts. The Post said in a follow-up alert: "Our push alert notification system was compromised this evening. We are working to resolve the issue. Please accept our apologies."

The messages appeared directed at Trump. One message said, "Open your heart to those you do not understand and listen to all those you fear and look down upon." The alerts even included lyrics from Nirvana's song "Come as You Are": "Take your time, hurry up, the choice is yours, but don't be late." The Post is owned by Trump-friendly media mogul Rupert Murdoch.—AP

CAMBODIA TO ALLOW FOREIGNERS TO LEAVE WITH SURROGATE BABIES

PHNOM PENH: The Cambodian government is set to allow foreign couples to return home with babies conceived to surrogates before the 'womb for rent' business was banned last year, an official said yesterday. Curbs on the surrogacy industry in neighboring Thailand and India sparked a boom in the unregulated baby business in impoverished Cambodia, with Australian couples in particular turning to the kingdom. But late last year Cambodian authorities banned commercial surrogacy and refused to legalize birth certificates for babies.

This prevented foreign parents—many believed to be Australians—from taking the children out of the country, although the couples were able to travel in and out of Cambodia. But an official said the restriction is poised to change after Prime Minister Hun Sen approved an "exit strategy" allowing babies who were born to or being carried by-surrogates before the ban to leave. "We will allow parents who have surrogate babies born (before the ban) to take them out," according to Chou Bun Eng, secretary of state at the Ministry of Interior.

She said foreign couples had to follow the law and show a DNA match in order to claim their babies, while the surrogate's husband had to testify that the baby did not belong to him. "We also need the parents to say why they have asked others to carry babies for them," Chou Bun Eng added. "We will facilitate the process and will not create any difficulty for the parents," she said. But she warned that parents tempted to try to take their children out of Cambodia illegally would face criminal charges.

Surrogacy agencies started springing up in the

Southeast Asian nation after India and Thailand blocked foreigners from the services following a flurry of scandals and concerns about exploitation. With cheap medical costs and no laws excluding gay couples or single parents, Cambodia quickly soaked up much of the demand.

In Nov, Australian nurse Tammy Davis-Charles, 49, was arrested for allegedly running an illegal surrogacy service in Cambodia-arranging for more than 20 Cambodian women to carry babies for Australian couples.—AFP

INDONESIA'S SELFIE MONKEY THREATENED FOR ITS MEAT

INDONESIAN VILLAGE HAVE NO RESERVATION ON EATING EXOTIC ANIMALS

TANGKOKO, Indonesia: The crested black macaque shot to fame when one of the monkeys snapped grinning selfies and became embroiled in a US court battle—but the tussle over copyright is the least of the rare animal's worries. In a remote corner of their native Indonesia, amid smoking volcanoes and dense jungles, the monkeys face a far greater threat as they are aggressively hunted to be eaten. "In other places some macaque species are facing extinction because of shrinking habitat," Yunita Siwi from Selamatkan Yaki, a foundation that campaigns to protect the primate, said.

"But here the habitat is getting smaller—and people are eating the monkeys." Authorities and activists are stepping up efforts to persuade villagers on Sulawesi island to stop consuming the critically endangered monkeys, one of many exotic creatures that form part of the local indigenous community's diet. The animal, whose scientific name is *Macaca nigra*, is part of a kaleidoscope of exotic wildlife found across

Indonesia, including tigers and orangutans, who face a range of threats from poachers to the destruction of their habitat.

On a recent trip to Sulawesi's Tangkoko nature reserve, some of the amber-eyed, black-haired macaques, known in the local language as "yaki", frolicked in a small river while others climbed palm trees and knocked coconuts to the ground. Among those living in Tangkoko is Naruto, who shot to fame after grabbing a British wildlife photographer's camera and snapping some selfies.

The pictures led to a legal fight after animal rights activists PETA brought the case to a San Francisco court arguing that Naruto should own the copyright—a claim rejected by a judge last year. The approximately 2,000 monkeys living in the 8,800-hectare reserve enjoy protection because they are in a restricted area, but that is not the case for about 3,000 others estimated to be in jungles elsewhere in the province of North Sulawesi.

Tasty like dog

The macaque's meat is prized by the ethnic Minahasan people, a largely Christian group in the world's most populous Muslim-majority country, who have no reservation about eating exotic animals, unlike Indonesia's Islamic communities. "I like the taste, hot and spicy, it is similar to wild boar or dog," Nita, a 32-year-old local Minahasan who gave only her first name, said. At a market in Tomohon city, stomach-churning arrays of burnt, mutilated animals were on offer.

Black crested macaques—flame-roasted and whole, with pained grimaces etched on their faces—were on tables for sale alongside piles of sliced-open pythons, burnt bats and dogs. The macaques and some other animals at the market are protected by Indonesian law and officials have in the past raided the site, leading to violent clashes with vendors. But the trade in exotic creatures was still booming during a recent visit, with some local travel agents even offering tours to adventurous foreign travelers. The demand for the meat has prompted Minahasan hunters to go far and wide in search of the macaque, heading in pickups to remote parts of the island.

Nail in coffin

The population of *Macaca nigra* in its natural habitat on Sulawesi has dropped more than 80 percent in four decades, from an estimated 300 per square kilometer in 1980 to just 45 per square kilometer in 2011, researchers say. The International Union for Conservation of Nature classifies the monkey as critically endangered. As well as being threatened by their status as a local delicacy, the monkey's natural habitat is being destroyed by expansion of settlements and agricultural lands. As the population has fallen, the local wildlife protection agency and activists have started campaigning to save them.

Tents manned by activists explaining that the monkey is protected have been set up at local markets, while billboards have been put up by roadsides to warn people that they face up to five years in jail if they hunt the creatures. NGOs and the local government have pushed schools to include lessons on conservation, including about the *Macaca nigra*, in their curriculum. Campaigners have also reached out to churches in the mainly Christian area to urge priests to preach that humans are the guardians of Earth and must protect endangered creatures like the monkeys, said activist Siwi.

They are also seeking to highlight the macaques' key role in supporting biodiversity. As they swing through the jungle canopy, the macaques disperse seeds and encourage growth of some trees, according to Stephan Lentey of the *Macaca Nigra* Project NGO. But campaigners warn that villagers' hunger for the meat heaps extra pressure on a creature already threatened by habitat loss. Hunting the animals for food "is the final nail in the coffin for a dwindling population," said Simon Purser of the Sulawesi-based Tasikoki wildlife rescue centre.—AFP



INDONESIA: This picture shows a vendor preparing bat meat for customers in Tomohon market in northern Sulawesi.—FP photos



INDONESIA: This picture shows crested black macaques being displayed in a stall in Tomohon market in northern Sulawesi.

LEOPARD SHUTS DOWN NEPAL AIRPORT

KATHMANDU: Nepal had to close its only international airport for around half an hour yesterday after a leopard was spotted close to the runway. A spokesman for the airport in Kathmandu said wildlife and security officers were searching for the animal, believed to be hiding in the drains, after it was spotted by a pilot. "We closed the airport for about 30 min-

utes after the incident was reported but we haven't found the leopard yet," Prem Nath Thakur said.

One international flight was delayed but no other flight was scheduled during the closure. Kathmandu is close to forested hills and leopards are occasionally known to stray into the city. In the past birds have posed serious safe-

ty problems at the single-runway airport, although stray cattle and dogs have also been known to disrupt flights. In 2016, a plane with nine passengers was forced to make an emergency landing when a bird struck its right wing. Nineteen people were killed in 2012 when an aircraft hit a bird and crashed shortly after taking off from the airport.—AFP



KATHMANDU: A Nepalese vet and technical team collar collect samples from a dead rhino in Chitwan National Park, some 250kms south of Kathmandu yesterday.

NEPAL TO RELOCATE FIVE RARE ONE-HORNED RHINOS

CHITWAN, Nepal: Conservationists yesterday captured a rare one-horned rhinoceros in Nepal as part of an attempt to increase the number of the vulnerable animals, which are prized by wildlife poachers. Five rhinos—one male and four female—will be released into a national park in Nepal's far west over the coming week in the hope of establishing a new breeding group. The first, a large male estimated to be around 12 years old, was located by rangers in Chitwan National Park after a four-hour search on elephant-back.

"He is one of the dominant males in this area," said park chief Ram Chandra Kandel. The team of vets, wildlife experts and mahouts hope to capture a second rhino later yesterday before departing for Shuklaphanta National Park, a 12-hour drive away. It will take at least a week to capture and transport the remaining rhinos to their new habitat, which is already home to an estimated eight of their kin. The first group of rhinos was released into Shuklaphanta in 2000, Dr Kanchan Thapa, a biologist from conservation group WWF, said.

The latest rhinos are needed to replenish the population, he added. Thousands of one-horned rhinos once roamed the southern plains of Nepal but rampant poaching and pressures of human encroachment reduced their numbers to around 100 in the later part of last century. There are now around 645 after a government-led conservation push in the years since a 10-year civil war ended in 2006. Poaching has declined significantly in Nepal, with only a few cases in recent years.

A rhino died last year after being shot by poachers, who were intercepted by authorities before removing its valuable horn. Rhino horns can sell for tens of thousands of dollars on the international black market, where they are used in traditional medicines in China and Southeast Asia. Rhino poaching carries a maximum penalty of 15 years in jail and a 100,000-rupee (\$1,000) fine in Nepal. The other significant population of one-horned rhinos is in the Kaziranga National Park in northeastern India, where there are believed to be around 1,200.—AFP

THE COST OF CANCER: NEW DRUGS SHOW SUCCESS AT A STEEP PRICE

NEWYORK: Newer cancer drugs that enlist the body's immune system are improving the odds of survival, but competition between them is not reining in prices that can now top \$250,000 a year. The drugs' success for patients is the result of big bets in cancer therapy made by Bristol-Myers Squibb Co, Merck & Co Inc and Roche Holding AG, among others in big pharma. The industry's pipeline of cancer drugs expanded by 63 percent between 2005 and 2015, according to the QuintilesIMS Institute, and a good number are reaching the market.

The global market for cancer immunotherapies alone is expected to grow more than fourfold globally to \$75.8 billion by 2022 from \$16.9 billion in 2015, according to research firm GlobalData. "For cancer drugs in general ... it is hard for us to drive down cost," said Steve Miller, chief medical officer at Express Scripts Holding Co, the nation's largest manager of drug benefit plans for employers and insurers. "You don't want to be in the position of being told to use the second best cancer drug for your child."

Lawmakers on both sides of the aisle, as well as US President Donald Trump, have been grappling with how to restrain rising prescription drug costs. They have talked about solutions ranging from more price negotiation to faster approval of new drugs, often invoking increased competition between drugmakers. "Competition is key to lowering drug prices," Trump told pharmaceutical executives at an Oval Office meeting in January.

But that is not happening with new drugs called checkpoint inhibitors that work by releasing a molecular brake, allowing the immune system to recognize and attack cancer cells the same way it fights infections caused by bacteria or viruses. For cancers like melanoma, the treatments can mean long-term survival for around 20 percent of patients. Bristol's Yervoy, first approved in 2011, targets a protein known as CTLA-4.

Other immunotherapies, including Bristol's Opdivo, Keytruda from Merck, Roche's Tecentriq, and Pfizer Inc's Bavencio, involve a different protein called PD-1. Other targets are being explored. Some new data will be presented this week in Washington at the American Association for Cancer Research's annual meeting. Current checkpoint inhibitors each have a list price near \$150,000 a year. A combination of Yervoy and Opdivo, approved by the Food and Drug Administration for advanced or inoperable melanoma, has a cost of \$256,000 a year for patients who respond to the treatment.

Similar immunotherapies are in devel-

opment at companies like AstraZeneca Plc. Merck, which declined to comment on pricing plans, expects an FDA decision by May 10 on its combination of Keytruda and chemotherapy as an initial treatment for the most common form of lung cancer - by far the biggest market for cancer drugs.

Pfizer said Bavencio, cleared by the FDA earlier this month to treat Merkel cell carcinoma, a rare type of skin cancer, has a price "comparable to other checkpoint inhibitors approved for different indications." The pharmaceutical industry holds that discussion of prescription drug prices has to take into account the major investment required for innovation and discovery of new lifesaving drugs.

Unrestrained pricing power

Scientific progress, and pricing power, is driving pharmaceutical companies to emphasize oncology research. "Most of the strategy on the part of pharmaceutical companies assumes unrestrained pricing power," said Dr. Peter Bach, director of Memorial Sloan Kettering's Center for Health Policy Outcomes in New York. "We don't see evidence that companies are pursuing cost-effective strategies."

Health insurers have had success in demanding price concessions in some drug categories - like diabetes, where several companies sell similar products and insurers are able to negotiate price discounts or rebates in exchange for coverage. According to IMS, that tactic capped the overall rise in spending on diabetes medicines at 8 percent in 2015, compared with an increase of 30 percent in billed invoices. All of the invoice price growth for insulin was offset by price cuts, the institute said.

But discounting is much less common for newer, innovative cancer drugs, mostly given by injection and approved for defined patient populations. Net price growth for branded oncology drugs averaged 4.8 percent in 2015, versus 6.4 percent for generics, according to IMS. Express Scripts' Miller and others said makers of new cancer medications enjoy pricing power due to coverage requirements, insurance plan structure and a lack of head-to-head competition studies.

"Cancer drugs don't compete on price," said Dr. Aaron Kesselheim, a researcher at Harvard Medical School and author of several studies of drug pricing. "Drug companies have market exclusivity and we require payers to cover cancer drugs - Medicare has six protected classes, including cancer." Medicare, the federal government's healthcare plan for seniors and the disabled, covers most prescription drugs under its "Part D" pharmacy benefits.—Reuters

BABIES CRY MORE IN UK, CANADA AND ITALY, LESS IN GERMANY: STUDY

LONDON: Babies cry more in Britain, Canada, Italy and Netherlands than in other countries, while newborns in Denmark, Germany and Japan cry and fuss the least, researchers said yesterday. In research looking at how much babies around the world cry in their first three months, psychologists from Britain have created the first universal charts for normal amounts of crying during that period. "Babies are already very different in how much they cry in the first weeks of life," said Dieter Wolker, who led the study at Warwick University.

"We may learn more from looking at cultures where there is less crying — (including) whether this may be due to parenting or other factors relating to pregnancy experiences or genetics." The highest levels of colic - defined as crying more than three hours a day for at least three days a week - were found in babies in Britain, Canada and

Italy, while the lowest colic rates were found in Denmark and Germany. On average, the study found, babies cry for around two hours a day in the first two weeks. They then cry a little more in the following few weeks until they peak at around two hours 15 minutes a day at six weeks.

This then reduces to an average of one hour 10 minutes by the time they are 12 weeks old. But there are wide variations, with some babies crying as little as 30 minutes a day, and others more than five hours. The research, published in the Journal of Pediatrics, was a meta-analysis of studies covering some 8,700 babies in countries including Germany, Denmark, Japan, Canada, Italy, the Netherlands and Britain. Wolker said the new crying chart would help health workers reassure parents whether their baby is crying within a normal range in the first three months, or may need extra support.—Reuters



DUBAI: Pink flamingos stand in the water at the Ras al-Khor Wildlife Sanctuary on the outskirts of Dubai, in the United Arab Emirates.—AFP

SHARK TAKES BITE OUT OF TERRIFIED AUSTRALIAN'S KAYAK

SYDNEY: A terrified Australian clung to the remains of his kayak for 40 minutes but survived in one piece after a shark took a huge bite out of the boat. Gavin Kleidon's ordeal began late Sunday as he was paddling in a leisurely fashion to Mud Island in Moreton Bay off Brisbane. Then the shark attacked from behind. Kleidon told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation he never saw the predator but knew immediately what had happened.

"I saw the back of my boat floating away and I knew pretty quickly what it was," he said. "I tried to climb on my boat as quick as I could. It was sinking pretty quick, which was stressing me out a bit. I

looked for my paddle but unfortunately it had drifted away." As he lay on top of what remained of his kayak, waves crashed overhead. But he managed to keep his nerve and pull his phone from its waterproof casing and call emergency services.

Kleidon said he had a "fair idea" of his location because of landmarks on the shoreline but endured a nervous 40-minute wait as marine police scrambled to find him, with passing planes heading into Brisbane airport helping track him. "I was very nervous at that stage to know that it (the shark) could've moved on pretty quick, or it could've still been around.—AFP

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA RESCUERS ON LOOKOUT FOR TANGLED WHALE

DANA POINT: Boaters were asked Sunday to be on the lookout for a gray whale tangled in an unknown material heading north along Southern California's coast. Capt. Frank Brennan was leading a whale-watching tour Saturday when he spotted the whale with what looks like some kind of metal frame around its head about 2 miles off Dana Point. "The whale was being evasive because there were so many boats around it," Brennan told the Orange County Register. He saw it a second time later in the day off Laguna Beach.

The National Marine Fisheries Service requested that boaters report any sightings of the tangled animal. Whales caught in materials such as fishing line or crabbing gear can starve or die from infected wounds. The mammal was seen again

around sunset Saturday near Newport Beach Harbor by Capt. Dave Anderson, who runs a separate whale-watching cruise and is involved in whale rescues. Anderson told The Associated Press it's the fourth tangled whale he has seen in the past two months.

Figures released last month showed a record number of whales getting caught in crabbing gear off the US West Coast. The Center for Biological Diversity cited 71 cases of whales caught in fishing lines off California, Oregon and Washington last year. It was the highest annual total for the region since record-keeping began in 1982. The numbers of such entanglements have been climbing yearly. California recently passed legislation meant to encourage crabbers to remove unused crabbing gear from the ocean.—AP



CALIFORNIA: In this photo provided by Capt. Dave's Dolphin and Whale Safari, a gray whale is caught in a crab trap off the coast at Dana Point, California.—AP

IN ENERGY STARVED INDIAN VILLAGES, SOLAR MINI-GRIDS LIGHT THE WAY

ATRAULI, India: A dusty plastic sheet covers a large diesel generator in a corner of a petrol station in Atrauli, a village in India's northern state of Uttar Pradesh, a modest but telling sign of progress. The gas station used to shut at 7 pm every day because the lights would often go off, and there was no way to know when they would come back on, said Sudhakar Singh, the manager. "The main power supply was very irregular, and operating the generator was expensive, so we could not afford to stay open beyond 7 pm," Singh told the Thomson Reuters Foundation, as motorbikes and trucks lined up for petrol and diesel.

Last year, the pump got a connection to a solar mini-grid, a local power network not connected to the national grid, which guarantees six hours of electricity every day. The pump has since stayed open all night. "Now, our expenses are lower and we earn more because we can stay open all night. We have not used the generator once since we got the connection," said Singh.

Power paradox

Atrauli's electricity revolution is a symbol of the energy paradox dogging India, one of the world's fastest growing economies, where power cuts are rampant and per capita electricity consumption is about a third the global average. Fast-dropping costs for solar power, combined with plenty of sun and a huge need for electricity in a country where about 300 million people - a quarter of the population - are still without it means solar energy has huge potential in India.

Despite Prime Minister Narendra Modi's pledge to supply power to every citizen by 2019 and a surge in solar production, reaching remote villages remains a challenge, with distribution losses as high as 30 percent on antiquated lines, low tariffs and limited use. Most of those without electricity live in the 99 percent of villages the government deems to be electrified because at least 10 percent of households and public places have electricity. But at least half the electrified households do not get at least six hours of electricity a day.

"While the grid has expanded and we gener-

ate enough power, distribution companies are not in a position to take that power, and are not interested in going into rural areas," said Aruna Kumarankandath at the Centre for Science and Environment. "When the supply is so unreliable, people use it sparingly, making it an unattractive proposition to invest in," said Kumarankandath, a renewable energy researcher.

Lights, fans, action

The situation is particularly dire in Uttar Pradesh, India's most populous state where only 37 percent of households are electrified, compared with 67 percent nationwide. Help has come from private mini-grids like the one in Atrauli operated by OMC Power, a company with 67 grids in the state. Renewable energy is key to India's electrification plan, and mini-grids with a capacity of 10 to 500 kilowatts (KW) are playing an increasingly important role.

"Mini-grids use the potential of untapped renewable energy and manage demand efficiently by generating power at the source of consumption," said Kumarankandath. A base home package from OMC Power costs 110 rupees (\$1.70) a month and comes with a switchboard with an LED bulb and a socket for charging a mobile phone. Additional lights, fans and even a television can be added.

A 50 KW solar grid with battery storage and a distribution reach of 5 km (3.1 miles) can power small businesses, schools, two telecom towers and over 500 homes, said Saraju N. Rao, chief technology officer at OMC Power. "There is enough demand in rural areas. If the supply is reliable and good, people are willing to pay more," he said.

Local jobs

Uttar Pradesh is the only state with a policy for mini-grids. It aims to power nearly 20 million households, about a tenth of its population. The state offers a 30 percent subsidy for these grids, which may also be powered by wind, biomass or water, and must guarantee at least eight hours of electricity to homes, and six hours for commercial needs.

Importantly, the policy offers exit options

when the areas have adequate grid supply: either the distribution company can receive energy from the mini-grids at an agreed tariff, or the project may be transferred to the distribution company. India's ministry for renewable energy released a national draft policy for mini- and micro-grids last June.

It aims to deploy at least 10,000 renewable energy projects in the next five years in "unserved and underserved parts of the country," with an average capacity of 50 KW per project. The ambitious targets come at a time when renewable energy is at a turning point in India, as generating electricity from renewables costs nearly the same as from conventional sources.

Coal still provides the lion's share of energy, but as a signatory to the Paris Agreement on climate change, India is committed to ensuring at least 40 percent of its electricity will come from non-fossil-fuel sources by 2030. A 10-year blueprint predicts 57 percent of India's electricity capacity will come from non-fossil sources by 2027. Solar energy is a particular focus and will contribute 100 gigawatts (GW) of the renewable energy capacity target of 175 GW by 2022.

"Renewable energy-based mini-grids will boost small businesses, create local jobs and build economies. This will improve living standards in villages," said Kumarankandath. "That in turn will ensure women's empowerment, better health and education. There cannot be a better development agenda for the country," she said. In Atrauli, OMC's mini-grid is just off the main road, next to the telecom tower it also helps to power. OMC has 280 customers in Atrauli, 60 percent of them commercial, Rao said.

One of OMC's first customers in the village was Anita, a widowed mother of two, who didn't have an electricity connection and used kerosene lamps for lighting in her shack. From one base package of a single light, Anita now has three lights, one each in her room, her son's room and the kitchen. "Earlier, the children would have to go search for a light to study by. But now they study at home, and I can do housework even at night," she said. "I would like to add a fan next."—Reuters

CLINIC PAGE



Kuwait Times
248 33 199





Dr. Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem
مؤيد علي المخيزيم

Consultant Pediatrician
إستشاري أطفال
M.B. Bch. FRCPC. FAAP. PEM



Al-Jabriya - Block 1A - St. 1 - Mazaya Building - 15th Floor - Clinic B - Tel.: 22269369 - Fax: 22269368



INDIANS IN KUWAIT CENTRAL BLOOD BANK CONDUCTS THEIR ANNUAL FAMILY GATHERING

Indians in Kuwait Central Blood Bank conducted their Annual Family get together on March 24, 2017. On the prestigious occasion a farewell was given to Mr N S Das who completed 40 years in KCBB and also to Mrs Lekha Thomas who completed 17 years in KCBB. Members shared their good wishes to both of them on their Bon Voyage. The program was enriched by variety of cultural activities by members and their families.



WFK HOLDS MONTHLY MEETING

What Boris Pasternak said about Literature, could not have been truer than what the evenings of Writers' Forum bring to the fore. He said: Literature is the art of discovering something extraordinary about ordinary people, and saying with ordinary words something extraordinary. At the monthly meeting of the Writers' Forum, Kuwait (WFK) held at the residence of its President Umesh Sharma on the March 31, some very insightful and beautiful words in poetry and prose, were presented by its members.

The beauty not only lay in the content which had depth and provoked the listeners to think, but it also lay in the linguistic variety thereof. Original Short Story, Essays, Articles and Poetry were narrated and recited in English, Hindi, Urdu, Oriya, Sanskrit, and Gujarati. The Forum is unique in the sense that it unequivocally cherishes each and every Indian language and encourages the amateurs and the stalwarts to share space and thoughts on the same platform.

While the seniors such as Dr Arvind Raina, Umesh Sharma and Maimuna Ali Chougale have their own Halo Effect, there also are present in WFK- other fine and young creative litterateurs. While the evening was presided over by Aamir Diwan who writes poetry in Hindi, the Chief Guest on the occasion was Dr Arvind Raina who is one of the founders of WFK and writes poems in Hindi, Dogri, and English.

The meeting was steered by Rajesh Verlekar. In the first session, Maimuna Ali Chougale presented a critique on a great scholar, poet, and professor at Aligarh Muslim University-Ale Ahmad Suroor. The article was very well received, and so was the short story that followed in Oriya, penned and narrated by Biswa Ranjan. The story was translated in English by another Oriya poet- Tushar Misra. Dr. Navnit Gandhi presented a satirical essay in Hindi on the spiritual bonding that the mobile phones have brought about amongst humans.

The second session comprised the recitation of poetry by Preeti Rajgolliker (Sanskrit), Ravin Singh (Hindi), Sayeed Nazar Kadapavi (Urdu), Kamaal Ansari (Urdu), Shakeel Jamshedpuri (Urdu), Chhaya Thakkar (Gujarati), Umesh Sharma (Hindi), Rajesh Verlekar (English), Tushar Misra (Oriya), Dr Navnit Gandhi (Hindi) and Chhaya Athavale (Hindi). Another former member-Parminder Kaur's poem in English was recited by her father- Mohan Singh. Others who were present included Sunil Soni, Rajeev Athavale, Ameer Uddin Ameer and Milind Rajgolliker.

The Chief Guest Dr Arvind Raina weaved his sentiments beautifully into words and expressed his happiness at the WFK's success in bringing and keeping together the languages and poets of all seasons. He said that all the presentations evoked some very strong and deeply moving emotions. He then recited a beautiful poetry in Hindi. Aamir Diwan who was presiding over the evening, also expressed his elation and contentment, while listening to all the members. He too recited a gripping poem in Hindi. The host -Umesh Sharma was thanked for the gracious hospitality.



Dr. Michael Bourk, GUST



Professor Bienvenido Leon, University of Navarra



Professor Lloyd Davis, University of Otago

GUST'S GLOBAL STUDIES CENTER ORGANIZES WORKSHOP

Gulf University for Science and Technology (GUST) yesterday announced a workshop by their Global Studies Center (GSC), led by Professor Bienvenido Leon of the University of Navarra, Professor Lloyd Davis of the University of Otago, and Dr. Michael Bourk of GUST, entitled "Technical Communication for Non-Technical People: Opportunities and Challenges Communicating Science in Digital Environments", which took place on the university campus this week. The focus of the event was to help faculty and staff learn how to communicate scientific and technical

knowledge more effectively to students or colleagues.

Assistant Professor in the Mass Communication and Media (MCM) Department at GUST, Dr. Michael Bourk, said, "Academics sometimes struggle to communicate their research in the everyday language of most people. This workshop aims to address this issue. In an era of pseudo-science and fake news proliferation, we need to ensure the ability to communicate objective truths and rational science effectively, particularly in online environments." The workshop was interactive, taking on a panel discussion style with

Professor Bienvenido Leon, University of Navarra, Professor Lloyd Davis, University of Otago, and Dr. Michael Bourk, GUST.

Throughout the workshop, they shared results of an international research project on online science communication, involving 15 scholars from five different countries and nine different universities. Their findings were highlighted to help attendees improve their science communication messages with non-technical audiences and communities. Attendees were given better tools and advice to enable them to become better communicators of scientific and technical knowledge,

which can be used with their students or during research seminars with a non-specialized audience.

The GSC regularly holds seminars with experts in various fields of study. The center was founded in 2015 in partnership with the National University of Singapore, and aims to conduct cutting-edge research on cross-national political, economic, social, cultural, and environmental issues of critical importance, as well as share research output and information regionally and globally. It seeks to foster public understanding of global issues and support the policy-making

processes of concerned states. Previous events hosted by the GSC include a discussion to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the liberation of Kuwait from Iraqi occupation, sponsored by the US Embassy in Kuwait, a lecture by Dr. Peter Sluglett, an expert on Middle Eastern history and Director of the Middle East Institute at NUS, entitled: "An Improvement on Colonialism? The 'A' Mandates and their Legacy in the Middle East", and another by Dr. Daniel Brumberg, the Kuwait Program Visiting Professor at the Paris School of International Affairs, on US-Arab Relations in a Time of Crisis.



GULF BANK RECEIVES EXCELLENCE IN VIP CUSTOMER SERVICE AWARD

Gulf Bank was pleased to receive the 'Excellence in VIP Customer Service' Award from Kuwait's Public Relations Association. Held under the patronage of HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the awards ceremony took place on Wednesday, 29 March 2017 at Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Center. The event convened a high level of attendance, where the Minister of Social Affairs and Labor Hind Al-Sabeh and the Chairman of Kuwait's Public Relations

Association, Jamal Al-Nasrallah presented the award to Gulf Bank representative, Meshari Shehab, Assistant General Manager Priority Banking.

Upon receiving the award, Meshari Shehab commented in a statement to the press: "We are proud to be recognized for our efforts in Priority Banking customer service and would like to thank Kuwait's Public Relations Association for this recognition. The 'Excellence in VIP Customer Service' award affirms the success of Gulf

Bank's strategy to provide its valued customers with services tailored to their needs.

"With Gulf Bank Priority Banking, customers enjoy a personalized and preferential treatment coupled with a suite of Banking and investment products and services designed to meet their financial goals." The awards aim at underscoring the importance of customer service and public relations that require unique skills and high experience, and at highlighting the efforts invested in the fields of public relations

and customer service across all industries, from the public and private sectors.

A judging committee was formed to select the winners. It consisted of international and local public relations and customer service experts. The evaluation was based on international standards in regards to the level of client servicing and the ability to meet the clients' needs. The event also featured a number of workshops about the strategies of public relations and customer service targeted at employees of ministries

and organizations, in addition to a small exhibition area where participants showed their products and services.

The Kuwait Public Relations Award is one of the most prestigious events in Kuwait. The main objectives of the association is to promote the role of the State of Kuwait in public relations practice and functions, to create channels of cooperation with international and regional public relations associations, and to raise awareness of the importance of this industry.



LULU HYPERMARKET AWARDS PRIZES TO FOOD EXPO 2017

Lulu Hypermarket, the leading hypermarket brand in the region, capped its Food Expo 2017 with a prize distribution ceremony held on April 2 at its Al-Rai outlet. Winners of the various competitions held during the food festival were felicitated by LuLu management in the presence of a large crowd of shoppers and well-wishers.

The competitions, which were launched on March 19 and extended throughout the expo period, featured a Cookery Contest, Live Cookery Demo, Junior-Chef Contest, Wow the Master Chef Contest, Taste and Win Contest, Make and Eat Competition, Carving Competition, Pickles Contest and Kitchen Queen Contests. All of the winners displayed remarkable cooking talent and skills in preparing distinct dishes.

The top place winners in each segment were awarded KD 125 worth of gift vouchers, while the second place and third place winners were handed KD 75 and KD 50 worth of gift vouchers respectively. In addition to the food competitions, the Food Expo 2017, which started on 22 March and ended on 1 April, featured various other cooking and food-based activities that drew in large crowds. Among the programs were special promotions, a live demonstration of Arabian-cooking by Chef Asmaa Al-Bahar, and an assortment of displays such as the biggest pizza, the longest egg roll and more.

Indian celebrity chef and culinary consultant Hari Nayak inaugurated the Food Expo and interacted with his fans during the Chit Chat with Master Chef program. LuLu Hypermarket's Food Expo 2017 marks another brilliant endeavor by the hypermarket to provide shoppers with an exciting and unique shopping experience that includes a wide variety of high-quality products at competitive prices.

THE IRANIAN CULTURAL ATTACHE HOLDS SYMPOSIUM ON WORLD POETRY DAY

By Nawara Fattahova

On the occasion of celebrating the World Poetry Day, The Iranian cultural attache held a symposium titled, 'Al-Shahnama; The Eternal Ferdousi Epic', which was presented by all of Dr. Mohammed Khaqani Asfahani, teacher of Arabic literature at Esfahan University, Mohammed Sarkhouh, Kuwaiti poet and writer, and Sameer Arshadi, teacher of Persian literature at Kuwait University.

Sameer Arshadi launched the event with thanking Souad Al-Sabah Printing House for printing and publishing this Epic. He recited

words of Dr. Souad Al-Sabah at the beginning of the Al-Shahnama Epic, who said that this epic great example of the Persian literature presented and very exciting way of writing. This epic consists of 60 thousand verses, and is considered one of the most important literature works in human history. "The writer Abualqasim Al-Firdousi spent 30 years writing this epic, which became an eternal book," noted Arshadi.

Kuwaiti poet and writer Mohammed Sarkhouh stated that Al-Shahnama means (the Letter of the Kings). "It's a letter addressed to all kings and leaders all over the world in all times

to encourage them to take care of their people, giving them their rights, and not oppressing them. Al-Firdousi advises them to spread love between people instead of aggression," he pointed out.

Dr. Mohammed Khaqani Asfahani expressed his happiness of the cultural and intellectual activity in Kuwait. "Over 40 thousand poets were active in Iran within 14 centuries since Islam came to Iran. These 40 thousand poets became popular internationally, and Al-Firdousi was on top of them. I advice all Arab intellectuals and writers to read Al-Shahnama, and discover the precious Persian literature," he stated.



OSN MOVIES ACTION

- 00:00 Starship Troopers
- 02:15 Alien Outpost
- 04:00 Reign Of Fire
- 06:00 Gone In Sixty Seconds
- 08:00 Double Team
- 10:00 Road Wars
- 12:00 Big Game
- 14:00 Gone In Sixty Seconds
- 16:00 Close Range
- 17:45 A View To A Kill
- 20:00 Automata
- 22:00 Terminator Genisys

ANIMAL PLANET HD

- 00:15 Vet On The Loose
- 00:45 Bondi Vet
- 01:40 Lone Star Law
- 02:35 Tanked
- 03:25 Pandamonium
- 04:15 Gator Boys
- 05:02 Vet On The Loose
- 05:27 Vet On The Loose
- 05:49 Lone Star Law
- 06:36 Gorilla School
- 07:00 Gorilla School
- 07:25 Dogs/Cats/Pets 101
- 08:15 Lone Star Law
- 09:10 Pandamonium
- 10:05 Tanked
- 11:00 Dogs/Cats/Pets 101
- 11:55 Bondi Vet
- 12:50 Lone Star Law
- 13:45 Gator Boys
- 14:40 Pandamonium
- 15:35 Tanked
- 16:30 Vet On The Loose
- 16:55 Vet On The Loose
- 17:25 Rugged Justice
- 18:20 Pit Bulls & Parolees
- 19:15 Tanked
- 20:10 Pandamonium
- 21:05 Rugged Justice
- 22:00 Pit Bulls & Parolees
- 22:55 Gator Boys
- 23:50 Vet On The Loose

BBC FIRST

- 00:35 The Living And The Dead
- 01:35 Line Of Duty
- 02:35 DCI Banks
- 03:25 DCI Banks

- 07:15 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
- 08:05 Disaster Date
- 08:30 Disaster Date
- 08:55 Ridiculousness
- 09:20 Key And Peele
- 09:45 Disaster Date
- 10:10 Ridiculousness
- 10:35 Impractical Jokers UK
- 11:00 Urban Tarzan
- 11:25 Urban Tarzan
- 11:50 I Live With Models
- 12:15 Lip Sync Battle
- 12:40 Impractical Jokers UK
- 13:05 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
- 13:55 Ridiculousness
- 14:20 Bondi Vet
- 15:10 I Live With Models
- 15:35 Disaster Date
- 16:00 Disaster Date
- 16:30 Impractical Jokers UK
- 16:55 Lip Sync Battle
- 17:25 Key And Peele
- 17:50 Life Or Debt
- 18:39 Ridiculousness
- 19:03 Disaster Date
- 19:27 Key And Peele
- 19:50 Key And Peele
- 20:13 IdiotSitter
- 20:37 Important Things With Demetri Martin
- 21:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
- 21:30 Workaholics
- 22:00 Inside Amy Schumer
- 22:25 Key And Peele
- 22:50 Tosh.0
- 23:15 Tosh.0
- 23:40 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah

Discovery Family

- 00:30 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
- 01:20 Kids Do The Craziest Things
- 01:45 Kids Do The Craziest Things
- 02:10 Pick A Puppy
- 02:35 Pick A Puppy
- 03:00 Destroyed In Seconds
- 03:25 Destroyed In Seconds
- 03:50 Ultimate Survival
- 04:40 How It's Made
- 05:05 How It's Made
- 05:30 Dirty Jobs
- 06:20 Mythbusters
- 07:00 Doki
- 07:25 Bear Grylls Survival School
- 07:50 Must Love Cats
- 08:40 How It's Made
- 09:05 How It's Made
- 09:30 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
- 10:20 Mythbusters

- 16:45 Elena Of Avalor
- 17:10 Liv And Maddie
- 17:35 Descendants Wicked World
- 17:40 Girl Meets World
- 18:05 Stuck In The Middle
- 18:30 Bunk'd
- 18:55 Bizaardvark
- 19:20 Disney Mickey Mouse
- 19:25 Alex & Co.
- 19:50 Jessie
- 20:15 Tsum Tsum Shorts
- 20:20 Backstage
- 20:45 Austin & Ally
- 21:10 The Next Step
- 21:35 Cracked
- 21:40 Best Friends Whenever
- 22:05 Girl Meets World
- 22:30 That's So Raven
- 22:55 Star Darlings
- 23:00 Good Luck Charlie
- 23:25 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
- 23:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch

Disney Junior

- 00:00 Henry Hugglemonster
- 00:15 Calimero
- 00:30 Art Attack
- 00:55 Zou
- 01:05 Loopdidoo
- 01:20 Henry Hugglemonster
- 01:35 Calimero
- 01:50 Zou
- 02:05 Art Attack
- 02:30 The Hive
- 02:40 Loopdidoo
- 02:55 Henry Hugglemonster
- 03:10 Art Attack
- 03:35 Loopdidoo
- 03:50 Calimero
- 04:05 Art Attack
- 04:30 Henry Hugglemonster
- 04:45 Zou
- 05:00 Art Attack
- 05:30 Henry Hugglemonster
- 05:45 Loopdidoo
- 06:00 Zou
- 06:15 Calimero
- 06:30 Loopdidoo
- 06:45 Henry Hugglemonster
- 07:00 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
- 07:25 Sofia The First
- 07:50 The Lion Guard
- 08:15 PJ Masks
- 08:40 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
- 09:05 Goldie & Bear
- 09:30 Minnie's Bow-Toons
- 09:35 The Lion Guard

Disney XD

- 06:00 Guardians Of The Galaxy
- 06:25 Marvel Ultimate Spider-Man vs The Sinister 6
- 06:50 Atomic Puppet
- 07:15 Gravity Falls
- 07:40 Supa Strikas
- 08:05 Two More Eggs
- 08:10 K.C. Undercover
- 08:35 Milo Murphy's Law
- 09:00 Walk The Prank
- 09:25 Right Now Kapow
- 09:50 Lab Rats
- 10:15 Two More Eggs
- 10:20 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
- 10:45 Mighty Med
- 11:10 K.C. Undercover
- 11:35 Lab Rats: Bionic Island
- 12:00 Avalon High
- 12:30 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
- 13:45 K.C. Undercover
- 14:10 Disney Mickey Mouse
- 14:15 K.C. Undercover
- 14:40 Lab Rats
- 15:05 Lab Rats
- 15:30 Supa Strikas
- 15:55 Supa Strikas
- 16:25 K.C. Undercover
- 16:50 Walk The Prank
- 17:15 Lab Rats: Bionic Island
- 17:40 Milo Murphy's Law
- 18:05 Disney Mickey Mouse
- 18:10 Gravity Falls
- 18:35 Mighty Med
- 19:00 Atomic Puppet
- 19:25 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
- 19:55 K.C. Undercover
- 20:20 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
- 20:45 Mighty Med
- 21:10 Walk The Prank
- 21:40 Disney Mickey Mouse
- 21:45 Marvel's Avengers Assemble
- 22:10 Marvel Ultimate Spider-Man vs The Sinister 6
- 22:35 Booster
- 23:00 Programmes Start At 6:00am KSA

EHD

- 00:05 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
- 00:55 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
- 01:50 Botched
- 02:50 Celebrity Style Story
- 03:20 Celebrity Style Story
- 03:50 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills
- 04:40 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills
- 05:30 Celebrity Style Story
- 06:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
- 06:55 El News
- 07:10 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
- 08:10 El News
- 09:10 Mariah's World
- 10:05 Mariah's World
- 11:00 Mariah's World
- 12:00 El News
- 12:15 So Cosmo
- 13:10 So Cosmo
- 14:05 So Cosmo
- 15:00 El News
- 15:15 WAGs
- 16:10 WAGs
- 17:05 WAGs
- 18:00 WAGs
- 19:00 El News
- 20:00 Mariah's World
- 21:00 Mariah's World
- 22:00 Mariah's World
- 23:00 El News
- 23:15 Botched

food network

- 00:00 Restaurant: Impossible
- 01:00 Mystery Diners
- 01:30 Mystery Diners
- 02:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 02:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 03:00 Man Fire Food
- 03:30 Man Fire Food
- 04:00 Chopped
- 05:00 Guy's Grocery Games
- 06:00 Barefoot Contessa
- 06:30 Barefoot Contessa
- 07:00 The Kitchen
- 08:00 The Pioneer Woman
- 08:30 The Pioneer Woman
- 09:00 The Pioneer Woman
- 09:30 The Pioneer Woman
- 10:00 Siba's Table
- 10:30 Siba's Table
- 10:50 Siba's Table
- 11:00 The Kitchen
- 12:00 The Pioneer Woman
- 12:30 The Pioneer Woman
- 13:00 Siba's Table
- 13:30 Siba's Table
- 14:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 14:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 15:00 Chopped
- 16:00 The Kitchen
- 17:00 The Pioneer Woman

- 17:30 The Pioneer Woman
- 18:00 Chopped
- 19:00 Iron Chef America
- 20:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 20:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 21:00 Man Finds Food
- 21:30 Man Finds Food
- 22:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 22:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 23:00 Guy's Grocery Games

itv CHOICE

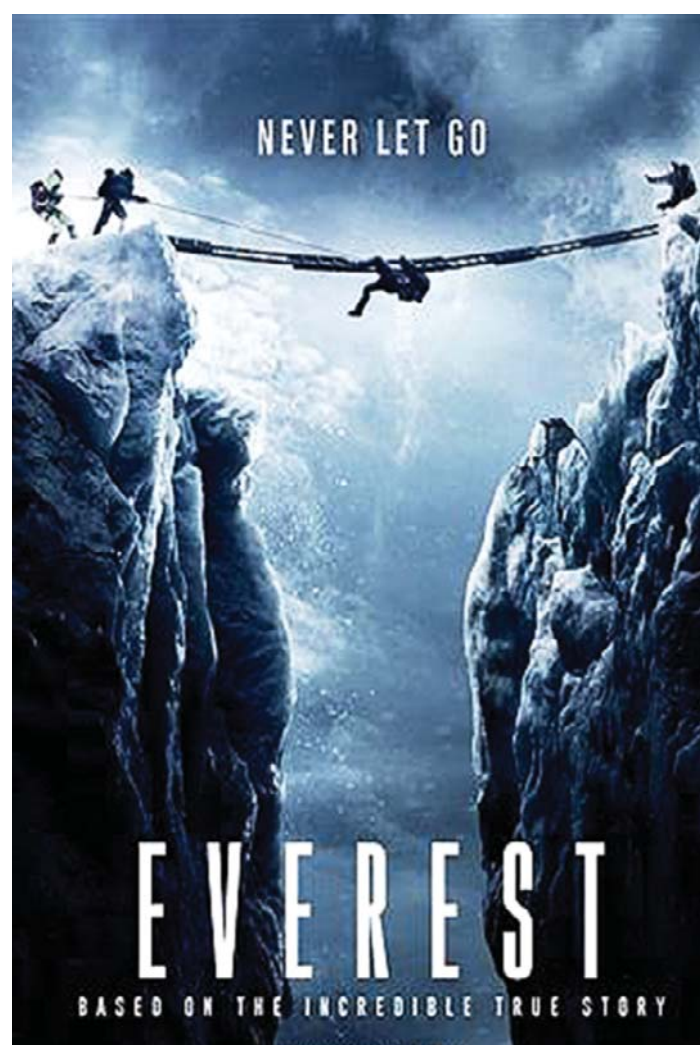
- 00:10 The Chase
- 01:00 Emmerdale
- 01:30 Coronation Street
- 02:00 Coronation Street
- 02:30 Guess This House
- 03:25 Vera
- 05:15 Come Date With Me Australia
- 06:10 The Chase
- 07:05 Guess This House
- 08:00 Vera
- 09:35 Gino's Italian Escape
- 10:00 Come Date With Me Australia
- 10:55 The Chase
- 11:50 Guess This House
- 12:45 Emmerdale
- 13:15 Coronation Street
- 13:45 Coronation Street
- 14:15 The Chase
- 15:10 Guess This House
- 16:00 Murdoch Mysteries
- 16:55 Brief Encounters
- 17:50 Come Date With Me Australia
- 18:20 Come Date With Me Australia
- 18:45 Emmerdale
- 19:15 Coronation Street
- 19:45 Coronation Street
- 20:10 Guess This House
- 21:00 Murdoch Mysteries
- 21:55 Brief Encounters
- 22:50 Emmerdale
- 23:15 Coronation Street
- 23:40 Coronation Street

H2 HD

- 00:00 America: The Story Of The U.S.
- 01:00 Cities Of The Underworld
- 02:00 America's Book Of Secrets
- 02:50 Ancient Aliens
- 03:40 Bible Secrets Revealed
- 04:30 The Universe
- 05:20 America: The Story Of The U.S.
- 06:10 The Universe
- 07:00 Cities Of The Underworld
- 08:00 America's Book Of Secrets
- 09:00 Ancient Aliens
- 10:00 Bible Secrets Revealed
- 11:00 The Universe
- 12:00 America: The Story Of The U.S.
- 13:00 Cities Of The Underworld
- 14:00 America's Book Of Secrets
- 15:00 Ancient Aliens
- 16:00 Bible Secrets Revealed
- 17:00 The Universe
- 18:00 America: The Story Of The U.S.
- 19:00 Cities Of The Underworld
- 20:00 America's Book Of Secrets
- 21:00 Ancient Aliens
- 22:00 Ancient Aliens
- 23:00 The Universe

H2 HD HISTORY

- 00:20 Mankind The Story Of All Of Us
- 01:10 The Curse Of Oak Island
- 02:00 Hunting Hitler
- 02:50 Storage Wars
- 03:15 American Pickers
- 04:05 Pawn Stars
- 04:30 Pawn Stars
- 05:00 Mountain Men
- 06:00 Leepu And Pitbull
- 06:50 Shipping Wars
- 07:15 Shipping Wars
- 07:40 Counting Cars
- 08:05 Counting Cars
- 08:30 Pawn Stars
- 08:55 Pawn Stars
- 09:20 Storage Wars
- 09:45 Storage Wars
- 10:10 American Pickers
- 11:00 Time Team
- 11:50 Time Team
- 12:40 Swamp People
- 13:40 Ax Men
- 14:20 Mountain Men
- 15:10 Ice Road Truckers
- 16:00 Leepu And Pitbull
- 16:50 Pawn Stars
- 17:15 Pawn Stars
- 17:40 Hunting Hitler
- 18:30 The Curse Of Oak Island
- 19:20 Mountain Men
- 20:10 American Pickers
- 21:00 Ice Road Truckers
- 21:50 Fifth Gear
- 22:40 Swamp People
- 23:30 American Pickers



EVEREST ON OSN MOVIES HD

- 00:10 Emma's Chance
- 09:00 Frozen
- 10:45 The Hunchback Of Notre Dame II
- 12:00 American Girl: Isabelle Dances Into The Spotlight
- 13:45 Frozen
- 15:45 The Emperor's New Groove
- 17:15 Kronk's New Groove
- 19:00 High School Musical 3: Senior Year
- 21:00 Inspector Gadget
- 22:30 The Emperor's New Groove

OSN MOVIES FESTIVAL

- 00:30 The Zero Theorem
- 02:30 Neil Young: Heart Of Gold
- 04:15 Mood Indigo
- 06:30 My Old Lady
- 08:30 Of Mice And Men
- 10:30 Gone With The Bullets
- 12:30 Neil Young: Heart Of Gold
- 14:15 The Truth About Emanuel
- 16:00 The Girl
- 17:45 Frankie And Johnny
- 19:45 Unbroken
- 22:15 Suite Francaise

OSN MOVIES KIDS

- 00:45 Curious George
- 02:30 Moomins And The Comet Chase
- 04:15 Capture The Flag
- 06:00 The Adventures Of Don Quixote
- 07:30 Mamma Moo And Crow
- 09:00 Thumbelina
- 10:45 Curious George
- 12:30 Moomins And The Comet Chase
- 14:00 Egon And Donci
- 16:00 Thumbelina
- 18:00 The Boxcar Children
- 20:00 The Tale Of Despereaux
- 21:45 Egon And Donci
- 23:15 Mamma Moo And Crow

OSN MOVIES NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CHANNEL HD

- 00:45 The Babadook
- 02:45 Pitch Perfect 2
- 04:30 The Invention Of Lying
- 06:30 Dick Tracy
- 08:45 Beaches
- 11:00 Pitch Perfect 2
- 13:15 The Guardian
- 15:45 The Bucket List
- 17:45 Everest
- 20:00 The Taking Of Pelham 123
- 22:00 Higher Learning

SC DISCOVERY science

- 00:30 How Do They Do It?
- 00:55 Food Factory
- 01:20 NASA's Unexplained Files
- 02:10 Ways To Save The Planet
- 03:00 The Big Brain Theory
- 03:48 Mythbusters
- 04:36 How Do They Do It?
- 05:00 Food Factory
- 05:24 NASA's Unexplained Files
- 06:12 Ways To Save The Planet
- 07:00 How Do They Do It?
- 07:26 The Big Brain Theory
- 08:14 Mythbusters
- 09:02 How The Earth Works
- 09:50 How Do They Do It?
- 10:14 Food Factory
- 10:38 The Unexplained Files
- 11:26 The Big Brain Theory
- 12:14 Mythbusters
- 13:02 How Do They Do It?
- 13:26 Food Factory
- 13:50 How The Earth Works
- 14:38 The Big Brain Theory
- 15:26 NASA's Unexplained Files
- 16:14 Mythbusters
- 17:02 Ways To Save The Planet
- 17:50 The Big Brain Theory
- 18:40 Mythbusters
- 19:30 Sport Science
- 20:20 How Do They Do It?
- 20:45 Food Factory
- 21:10 Ways To Save The Planet
- 22:00 Sport Science
- 22:50 The Big Brain Theory
- 23:40 Mythbusters

NAT GEO WILD HD

- 00:20 Man V. Lion
- 01:10 Hunter Hunted
- 02:00 Clouded Leopard
- 02:50 Animals Gone Wild
- 03:45 Jobs That Bite!
- 04:40 Ultimate Animal Countdown
- 05:35 Clouded Leopard
- 06:30 Animals Gone Wild
- 07:25 Jobs That Bite!
- 08:20 Ultimate Animal Countdown
- 09:15 World's Deadliest Animals
- 10:10 Survive The Wild
- 11:05 Man V. Monster
- 12:00 Shark Junction
- 12:55 Return Of The Lion
- 13:50 Animals Gone Wild
- 14:45 Jobs That Bite!
- 15:40 Ultimate Animal Countdown
- 16:35 Animals Gone Wild Compilations
- 17:30 Survive The Wild
- 18:25 Man V. Monster
- 19:20 Jobs That Bite!
- 20:10 Ultimate Animal Countdown
- 21:00 Animals Gone Wild Compilations
- 21:50 Survive The Wild
- 22:40 Man V. Monster
- 23:30 Shark Junction

OSN MOVIES FAMILY

- 00:15 Emma's Chance
- 02:15 Chilly Christmas
- 04:00 American Girl: Isabelle Dances Into The Spotlight
- 06:00 Kim Possible: So The Drama
- 01:10 Return To Amish
- 02:00 My Big Fat Fabulous Life
- 02:25 Say Yes To The Dress: Bridesmaids
- 02:50 Love At First Swipe
- 03:15 Cake Boss
- 03:35 Little Miss Atlanta
- 04:20 Little People, Big World
- 04:45 Little People, Big World
- 05:10 Toddlers & Tiaras
- 06:00 Say Yes To The Dress: The Big Day
- 06:50 Say Yes To The Dress: Bridesmaids
- 07:15 Say Yes To The Dress:



BIG GAME ON OSN MOVIES ACTION

- 04:15 Casualty
- 05:10 Stella
- 06:00 Casualty
- 06:55 Casualty
- 07:55 Father Brown
- 08:45 Doctor Who
- 09:35 Stella
- 10:25 Casualty
- 11:25 Father Brown
- 12:15 Doctor Who
- 13:05 Stella
- 13:50 Casualty
- 14:45 Father Brown
- 15:35 Doctor Who
- 16:25 Stella
- 17:10 The Coroner
- 18:00 Doctors
- 18:30 Doctors
- 19:05 Father Brown
- 20:00 Frankie
- 21:00 The Level
- 21:50 DCI Banks
- 22:45 DCI Banks
- 23:40 Doctors
- 11:10 Must Love Cats
- 12:00 Ultimate Survival
- 12:50 How It's Made
- 13:15 How It's Made
- 13:40 Dirty Jobs
- 14:30 Doki
- 14:55 Bear Grylls Survival School
- 15:20 Mythbusters
- 16:10 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
- 17:00 Race To Escape
- 17:50 Now That's Funny
- 18:40 Destroyed In Seconds
- 19:05 Destroyed In Seconds
- 19:30 How It's Made
- 19:55 How It's Made
- 20:20 Mythbusters
- 21:10 Race To Escape
- 22:00 World's Funniest Fails
- 22:50 Destroyed In Seconds
- 23:15 Destroyed In Seconds
- 23:40 Ultimate Survival
- 10:00 Sofia The First
- 10:30 Doc McStuffins
- 10:55 Miles From Tomorrow
- 11:20 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
- 11:50 Loopdidoo
- 12:05 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
- 12:30 Gummi Bears
- 12:55 Zou
- 13:10 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
- 13:35 PJ Masks
- 14:00 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
- 14:30 The Lion Guard
- 15:00 Sofia The First
- 15:30 Doc McStuffins
- 15:55 Goldie & Bear
- 16:20 Miles From Tomorrow
- 16:50 PJ Masks
- 17:15 Sofia The First
- 17:40 Doc McStuffins
- 18:05 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
- 18:30 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
- 19:00 Goldie & Bear
- 19:25 Goldie & Bear
- 19:50 Doc McStuffins
- 20:05 Goldie & Bear
- 20:35 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
- 21:00 Gummi Bears
- 21:30 Miles From Tomorrow
- 22:00 PJ Masks
- 22:25 PJ Masks
- 22:55 PJ Masks
- 23:20 Henry Hugglemonster
- 23:35 The Hive
- 23:45 Loopdidoo

Disney Channel HD

- 00:10 Hank Zipzer
- 00:35 Binny And The Ghost
- 01:00 Binny And The Ghost
- 01:25 Hank Zipzer
- 01:45 The Hive
- 01:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
- 02:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
- 02:40 Hank Zipzer
- 03:05 Binny And The Ghost
- 03:30 Binny And The Ghost
- 03:55 Hank Zipzer
- 04:15 The Hive
- 04:20 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
- 04:45 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
- 05:10 Hank Zipzer
- 05:35 Binny And The Ghost
- 06:00 Binny And The Ghost
- 06:25 Hank Zipzer
- 06:45 The Hive
- 06:50 The 7D
- 07:00 Jessie
- 07:25 Jessie
- 07:50 Tsum Tsum Shorts
- 07:55 The Zhuzhus
- 08:20 Elena Of Avalor
- 08:45 Bizaardvark
- 09:10 Bizaardvark
- 09:35 Stuck In The Middle
- 10:00 Stuck In The Middle
- 10:25 Disney The Lodge
- 10:50 Bunk'd
- 11:15 Bunk'd
- 11:40 Pocahontas II: Journey To A..
- 12:55 Stuck In The Middle
- 13:20 Jessie
- 13:45 Jessie
- 14:10 Austin & Ally
- 14:35 Austin & Ally
- 15:00 Liv And Maddie
- 15:25 Liv And Maddie
- 15:50 Sunny Bunnies
- 15:55 The Zhuzhus
- 16:20 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And

crime & investigation network

- 00:00 Killers
- 01:00 I Escaped My Killer
- 02:00 Homicide Hunter
- 03:00 Crimes That Shook Australia
- 04:00 Killers
- 05:00 I Escaped My Killer
- 06:00 My Crazy Ex
- 07:00 My Crazy Ex
- 08:00 Evil Up Close
- 09:00 I Killed My BFF
- 10:00 Crimes That Shook Australia
- 11:00 The First 48
- 12:00 The First 48
- 13:00 My Crazy Ex
- 14:00 Evil Up Close
- 15:00 Crimes That Shook Australia
- 16:00 I Killed My BFF
- 17:00 The First 48
- 18:00 The First 48
- 19:00 Evil Up Close
- 20:00 Britain's Biggest Heists
- 21:00 Crimes That Shook Australia
- 22:00 Crime Stories
- 23:00 Sex, Fame And Murder

COMEDY CENTRAL

- 00:05 The Half Hour
- 00:30 South Park
- 00:55 South Park
- 01:20 Tosh.0
- 01:45 Tosh.0
- 02:10 Another Period
- 02:35 Another Period
- 03:00 The Daily Show - Global Edition
- 03:25 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
- 04:15 Lip Sync Battle
- 04:40 Ridiculousness
- 05:05 Disaster Date
- 05:30 Sweat Inc.
- 06:20 Catch A Contractor
- 06:50 Catch A Contractor



MY OLD LADY ON OSN MOVIES

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 Khaldiya Coop	Fahad Al-Salem St Khaldiya 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

STATE OF KUWAIT DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



Tel: (+965) 161 Ext: 2627 - 2630
Fax: (+965) 24348714
www.met.gov.kw

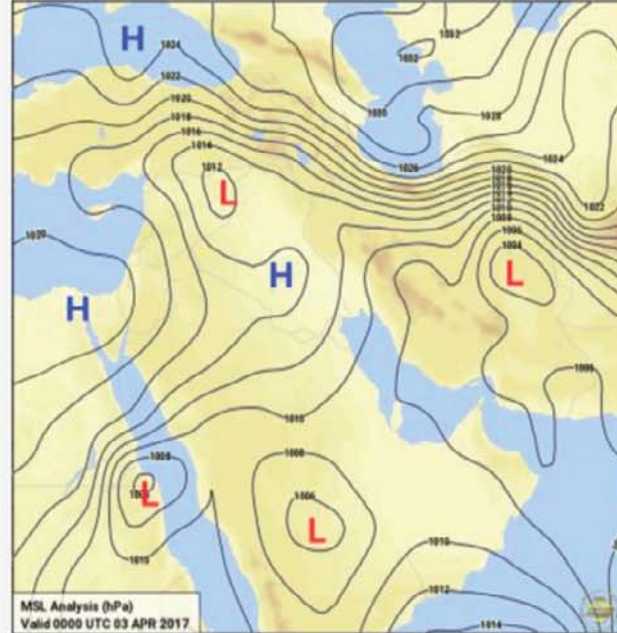
Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

Issued 03/04/2017-07:00 LT UTC +3hr

Max Temperature 32 °C

By Day : Mostly sunny with light to moderate freshening gradually at times north westerly wind, with speed of 15 - 40 km/h with a chance for blowing dust over open areas
By Night : Fair with light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 12 - 32 km/h

SFC. CHART



Four-Day Forecast

	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Expected Weather	sunny + blowing dust	sunny	clouds to increase + scattered rain	partly cloudy + scattered rain
Min Temp °C	18	17	20	21
Max Temp °C	30	31	32	35
Wind Direction	north westerly	north westerly to light variable	variable wind changing to light to moderate south easterly	south easterly
Wind Speed km/h	15 - 40	12 - 35	10 - 32	15 - 40

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	20		30	
KUWAIT AIRPORT	20		32	
ABDALY	17		33	
BUBYAN	19		24	
JAHRA	20		33	
FAILAKA ISLAND	20		26	
SALMIYAH	20		26	
AHMADI	21		23	
JAL ALIYAH	17		34	
QAROH ISLAND	20		25	
UMM AL-MARADEM	21		25	
NUWAISIB	21		33	
WAFRA	20		33	
SALMY	16		33	
MUTRIBA	17		35	

Recorded Yesterday at Kuwait Airport

Max Temp (°C)	36
Min Temp (°C)	21
Max Rel Hum (%)	87
Min Rel Hum (%)	24
Max Wind Speed (km/h) and Direction	53 SE
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR	0 mm
Sunrise	05:36
Sunset	18:07

Prayer Times

Fajr	04:16
Sunrise	05:36
Zuhr	11:51
Asr	15:23
Sunset	18:07
Isha	19:25

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
Antigua	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		



PRIVATE CLINICS

Ophthalmologists Dr. Abdallah Al-Mansoor 25622444 Dr. Samy Al-Rabeea 25752222 Dr. Masoma Habeeb 25321171 Dr. Mubarak Al-Ajmy 25739999 Dr. Mohsen Abel 25757700 Dr. Adnan Hasan Alwayl 25732223 Dr. Abdallah Al-Baghly 25732223 Ear, Nose & Throat (ENT) Dr. Ahmed Fouad Mouner 24555050 Ext 510 Dr. Abdallah Al-Ali 25644660 Dr. Abd Al-Hameed Al-Taweel 25646478 Dr. Sanad Al-Fathalah 25311996 Dr. Mohammad Al-Daory 25731988 Dr. Ismail Al-Fodary 22620166 Dr. Mahmoud Al-Booz 25651426 General Practitioners Dr. Mohammed Y Majidi 24555050 Ext 123 Dr. Yousef Al-Omar 24719312 Dr. Tarek Al-Mikhaizeem 23926920 Dr. Kathem Maarafi 25730465 Dr. Abdallah Ahmad Eyadah 25655528 Dr. Nabeel Al-Ayoobi 24577781 Dr. Dina Abdallah Al-Rafea 25333501 Urologists Dr. Ali Naser Al-Serfy 22641534 Dr. Fawzi Taher Abul 22639955 Dr. Khaleel Abdallah Al-Awadi 22616660 Dr. Adel Al-Hunayan FRCS (C) 25313120 Dr. Leons Joseph 66703427	Plastic Surgeons Dr. Mohammad Al-Khalaf 22547272 Dr. Abdal-Redha Lari 22617700 Dr. Abdel Quttainah 25625030/60 Family Doctor Dr Divya Damodar 23729596/23729581 Psychiatrists Dr. Esam Al-Ansari 22635047 Dr. Eisa M. Al-Balhan 22613623/0 Gynaecologists & Obstetricians Dr Adrian arbe 23729596/23729581 Dr. Verginia s.Marin 2572-6666 ext 8321 Dr. Fozeya Ali Al-Qatan 22655539 Dr. Majeda Khalefa Aliytami 25343406 Dr. Ahmad Al-Khooly 25739272 Dr. Salem soso 22618787 General Surgeons Dr. Amer Zawaz Al-Amer 22610044 Dr. Mohammad Yousef Basher 25327148 Internists, Chest & Heart Dr. Adnan Ebil 22639939 Dr. Mousa Khadada 22666300 Dr. Latefa Al-Duweisan 25728004 Dr. Nadem Al-Ghabra 25355515 Dr. Mobarak Aldoub 24726446 Dr Nasser Behbehani 25654300/3	Paediatricians Dr. Khaled Hamadi 25665898 Dr. Abd Al-Aziz Al-Rashed 25340300 Dr. Zahra Qabazard 25710444 Dr. Sohail Qamar 22621099 Dr. Snaa Maarooof 25713514 Dr. Pradip Gupare 23713100 Dr. Zacharias Mathew 24334282 Dermatology Dr. Mohammed Salam Bern University 23845955 Dentists Dr Anil Thomas 3729596/3729581 Dr. Shamah Al-Matar 22641071/2 Dr. Anesah Al-Rasheed 22562226 Dr. Abdallah Al-Amer 22561444 Dr. Faysal Al-Fozan 22619557 Dr. Abdallateef Al-Katrash 22525888 Dr. Abdallah Al-Duweisan 25653755 Dr. Bader Al-Ansari 25620111 Neurologists Dr. Sohal Najem Al-Shemeri 25633324 Dr. Jasem Mola Hassan 25345875 Gastrologists Dr. Sami Aman 22636464 Dr. Mohammad Al-Shamaly 25322030 Dr. Foad Abdallah Al-Ali 22633135	Endocrinologist Dr. Abd Al-Naser Al-Othman 25339330 Dr. Ahmad Al-Ansari 25658888 Dr. Kamal Al-Shomr 25329924 Physiotherapists & VD Dr. Deyaa Shehab 25722291 Dr. Mused Faraj Khamees 22666288 Rheumatologists: Dr. Adel Al-Awadi 25330060 Dr. Khaled Al-Jarallah 25722290 Internist, Chest & Heart DR.Mohammes Akkad 24555050 Ext 210 Dr. Mohammad Zubaid MB, ChB, FRCP, PACC Assistant Professor Of Medicine Head, Division of Cardiology Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital 25339667 Consultant Cardiologist Dr. Farida Al-Habib MD, PH.D, FACC 2611555-2622555 Inaya German Medical Center Te: 2575077 Fax: 25723123
--	--	--	---

Psychologists /Psychotherapists

Soor Center
Tel: 2290-1677
Fax: 2290 1688

info@soorcenter.com
www.soorcenter.com

Kaizen center
25716707

Noor Clinic
23845955

William Schuilenberg, RPC 2290-1677
Zaina Al Zabin, M.Sc. 2290-1677

CROSSWORD 1568



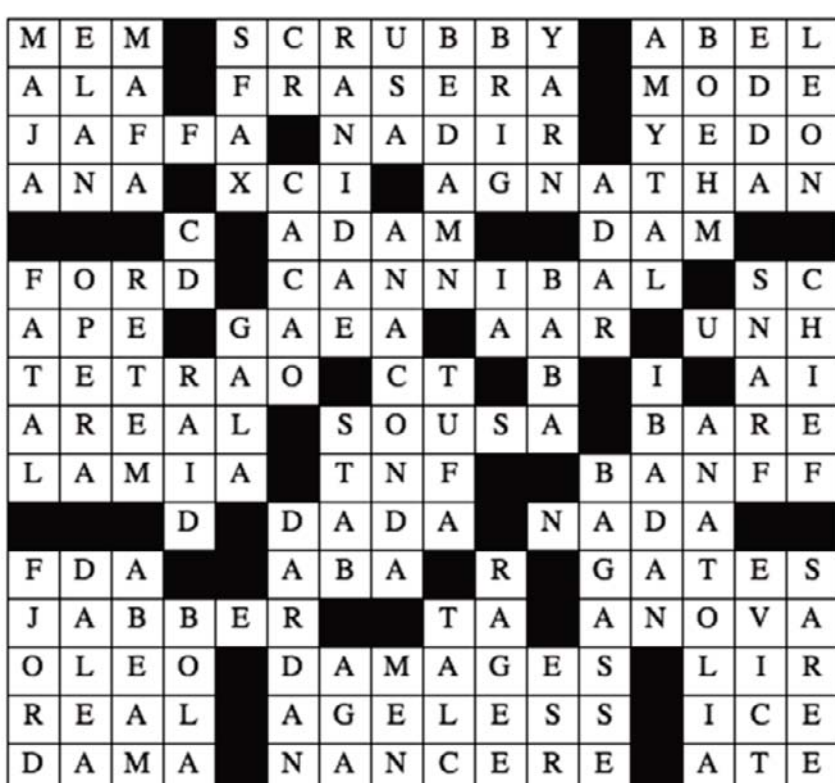
ACROSS

1. A humorous anecdote or remark.
4. Spiced hot milk with rum or wine.
12. A serve that strikes the net before falling into the receiver's court.
15. Any of various coarse shrubby plants of the genus *Iva* with small greenish flowers.
16. A fellow female member of a youth gang.
17. Hormone secreted by the posterior pituitary gland (trade name Pitressin) and also by nerve endings in the hypothalamus.
18. A slight wind (usually refreshing).
20. Type genus of the Ardeidae.
21. An agency of the United Nations affiliated with the World Bank.
22. A particular geographical region of indefinite boundary (usually serving some special purpose or distinguished by its people or culture or geography).
23. A genus of Mustelidae.
25. United States baseball player and manager (1873-1934).
27. A radioactive transuranic element.
29. An associate degree in nursing.
31. fastener that fastens together two ends of a belt or strap.
38. A constellation in the southern hemisphere near Telescopium and Norma.
39. Verse in the meter used in Greek and Latin poetry consisting of strophes of 4 tetrametric lines.
43. Affording or marked by rest or repose.
45. With eagerness.
48. Essential oil or perfume obtained from flowers.
49. Wild ginger.
51. The basic unit of money in Iran.
52. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
53. Informal terms for a mother.
54. Primitive chlorophyll-containing mainly aquatic eukaryotic organisms lacking true stems and roots and leaves.
55. An Arabic speaking person who lives in Arabia or North Africa.
58. Block consisting of a thick piece of something.
59. A ruler of the Inca Empire (or a member of his family).
62. A ductile gray metallic element of the lanthanide series.
63. The capital and largest city of Yemen.
69. A Hindu prince or king in India.
73. A self-funded retirement plan that allows you to contribute a limited yearly sum toward your retirement.
74. Someone who tries to bring peace.
78. A boy or man.
79. A light touch or stroke.
80. A learner who is enrolled in an educational institution.
81. A sudden loss of consciousness resulting when the rupture or occlusion of a blood vessel leads to oxygen lack in the brain.
82. A Kwa language spoken by the Yoruba people in southwestern Nigeria.
83. Clearly apparent or obvious to the mind or senses.
84. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.

DOWN

1. An ancient Egyptian city on the west bank of the Nile opposite Cairo.
2. Report or maintain.
3. An expression of open-mouthed astonishment.
4. Lacking self-confidence.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

A sense of humor is good this morning. The appreciation of humor is what a sense of humor is all about. You are good at creating little bits and pieces of humor but sometimes just laughing at somebody else's joke is fun and relieves a lot of stress. Be a humor detective and check out the typing goofs from advertisements, signs or the newspaper. In many cases you and your friends and family have a sort of a psychic link. They just about know what you will say or do in many situations. This joke sharing is one time when they never know what to expect and will end up laughing and carrying on in a most delightful manner, thanks to you. Of course, the best way to carry through on a joke is to not laugh at your own story-enjoy.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You may be reviewing your goals today. A parent, mentor or loved one may have said or done something that reminds you of the expectations you had for your future when you were young. At any rate you may be pleased with your assessments and decide more education or a better job is in your own personal forecast. Probing conversations find you at your mental best. You have the right mental attitude and draw respect and admiration from the people around you. Your analytical abilities are at a high and business matters are carried out successfully. This is a great time to be with others in a teamwork situation. There are many ways to become involved within the neighborhood, and tonight you might be attending a neighborhood committee meeting.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You will receive compliments today not only from a loved one, but from someone at work. You may have a special glow about you today that just draws kind comments. You may find yourself lunching with co-workers and enjoying conversations about past love relationships and lessons learned. Differences in social expectations and personal expectations may be a topic of discussion as well. You may be able to enjoy and value your own life situation or feel especially kind towards a friend or loved one. Perhaps planning a vacation or a move is in order now. There is a cycle of romance and longing for the comfort of home-emphasizing a need for security and roots. Family, home, relatives and real estate play a big part in your life now.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

It is easy for you to get your message across to others this day. You may be sad when your work is criticized, however. You may rise to the opportunity to demonstrate your abilities to compromise and solve problems. Your management abilities are in high focus. Your ideas can change things for the better in the workplace, but others may not be ready to merge their ideas with yours-patience. You are constantly in pursuit of new and different ways to improve money-making skills and this may be a good time to consider your own business. A clear-minded insight into your own plans and methods is obtainable now. Your charm and outgoing personality will draw others to your point of enthusiastic ideas.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

You are hopeful concerning money matters this day. There is a desire to excel in the workplace. To complete an important project earlier than expected, you will find sources that will help equip you to solve problems and supply information. Noontime may find you at a library, researching ways in which to beautify the furniture you now have-restoring perhaps. With self-confidence you create good luck all around you. Your powers of perception are particularly sharp and you would do well now to work out the details of any previous plans. Combined interests between you and your partner may find you both planning a trip or a weekend outing. Young people may take precedence this evening. Your attention moves to new tools.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Changes could occur in your environment that will shock you. You could find yourself becoming quite thrilled to finally see positive changes take place. Perhaps your city or workplace has finally decided to have a special place for the trash that can be recycled. In the workplace you are moved by high achievers and may learn some new work techniques. Committing yourself to a purpose creates a positive focus forward. Balance between your sense of duty to the world and your sense of duty to yourself is an important lesson to learn now. Others are impressed by your productivity today. Your nature may be calm, as you take a serious attitude to just about all aspects of your life. A little scholastic help for a youngster may be needed tonight.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

There is no stealing the glory from you. You have the ability to accomplish whatever you set out to do. This afternoon you could be pulling out your hidden, creative ideas in order to decide about some changes or develop some new methods. Perhaps this is just talking over a new plan with co-workers, but you are full of ideas. Your personal authority has improved and you are not only able to express yourself well, but you are respected for your intelligent ideas. You may be learning to master frustrations through activities that will help you think through situations. Whatever the reason for this growth, others will notice. If you work at a computer or a desk you would be wise to practice good posture. You and family members talk about an upcoming trip.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Misunderstandings and confusion may happen this morning. With some effort, you can work past any problem by busying yourself in your work. However, be cautious in promising more than you can deliver; timing is everything. Any desire for the new and the different should be listed for future reference and not necessarily begun today. You impress someone at the top of the corporate ladder. Be sure to take your breaks and walk after lunch. There is talk of a social gathering with co-workers after work and you may enjoy helping to plan an after work get-together. You will often draw emotional sustenance and a sense of security from ideals, friends and a social involvement. Soft lights and sweet music are relaxing later this evening.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

You may have to hold your breath and count to ten before you answer someone today. We all have times we would like to say what we think, but you will be happier with the outcome when you go with the count-to-ten method. This also may not be a time to make quick professional decisions. It is, however, important to keep a close eye on your systems and schedules and stick to them! The work you do and the way you take care of health and other mundane obligations are important keys to your best potential, in many respects. This is an ideal time to kick off a new fitness routine or accelerate a current one. What a wonderful time it is this evening to spend with loved ones and family. Smile! Relationships are most meaningful at this time.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Sales in real estate as well as the import-export business can be very lucrative at this time. If any part of your job involves writing, you are about to open up into a wondrous path of discovery. You have a natural writing talent, and the way you put words together makes potential customers into permanent ones. You begin to know yourself better and all sorts of creative avenues open up to you now. You need to serve, perform, receive and express yourself each day in order to feel complete and useful. This can be a real feat for most of us, but you are competent and will strike this balance when you make a determined effort. Visiting with friends helps you to be even more expressive. Don't forget the family member that might like to hear a story this evening.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Harmonize yourself with the job demands in order to strengthen your present job course. Religion, philosophy and world affairs may influence your work. There could be some challenges this day but your attitude will show your willingness. Some sort of temporary obstacle may appear and you could feel frustrated-have patience, you will have everything running smoothly once again. Your words have as much effect as the example you set. Your thinking is lucid and grasping. You may unknowingly help a close friend later today. On a personal level, you are in touch with your feelings and can restore any hard feelings that may have occurred in the recent past. Laughter is good medicine. Someone treats you to dinner tonight.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Your feelings at work may take on a positive, get-it-done attitude. However, you may find interruptions that impede your progress. Circumstances could cause you to be firm with co-workers. However, suggesting a time to talk later will help appease the situation. What you value in life is how you form your goals. Do some deep thinking, perhaps even a little note taking about the progress of these goals. If your money and your goals are not going in the direction of what you value in life, do some reassessing. It could be you are trying to reach someone else's dream. Your friends may want you to join them in their activities this afternoon. You will find deep conversations between friends will turn a short visit into a long one.

WORD SEARCH

Summer

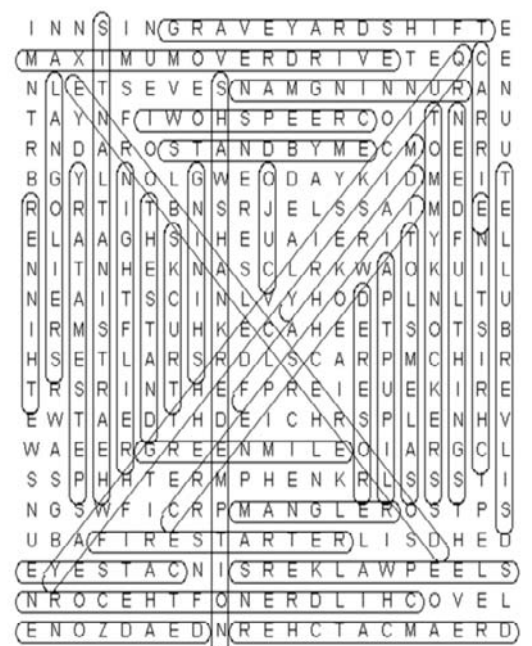
Find and circle all of the summer words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell an additional summer item.



- | | | | |
|----------|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| ANTS | FISHING | JULY | SUNBURN |
| AUGUST | FLIES | JUNE | SUNGLASSES |
| BARBECUE | FLOWERS | MOSQUITOES | SUNSCREEN |
| BASEBALL | GARDENING | NO SCHOOL | SUNSHINE |
| BEACH | GOLF | PICNIC | SUNTAN |
| BEEES | GREEN GRASS | ROLLER BLADES | SWEAT |
| BICYCLE | HAT | SANDALS | SWIMMING |
| BLUE SKY | HIKING | SKATEBOARD | U V RAYS |
| BOATING | HOLIDAYS | SOCCER | WASPS |
| BREEZE | HOT | SOLSTICE | WATER FIGHTS |
| CAMPING | ICE CREAM | SPRINKLERS | WATERMELON |

Yesterday's Solution

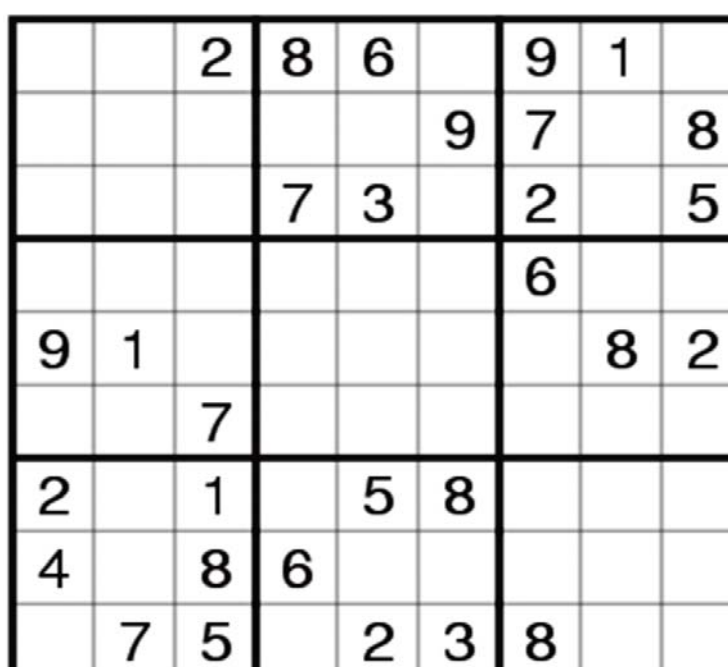
Stephen King Movies



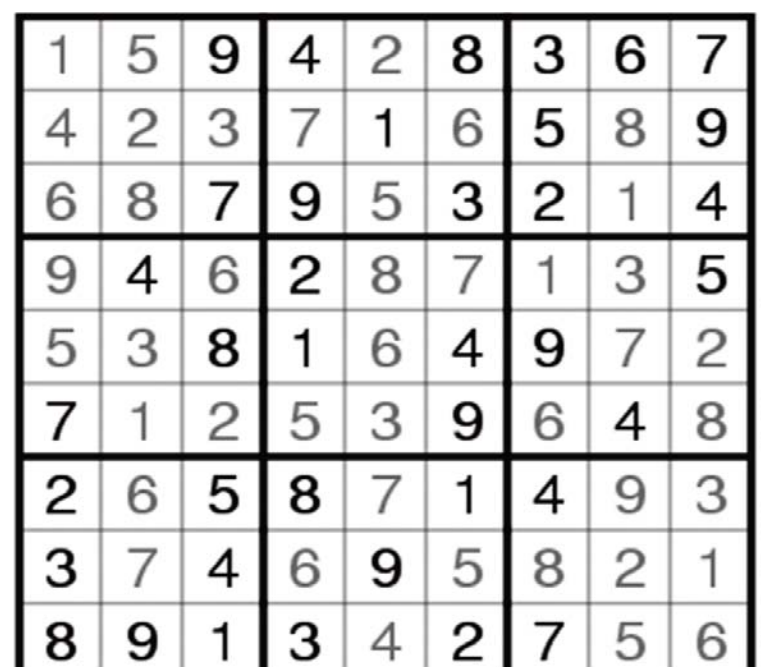
- | | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| APT PUPIL | DEAD ZONE | MAXIMUM OVERDRIVE | SHAWSHANK REDEMPTION |
| CARRIE | DOLORES CLAIBORNE | MISERY | SHINING |
| CAT'S EYE | DREAMCATCHER | NEEDFUL THINGS | SILVER BULLET |
| CHILDREN OF THE CORN | FIRESTARTER | NIGHT FLIER | SLEEPWALKERS |
| CHRISTINE | GRAVEYARD SHIFT | PET SEMATARY | STAND BY ME |
| CREEPSHOW I | GREEN MILE | QUICKSILVER HIGHWAY | THE STAND |
| CREEPSHOW II | HEARTS IN ATLANTIS | ROSE RED | THINNER |
| CUJO | LANGOLIERS | RUNNING MAN | TOMMYKNOCKERS |
| DARK HALF | MANGLER | SALEMS LOT | TRUCKS |

The hidden sentence is: IN NINETEEN SEVENTY FOUR DOUBLEDAY RELEASED CARRIE WHICH WAS STEPHEN KING'S FIRST PUBLISHED NOVEL

Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution





In this March 27, 2017, photo, tourists from China walk to board a boat for a harbor tour in Boston. — AP photos



Tourists from China take pictures at the New England Aquarium in Boston.



Tourists from China enter Quincy Market in Boston.

US cities roll out the welcome mat for Chinese visitors

Hotels offering congee and other Chinese staples for room service. Casinos training staff on Chinese etiquette. Restaurants, tourist sights and shopping malls translating signs, menus and information booklets into Mandarin. The American hospitality industry is stepping up efforts to make Chinese visitors feel more welcome, since they are projected to soon surpass travelers from the United Kingdom and Japan as the single largest overseas demographic.

And it's not just the typical tourist hubs of New York and Los Angeles, where such efforts have long been commonplace. Smaller cities like Boston, Las Vegas, Seattle and Washington, DC, are increasingly getting into the act, industry officials say. "Americans traditionally lag behind what other international designations do for different cultures," said Elliott Ferguson, CEO of Destination DC, the city's convention and tourism organization, which last year launched "Welcome China," a certification program for local businesses. "We just kind of assume that one size fits all. Quite frankly, that's just not welcoming."

Chinese guests

Local tourism associations in those and other cities have recently launched campaigns aimed at getting their member hotels, restaurants and tourism companies to better incorporate Chinese language and customs into their offerings. They're also embarking on tourism-focused sales missions to China and opening satellite offices in Chinese cities to strengthen ties and sell their city to trendsetters. Some companies have already embraced the message.

The Sheraton Boston in the Back Bay neighborhood started offering in 2013 simple creature comforts many Chinese travelers expect, including slippers, robes, instant noodles, an electric kettle and green tea, and have since taken other steps to cater to Chinese guests, said Angela Vento, the hotel's general manager. The Four Seasons in DC's Georgetown neighborhood makes similar gestures, as well as offering Chinese-language television and newspapers. It's also working on offering more traditional Chinese dishes on its room service and restaurant menus, said Liliana Baldassari, a hotel spokeswoman.

In Las Vegas, Caesars Entertainment last year started offering guests at some of its affiliated resorts the option to book



Tourists from China watch penguins at the New England Aquarium in Boston.

and pay for hotel rooms using WeChat, China's most popular social media app. "It's made a really strong statement to the Chinese that these people really welcome us and understand us," said Bruce Bommarito, the company's vice president for international marketing, noting the Roman-themed casino has rolled out other China-focused initiatives in recent years, including training programs for staff on basic cultural etiquette for serving Chinese guests.

Flexes its spending power

Those and other small touches are a step in the right direction, but more companies need to make an effort to recognize the growing importance of the Chinese market, said Justin Minggan Wei, a 27-year-old from Beijing who came to Boston in 2008 for college, an experience that inspired him to launch a consulting company helping local restaurants and businesses better serve Chinese customers. Zeng Wen, a 24-year-old who works part-time as a tour guide for Chinese-speakers in Chicago, said she has noticed recent efforts to reach out to Chinese tourists, like the Hilton hotel chain's "Hilton Huanying" program, which derives its name from the Chinese words for "welcome."

But Zhe Zhang, a 36-year-old from Guangzhou who visited

Los Angeles this year, said he didn't see any obvious outreach to Chinese visitors, outside of Chinese-run establishments. The most intimidating part, he said, was ordering food with his basic grasp of English. "If possible, restaurants could provide a simple Chinese menu or pictured menu," Zhang suggested. Cities can't afford to be caught flat-footed as China's growing middle class - almost nonexistent two decades ago - flexes its spending power, industry experts say. Chinese visitors already spend more in the US than other international travelers, at roughly \$7,200 per person, according to the US Travel Association, an industry trade group. Travelers from the country are expected to more than double from about 2.6 million visitors in 2015 to nearly 6 million by 2021, the association said.

US-China trade relationship

More direct flights from China to a wider range of US cities in recent years is partly fueling the boom. Creation of a 10-year visa between the US and China in 2014 has also made it easier for Chinese to travel more frequently to the US. That has allowed them to venture beyond must-see destinations like New York and Los Angeles to smaller and mid-size destinations and even the national parks, said Scott Johnson, a New York consultant working with Boston and other cities to grow their international presence.

The growing ranks of affluent Chinese are also staying longer and visiting more locations in the US as they plan for their children's college education or seek real estate and other investment opportunities. US tourism officials are working to assure partners in China that they remain welcoming even as the administration of Republican President Donald Trump tightens international travel policies and promises fundamental changes in the US-China trade relationship, said Tom Norwalk, CEO of Visit Seattle, the city's tourism organization. "Security and travel don't have to be mutually exclusive," he said. "We'd hate to see us roll back the clock. We've been pretty loud and clear about that." — AP



An activities guide, left, a city guide, center, and a pop-up map, right, all with Chinese translations, are displayed in a guest room at the Sheraton Boston Hotel in Boston.



Items in a welcoming kit containing creature comforts that many Chinese travelers expect in their rooms, including, from the left, an electric kettle, green tea, instant noodles, slippers, and a robe, rest in a tray on a bed in a guest room at the Sheraton Boston Hotel in Boston.

'SIZDEH BEDAR' IRAN ANCIENT FESTIVAL



Iranians spend time outdoors to observe the ancient festival of Sizdeh Bedar. — AP photos



An Iranian couple spend their time outdoors to observe the ancient festival of Sizdeh Bedar.



An Iranian woman smokes a water pipe during the ancient festival of Sizdeh Bedar.



An Iranian family spend their time outdoors to observe the ancient festival of Sizdeh Bedar.



Iranians ride boats on the Persian Gulf Martyrs lake during the ancient festival of Sizdeh Bedar.

Rap anti-hero Tupac Shakur bigger in death than life

Tupac Shakur's recording career lasted just five years before he was murdered in 1996, but it is the rapper's influence from beyond the grave that will be celebrated when he is inducted in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame on Friday. Arguably bigger in death than he was in life, Shakur will be only the sixth rap act to be voted into the Hall of Fame in its 30-year history. The Hall of Fame described him as "an international symbol of resistance and outlaw spirit, an irresistible contradiction, a definitive rap anti-hero." That is a big claim for the Harlem-born son of two Black Panther activists who spent time in jail for assault and released just four albums before being killed at age 25 in a drive-by shooting in Las Vegas that has never been resolved.

Rap too has evolved, becoming the second most popular music genre in the United States after rock, reflecting and challenging social inequities in its lyrics and music videos, and inspiring symposiums at prestigious universities such as Harvard. Shakur has sold 75 million albums, mostly from seven posthumous releases, and although his sales figures will never match those of 21st century hip hop kings like Drake,

Kanye West and The Weeknd, his influence remains profound. "For anyone who is serious about learning about hip hop, there are certain people whose music you have to deal with and Tupac is one of those people. You can't say you are knowledgeable about hip hop if you don't know about Tupac," said Todd Boyd, professor of cinema and media studies at the University of Southern California.

Holograms and Hollywood

Boyd was one of the academics who first created the study of hip hop culture in the American university system in the early 1990s when it was often demonized by politicians for promoting violence and misogyny. He said Shakur had an emotional energy that distinguished him from many of his contemporaries and transcended his skills as a rapper or a lyricist. "When you listen to Tupac, you feel something. He has a strong emotional impact that I think speaks to the fact that here was a guy who, in my mind, was going perhaps to be a better actor than rapper, had he lived," Boyd said. Shakur's "appearance" in a hologram at the Coachella



Tupac Shakur

music festival in 2012 sent sales of his music soaring. He has also been the subject of several documentaries, a Broadway play, a June movie release "All Eyez on Me" and an upcoming TV series on Shakur and his friend-turned-rival Biggie Smalls. "Everybody loves a mystery. That's a huge part of the mythos

that surrounds his death, that it's unsolved," said Richard "RJ" Bond, who in March released "Tupac Assassination: The Battle for Compton," his fifth documentary about Shakur.

Other than his murder, the Los Angeles film maker believes people gravitate towards Shakur's music today because his observations about politics, the media, the police and relationships are still relevant. "His themes are timeless and universal. He talked about relationships between sons and parents, between people and governments. What he talked about still resonates with the human condition," Bond said. Boyd said Shakur does not need induction in the Rock Hall of Fame to confer legitimacy, although the honor is nice for his fans. "When you listen to hip hop even these days there is still a great deal of reverence for him. And for any member of the community who is young enough not to have been alive when he was around, to go back to his music now is very important to them," Boyd said. — Reuters



Workers prepare the stage for French electronic music pioneer Jean-Michel Jarre ahead of his upcoming concert to publicize the plight of the shrinking Dead Sea at the ancient cliff top fortress of Masada.



French electronic music pioneer Jean-Michel Jarre speaks to a man as he prepares the stage for his upcoming concert.— AFP photos

ELECTRO MUSIC PIONEER PLANS DEAD SEA SHOW TO DEFY TRUMP

Pioneering electronic musician Jean-Michel Jarre said he wants to use an all-night concert at the Dead Sea to highlight what he sees as the anti-environmental policies of US President Donald Trump. The French musician, who shot to fame in the 1970s, will perform in front of the ancient Masada fortress in Israel on Thursday in a bid to draw attention to the "urgency of saving the Dead Sea," he told AFP. The lake shared by Israel, Jordan and the Palestinian territories, which is the lowest and saltiest body of water in the world, is receding by roughly a meter (three feet) per year.

Experts have warned it is on course to dry out by 2050. The musician said he wants to "make the world aware" of the danger. With a youthful look despite his 68 years, he warned of the lack of oxygen in the Dead Sea—an allusion to his best known album "Oxygene". Jarre is a goodwill ambassador for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), which in 2002 designated Masada a world heritage site. The venue at the foot of the fortress is one of the most stunning sites in the region and the location of a seminal event in Jewish history.

Biblical King Herod built Masada fortress in the first century BC on a rocky outcrop 430 meters (1290 feet) above the Dead Sea. In 73 AD, Roman troops besieged 960 Jewish Zealots there after they rebelled against the Roman rule of then Palestine, according to a historian of the period, Flavius Joseph. Instead of allowing themselves to fall captive, they committed collective suicide.



Workers prepare the stage for French electronic music pioneer Jean-Michel Jarre ahead of his upcoming concert to publicize the plight of the shrinking Dead Sea at the ancient cliff top fortress of Masada.

'Aware of the urgency'

"I want the Dead Sea, like Masada, to be part of UNESCO's world heritage," Jarre said during a pre-show visit to the site. "This region belongs to humanity," he said. "It involves all of us from a human point of view. We must do our utmost to preserve this place." Jarre has had a prolific output, once pro-

ducing three albums in a year and a half, and is renowned for large-scale outdoor performances including laser shows and pyrotechnics. He is a four-time Guinness world record holder for number of spectators, once performing in front of 3.5 million people in Moscow.

But this time he said he wanted an "intimate" concert, out of respect for his surroundings. The concert will include performances by Israeli and French DJs and musicians, along with two sets by Jarre himself. The show is to end at sunrise on Friday morning. Only 10,000 tickets will be available, for between \$128 and \$767 (120 and 720 euros), said the show's Israeli artistic director, Alexandra Juran, who will also direct a film of the concert set to be launched on the internet later this year. Jarre said he hopes to "reach as many people as possible" with his message. Trump is set to roll back a slew of environmental protection measures implemented under former president Barack Obama, in a bid to untether the US fossil fuel industry. The move has triggered doubts over the United States' commitment to global climate accords. Trump has also given final approval for the controversial Keystone XL oil pipeline from Canada into the United States, reversing Obama's decision to block it. "For me, the whole point of this project is to make people aware of the urgency of dealing with the Earth as a whole," Jarre said. "The concert will contribute to, I hope, organizing the resistance against all the Trumps of the world." — AFP

Roland founder, digital music pioneer Ikutaro Kakehashi dies

Ikutaro Kakehashi, the Japanese engineer who pioneered digital music and founded synthesizer giant Roland Corp., has died, his company ATV Corp. said Monday. He was 87. Kakehashi, reputed to have devoted his life to the pursuit of live entertainment, had a definitive impact on shaping the sound of electronic, hip hop and dance music. He founded Roland in 1972, and the company's first product was the rhythm machine. Since then, Roland instruments have graced the stage of top artists from Lady Gaga to Omar Hakim. Kakehashi received a Grammy in 2013 for developing MIDI, or Musical Instrument Digital Interface, which digitally connects instruments.

Upon receiving the Grammy, Kakehashi noted how quickly the years had passed since the debut of the MIDI protocol in 1983. "It is my great pleasure that MIDI played a significant role in their prevalence," he said at that time on the Roland website. "This year's Technical GRAMMY Award is the result of the cooperation by the companies who worked towards the same dream - growth of electronic musical instruments." ATV, a company Kakehashi founded in 2013, after he left Roland, declined to give details about his death, citing the family's wishes for privacy. Japanese media reports said Kakehashi died on Saturday.

"Music literally would not be what it is today without Mr. Kakehashi," said Steven Fisher, now at Yamaha and a former employee at Roland, who worked with Kakehashi on electronic percussion and drum products. Kakehashi taught him not to plan for something perfect, instead advising him to "take action, follow your passion and respect your competition," Fisher said on his Facebook page Saturday, mourning his death. Kakehashi always stressed that the advent of electronic music was not at odds with acoustic instruments, or that it was trying to undermine the rich legacy of music.

But amplification held great potential, including the possibility to create various speakers as well as present music to far larger audiences, like the hundreds at concert halls, not the previous dozens in old-style chamber settings, he said. One Roland product he liked to show off was a guitar that was a collaboration with Fender, which could not only play Stratocaster riffs but also the sounds of an acoustic guitar, sitar and 12-string acoustic guitar, as well as instantly drop octaves and distort notes. "The options have widened," Kakehashi said of electronic music at a Roland seminar in 2012. "I believe the ways of musical expression have expanded." — AP



This photo shows Japanese engineer Ikutaro Kakehashi. — AP

Review: Unreleased 1976 Bill Evans Trio gig intimate treat

"On A Monday Evening" is the first release of a 1976 recording by the Bill Evans Trio, an autumn concert in Wisconsin that finds the influential pianist and his partners in outstanding form. Sharing the stage with bassist Eddie Gomez and drummer Eliot Zigmund on Evans originals like "Sugar Plum" and "Time Remembered" or standards like "All of You" and "Someday My Prince Will Come," the leader and his ensemble's improvisational brilliance makes this release well worth discovering. Recorded at the University of Wisconsin's Madison Union Theater by radio DJs who interviewed Evans then, the sound is well-balanced, surprisingly good mono and feels intimate despite the large auditorium.

The impact of Bill Evans on jazz pianists and beyond - from Keith Jarrett to Lyle Mays to Fred Hersch - has been described as "overpowering." From his contributions to Miles Davis' "Kind of Blue" to his groundbreaking trio with Scott LaFaro and Paul Motian, Evans innovated, fascinated and entertained in large measure. Gomez, who spent over a decade with Evans, and Zigmund, whose tenure in the 1970s was shorter but also well regarded, provide not only imaginative support but also exceptional creative skills developing deep musical feedback with the ringing tones of Evans' piano. On the bowed (or arco) bass solo on "All of You," Gomez occasionally makes his instrument sound like a saxophone. Over the nearly 47 minutes in this set, Evans, Gomez and Zigmund add a precious chapter to their high-caliber legacy. — AP

Senegal's Orchestra Baobab returns with dance galore



Senegal's Orchestra Baobab honors a former bandmate on "Tribute to Ndiouga Dieng," a spicy mix of African and Cuban tempos with no rust and a fluctuating pulse. Relying on two-saxophone leads and kora player Abdoulaye Cissoko to partially fill in for Barthelemy Attisso - their long-time guitarist now busy with a legal career - the orchestra's seemingly effortless ability to create irresistible dance rhythms remains intact even after a 10-year pause. Dieng died in November 2016 but his son Alpha has been recruited to sing his songs.

Regular vocalists Balla Sidibe, also on timbales, and Rudy Gomis continue their strong work, joined in exciting guest spots by Cheikh Lo and West African megastar Thione Seck, also a Baobab alumni, who

reprises "Sey," a dance-floor classic. Formed in 1970, the band's career was revived by the re-edition of its mouthwatering, hip-shaking "Pirates Choice," and they got back together in 2001. This is just their third album since that return - after the Grammy-nominated "Specialist In All Styles" from 2002 and 2007's "Made in Dakar" - and it's a wonderful addition to their rich catalog. It's subtlety and insinuation as much as the actual tick-tick-tock of the percussion and Charlie Ndiaye's velvety bass guitar that complete the seduction, as the band disguises its achievements with all the skills of a suave lover. Or, in this case, a whole orchestra of them! — AP

Q&A: Nolan previews adrenaline rushing war epic 'Dunkirk'

Director Christopher Nolan has spent his career bending minds (and cities) with his films. He works on a scale that is stubbornly and obsessively cinematic and it seems that no concept, be it Batman or the multiverse or dreams, is too big for the visionary filmmaker. His latest movie, "Dunkirk," out July 21, takes him out of the fantasy world and into reality and the storied evacuation of Allied soldiers from that beach in France in May and June of 1940. Nolan spoke to The Associated Press about "Dunkirk" at the recent CinemaCon in Las Vegas, where he was promoting his epic to theater owners:

AP: Why Dunkirk?

Nolan: As a filmmaker you're always looking for a gap in cultural movies and Dunkirk is a story British people are raised on. It's in our DNA practically. But it has not been addressed in the movies. So for me, it was a very exciting gap. I've spent a number of years trying to figure out what's the angle of approach, what's the angle of attack for getting the story across? So we came upon the notion of creating a very experiential film, one that rather than trying to address the politics of the situation, the geopolitical situation, would really put you on the beach where 400,000 people are trapped, surrounded by the enemy closing in and faced with annihilation or surrender. The fact the story ended with neither

annihilation nor surrender makes it one of the greatest stories in human history.

AP: How did you approach it?

Nolan: The approach is trying to take the full experience and put the audience there. What would it be like to be on the beach? To be on a boat trying to cross the channel? It's a huge challenge, but exactly the kind of challenge that you look for in film.

AP: You have said the film is less about character than survival. Can you explain what you mean?

Nolan: I feel like Dunkirk is such a universal event and it involves so many people that to try to encapsulate the specific detail of the human experience wasn't the way to go. What we decided to do was to really try and live in the moment of the experience ... the very immediate and human desire to survive. It's the most human movie I've ever made because it's about the desire for survival. We wanted to tackle that and make what I refer to as a very present tense narrative where you're in the moment with the characters. You're not necessarily spending too much time discussing who they were before or who they will be after.

AP: This film has been rated PG-13. Was that a choice you made?

Nolan: All of my big blockbuster films have been PG-13. It's a rating I feel comfortable working with totally. "Dunkirk" is not a war film. It's a survival story and first and foremost a suspense film. So while there is a high level of intensity to it, it does not necessarily concern itself with the bloody aspects of combat, which have been so well done in so many films. We were really trying to take a different approach and achieve intensity in a different way. I would really like lots of different types of people to get something out of the experience.

AP: Is there any truth to the report that the production bought a \$5 million vintage plane to crash?

Nolan: No. We used real antique vintage planes and flew them for the movie but we also constructed full scale models to destroy. A lot of money was involved but not that much money. I would never! Obviously never ... These planes are so beautiful and so valuable for so many reasons and the respect I have for them having done this, especially now having worked with them. The Spitfire is the most glorious machine.

AP: And you tell the story from three points of view?

Nolan: The story needs to be told from different points of view intertwined. We spend time looking at various points of view. On the beach. In the air. Out on the sea.

FASHION



In this file photo, a counterfeit Chanel houndstooth suit, right, is displayed alongside a suit from Chanel's spring/summer 1971 collection during a press preview of iTreasures on Trial: The Art and Science of Detecting Fakes! at the Winterthur Museum in Wilmington, Del. — AP photos



Photo shows a counterfeit Hermes Birkin luxury handbag during a press preview.



A forged 1990 bottle of DRC La Tache wine that was sold to billionaire Bill Koch alongside assorted forged wine labels during a press preview.



A genuine lampshade created by Tiffany Studios in the early 1900s, left, stands alongside a forgery created in the second half of the 20th century during a press preview.



A forged painting purported to be the work of artist Mark Rothko is displayed during a press preview.

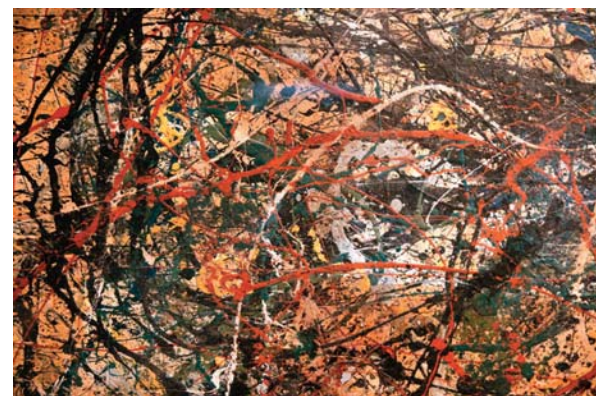
Winterthur exhibit offers insight into detecting art fraud



Artwork on a porcelain plate depicts a scene from early American history during a press preview.

A new exhibition at Delaware's Winterthur Museum offers would-be sleuths a firsthand look at how experts detect high-priced fakes and forgeries. The exhibit opens Saturday and runs through Jan 7. It includes a broad range of objects that illustrate the ongoing battle pitting clever forgers and con men against equally determined art conservationists and historians, who used trained eyes, paper trails and high-tech equipment to determine what's real and what's not.

The items on display, both genuine and fake, extend well beyond paintings and fine art, to include high fashion, furniture, sports memorabilia, even postage stamps and weather vanes. — AP

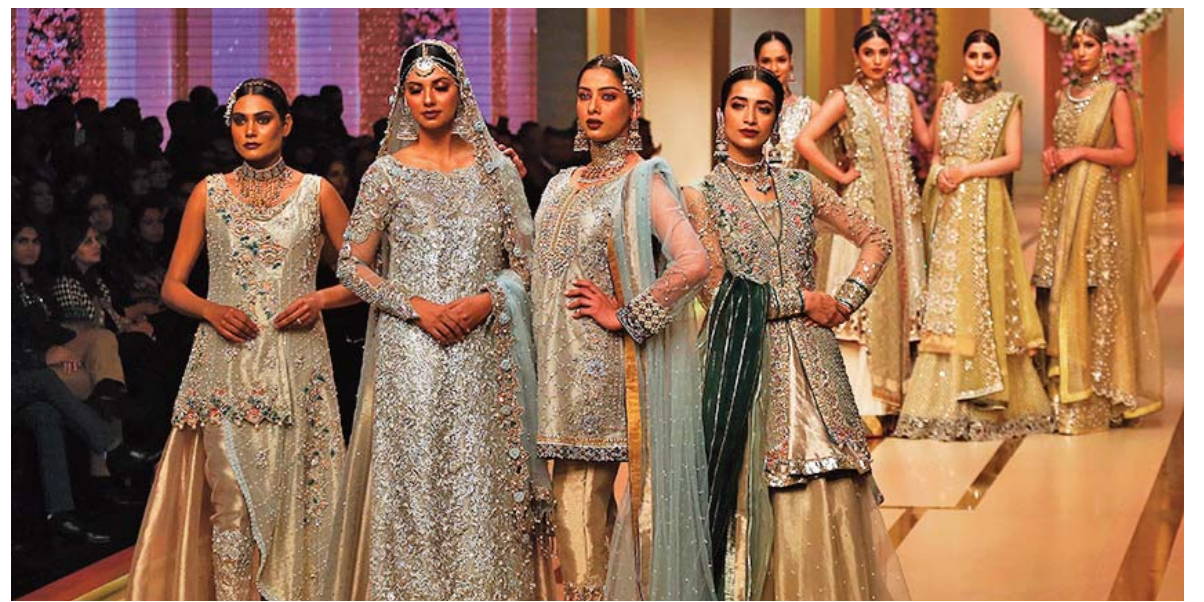
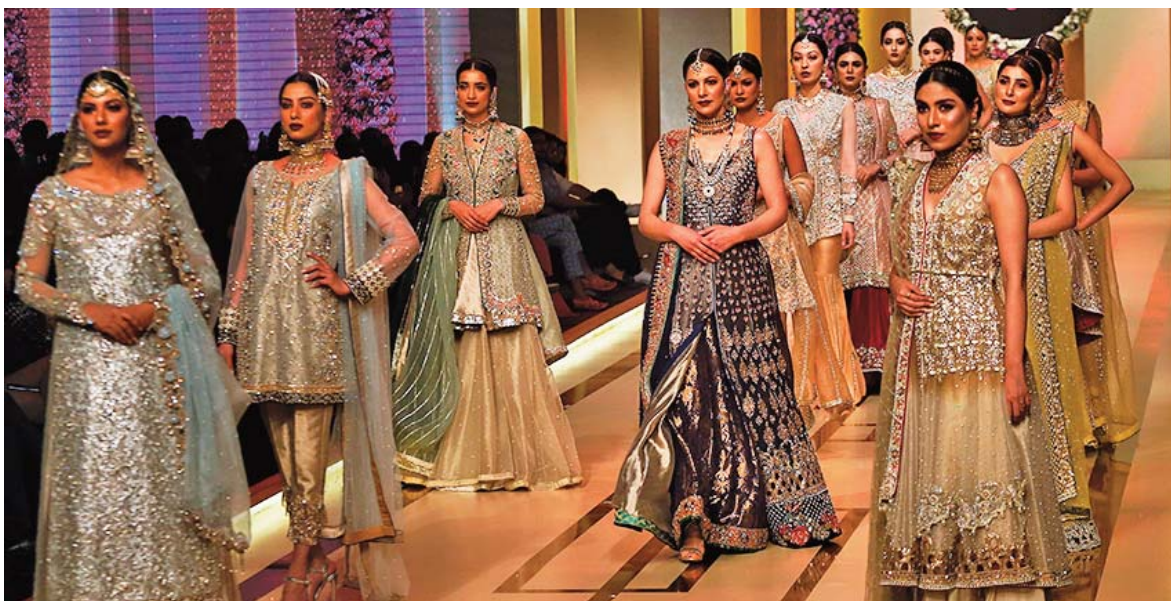


A detail of a painting purported to be the work of artist Jackson Pollock is seen during a press preview.

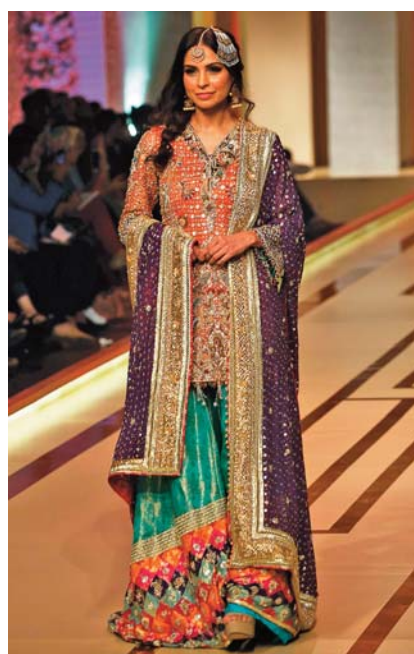
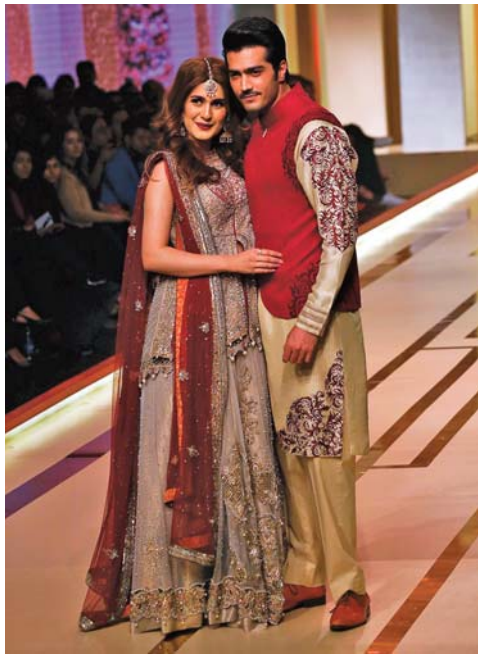


A bottle of wine purported to have belonged to Thomas Jefferson is seen on display during a press preview.

FASHION BRIDAL COUTURE WEEK



Models present designs by Emraan Rajput during the Fashion Bridal Couture Week in Pakistan's capital Karachi. — AFP



Centrepont SS17 live collection presentation

Regional fashion retailer, Centrepont, recently launched its fabulous collection for a stylish Spring Summer 2017 at the beautiful rooftop of Landmark Tower. The prestigious event introduced the region's top tier media and fashion influencers to a range of trendy and contemporary fashion, footwear and accessories for women, men, teens and tots.

The presentation primarily showcased the style inspiration from Centrepont's Spring Summer collection. Models, including men, woman and children, strutted on a styled runway, amidst the season backdrop campaign colours in sophisticated hues of purple, blue and yellow; allowing guests to see the key pieces come to life.

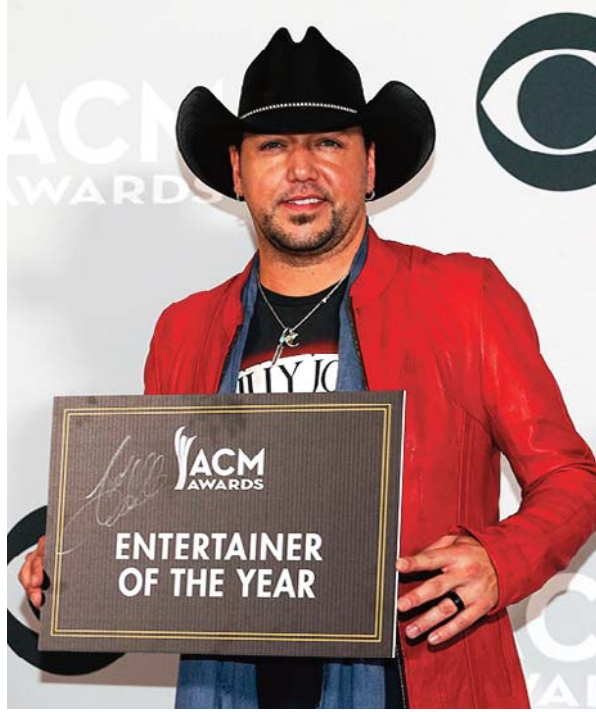
The SS17 collection is comprised of nautical styling with a neo-twist with colourful stripes seen in both an optical re-arrangement and in the classical nautical style for women. Fashionistas can show off their pretty feet in a range of floral-printed sandals and feminine pearl-detailed wedges this season. Ladies can choose from a range of fashionable accessories

to complement their summer outfits with lighter tones embellished with Swarovski crystals and bright bohemian prints on bags. A range of matt, glossy and frosty makeup shades to suit every woman's style sentiment complete the Spring Summer look.

As for men, the collection is inspired by 90s graphic styling teamed with modern minimalism. Men can put their best foot forward from a range of trendy footwear, with a collection of smart and comfortable sandals, high-top sneakers, and formal leather loafers. A pretty palette of pinks for little girls and bright aquatic greens and blues help dapper tots and teens get ready for the season. The main inspiration behind the collection this season is distinctive styles and trendy looks to add glamour to the Spring Summer night!

Get your hands on the latest Spring Summer collection at Centrepont stores located in Al- Rai, Avenues, Hawally, Salmiya, Fintas, Jahra, Fahaheel, Sulaibikhat, Kuwait City and Khaitan.

AWARDS



Jason Aldean poses with the Entertainer of the Year award in the press room. — AP/AFP photos



Jason Aldean poses with the Entertainer of the Year award.



Jason Aldean performs 'Any Ol' Barstool'.

ACM Awards kick off with energy, jokes about Oscars mishap



Miranda Lambert poses in the press room with her awards for album of the year for 'The Weight of These Wings,' and female vocalist of the year.

The Academy of Country Music Awards kicked off with six separate performances full of energy, including a tribute to Chuck Berry featuring Joe Walsh, Luke Bryan and Dierks Bentley. The trio performed "Johnny B. Goode" at the T-Mobile Arena in Las Vegas as audience members got out of their seats Sunday to sing and dance along. "For the man that influenced every form of music, including country," said Bryan of Berry, who died last month. Before that, the nominees for entertainer of the year - Bryan, Carrie Underwood, Jason Aldean, Keith Urban and Florida Georgia Line - started the show with performances of their recent hits.

Aldean won entertainer of the year last year. Later in the show, airing live on CBS, Urban sang the soulful "Blue Ain't Your Color" with a throwback, black-and-white vibe, while the back of the stage was smoky and bright blue. As he switched to the upbeat, disco-flavored "The Fighter" - where he was joined by Underwood - the camera focused on his actress-wife Nicole Kidman, who sang and danced along. Miranda Lambert also had a top-notch performance: She earned a standing ovation after she sang the slow, acoustic-sounding "Tin Man" as the crowd watched along seriously as she hit all the right notes and strummed her guitar.

Stripper-cowboys

The night featured comedy, including a play off the Academy Awards mishap during the best picture winner announcement in February. "This is odd. David?" asked "Entertainment Tonight" host Nancy O'Dell while holding the card with the name of the song of the year winner. "Emma Stone, 'La La Land,'" David Copperfield announced, as the audience laughed. The real winner was Thomas Rhett for "Die a Happy Man." "Thank you to my beautiful wife, my beautiful pregnant wife," said Rhett, whose wife was in the audience. "The song's inspiration was because of you." Bryan and Bentley, who are co-hosting the show for a second year, also had jokes: They laughed about doing Vegas activities leading up to the awards show, and even showed photos of them dressed as stripper-cowboys. Bryan even joked days ahead that the ACM Awards would unite Democrats and Republicans.

"Democrats and Republicans are going to get along on Sunday night. They're all going to watch the ACMs together and stuff's going to start happening in this country. It's going to change," Bryan said in an interview with The Associated Press. "Cats and dogs are going to make out." "Coming to an election near you. Is politics your next career?" Bentley said. "Yes," Bryan replied. Sam Hunt performed his No. 1 hit, "Body Like a Back Road," and he went into the audience to sit next to his fiancé to sing the song.

Female vocalist

The show is expected to feature a number of other A-list performances during the three-hour show, including the Backstreet Boys with Florida Georgia Line, Chris Stapleton, Faith Hill and Tim McGraw. Earlier winners announced before Sunday's show included two wins for Florida Georgia Line: single record of the year with "H.O.L.Y." and vocal event of the year for "May We All" with McGraw. Urban, who had success with his genre-bending, Grammy-nominated album "Ripcord," is the top nominee with seven. He will compete for album of the year, song of the year with "Blue Ain't Your Color" and male vocalist of the year.



Brian Kelley, third from left, and Tyler Hubbard, third from right, of Florida Georgia Line, and from left, AJ McLean, Brian Littrell, Nick Carter, Howie Dorough, and Kevin Richardson, of Backstreet Boys, perform at the 52nd annual Academy of Country Music Awards.

In the latter category, he's up against Aldean, Bentley, Stapleton and Rhett. Nominees for female vocalist of the year are Kacey Musgraves, Kelsea Ballerini, Lambert, Underwood and Maren Morris, who recently won a Grammy for her hit song, "My Church." Other performers during the show are Reba McEntire, Rhett, Ballerini, Brothers Osborne, Cole Swindell and Jon Pardi. Presenters include Darius Rucker, Miss America Savvy Shields, Jake Owen, Kane Brown, Lauren Alaina and Kellie Pickler. Lori McKenna, who won the best country song Grammy for two consecutive years for writing McGraw's "Humble and Kind" and co-writing Little Big Town's "Girl Crush," was named songwriter of the year.

Morris won new female vocalist of the year, Pardi was named new male vocalist, and Brothers Osborne picked up both vocal duo of the year and new vocal duo or group of the year. Little Big Town won vocal group of the year, beating out Lady Antebellum, which had just performed on the show. "I just wanna be in Lady Antebellum's band," Kimberly Schlapman yelled. "Me too," screamed Karen Fairchild. — AP



Hosts Luke Bryan, left, and Dierks Bentley present a performance by Florida Georgia Line and Backstreet Boys at the 52nd annual Academy of Country Music Awards.



Brian Kelley, left, and Tyler Hubbard, of Florida Georgia Line, pose in the press room with their awards for single record of the year for 'H.O.L.Y.' and vocal event of the year for 'May We All'.



Thomas Rhett poses in the press room with his awards for artist and songwriter for song of the year for 'Die a Happy Man,' and male vocalist of the year.



Thomas Rhett, left, and Maren Morris perform 'Craving You'.



John Osborne, center left, and TJ Osborne, center right, of Brothers Osborne, perform 'It Ain't My Fault'.



TJ Osborne, left, and John Osborne, of Brothers Osborne, pose in the press room with their awards for Vocal Duo of the year, and new Vocal/Duo Group of the year.



Thomas Rhett performs 'Craving You'.



Kellie Pickler, center, presents John Osborne, (left) and TJ Osborne (right) of Brothers Osborne, the award for new Vocal/Duo Group of the year

A W A R D S



(From left) Jimi Westbrook, , Kimberly Schlapman, Karen Fairchild, and Phillip Sweet, of Little Big Town, perform 'Happy People'.



Karen Fairchild, center, accepts the video of the year award on behalf of Artists of Then, Now & Forever for 'Forever Country'.



Lori McKenna arrives at the 52nd annual Academy of Country Music Awards.

Winners

List of winners at the 2017 Academy of Country Music Awards

- Entertainer of the year:** Jason Aldean.
- Album of the year:** "The Weight of These Wings," Miranda Lambert.
- Single record of the year:** "H.O.L.Y.," Florida Georgia Line.
- Song of the year:** "Die a Happy Man," Thomas Rhett.
- Male vocalist of the year:** Thomas Rhett.
- Female vocalist of the year:** Miranda Lambert.
- Vocal duo of the year:** Brothers Osborne.
- Vocal group of the year:** Little Big Town.
- Video of the year:** "Forever Country," Artists of Then, Now & Forever.
- New vocal event of the year:** "May We All," Florida Georgia Line and Tim McGraw.
- New female vocalist of the year:** Maren Morris.
- New male vocalist of the year:** Jon Pardi.
- New vocal duo or group of the year:** Brothers Osborne.
- Songwriter of the year:** Lori McKenna. — AP



(From left) Phillip Sweet, , Karen Fairchild, Jimi Westbrook, and Kimberly Schlapman, of Little Big Town, accept the award for Vocal Group of the year.



Maren Morris accepts the award for new Female Vocalist of the year as presenter Kellie Pickler looks on at right.



Jon Pardi poses in the press room with the award for new Male Vocalist of the year.



Maren Morris performs 'I Could Use a Love Song'.



Jon Pardi, left, performs 'Dirt on My Boots'.



Singer-songwriter Cam



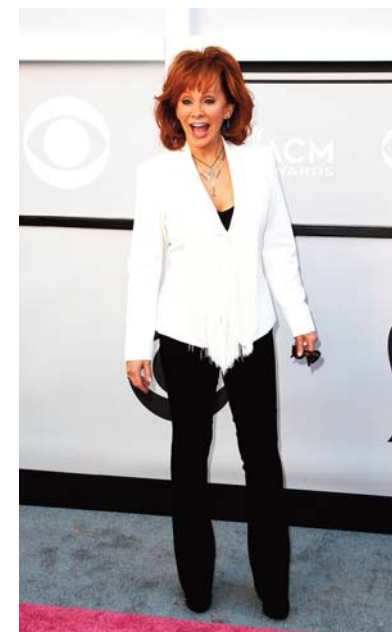
Australian actress Nicole Kidman and New Zealand-born Australian-American country musician Keith Urban.



Hillary Scott of the music group Lady Antebellum.



Recording artist Kacey Musgraves.



Recording artist Reba McEntire



Recording artist Kelsea Ballerini



Recording artists Cowboy Troy, Big Kenny and John Rich of music group Big & Rich, and DJ Sinister pose as they arrive for the 52nd Academy of Country Music Awards.



Preston Brust and Chris Lucas of duo LOCASH arrive with Kristen White (left) and Kaitlyn Lucas (right) for the 52nd Academy of Country Music Awards.



Recording artist Kellie Pickler



Faith Hill, performs 'Speak To A Girl'.

Lifestyle

TUESDAY, APRIL 4, 2017

ACM Awards kick off with energy, jokes about Oscars mishap

38



A worker checks the lanterns in preparation for the upcoming celebration of Buddha's birthday on May 3 at the Jogye temple in Seoul, South Korea, yesterday. Many Buddhists visit the temple across the nation to celebrate the Buddha's birthday and pray with their wishes. — AP



A man looks at artworks by Spanish artist Pablo Picasso during the presentation of the exhibition 'Pity and Terror: Picasso's Path to Guernica' at the National Museum Reina Sofia Art Center in Madrid yesterday.

MADRID SHOW DELVES INTO PICASSO'S DARK JOURNEY TO GUERNICA

It's an artistic journey through "terror," "panic" and "fear" that culminates in "Guernica", Pablo Picasso's universal howl against the ravages of war that turns 80 next month. Yesterday, Madrid's Reina Sofia museum of modern art launched a major exhibition that delves into the darkness of Picasso's work before his masterpiece, and attempts to shed light on how he was able to create one of the world's most famous paintings. "Pity and Terror: Picasso's Path to Guernica" opens today and runs until September 4, bringing together some 180 pieces from the Reina Sofia's collection and more than 30 institutions around the world such as the Centre Georges-Pompidou in Paris, New York's Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) and private collections.

"There is no other piece in the 20th century that has generated so many comments, so many interpretations as Guernica," said Manuel Borja-Villel, director of the museum that has housed the painting for 25 years. A depiction of the bombing of the small Basque town of Guernica on April 26, 1937, during Spain's civil war, the canvas mixes stark, almost unbearable images of women, infants, animals in agony. It has since become a potent plea for peace, recognized the world over and used in countless anti-war protests.

Crying blood

So what do you do to commemorate the 80th anniversary of such a famous, much talked-about work of art? The answer: try to shed light on the Spanish artist's journey towards Guernica. In order to do so, curators decided to delve into Picasso's work from the mid 1920s when the artist took a turn for the more macabre, possibly in belated response to the devastating First World War. "Terror, violence, horror, panic, fear, death become his subject," British art historian Timothy James Clark, one of the curators, told reporters. The exhibition features such works as "Woman Dressing Her Hair", borrowed



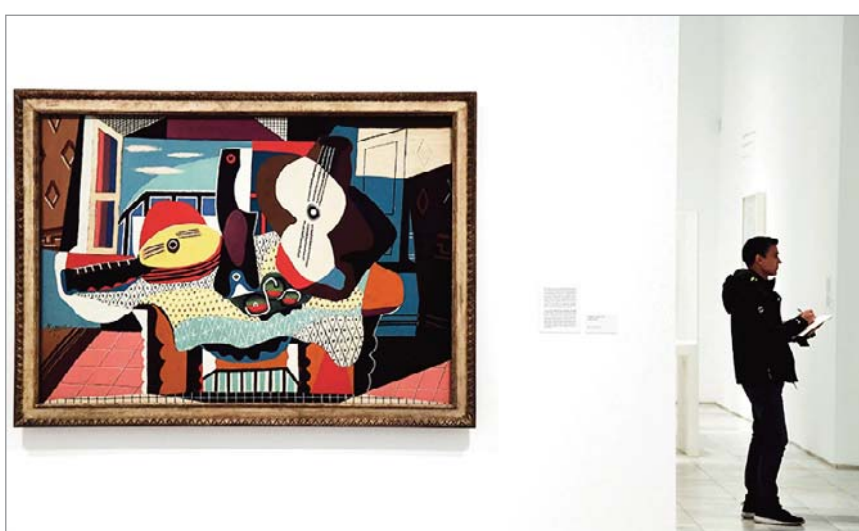
A photographer takes images of a sculpture by Spanish artist Pablo Picasso titled 'Head of a Woman on a Grey Background'.

from MoMA, or "The Three Dancers", a canvas normally on display in London's Tate Modern.

The latter, painted in 1925, portrays three figures engaged in a macabre, maniacal dance and represents the moment when Picasso's art took a dark, violent change of direction, said Clark. Women with dead babies, a person crying blood—the exhibition also includes some of the powerful preparatory drawings that he did before painting Guernica in May 1937. "We wanted to think about the attitudes, the concerns, maybe even the fantasies and obsessions and unresolved knots in the psyche that went into the making of Guernica," said Clark. — AFP



A man takes photos near a painting by Spanish artist Pablo Picasso titled 'Monument to Spaniards who died for France'.



A man takes notes near a painting by Spanish artist Pablo Picasso titled 'Mandolin and Guitar'.—AFP photos

Bizarre News

Japan opens owl cafes

Japan has opened a number of owl cafes in which customers can pet the creatures whilst enjoying their lunch. Following on from the trend of cat cafes - where customers enjoy the company of furry felines whilst eating their lunch or indulging in a hot beverage - Japan have started opening similar sanctuaries for owl lovers. Owl Village in Tokyo has eight owls, and representative Aya Matsuda says every care has been taken to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the majestic creatures. She told Reuters: "Some owl cafes lack enough staff, and customers can freely interact with owls, but in our cafe, customers are only able to enter the owl room with staff, who explain how to touch the animals or give them a rest when they look tired." However, Chihiro Okada, an activist with the Animal Rights Centre in Tokyo, claims "confining" the winged animals can constitute animal abuse, and should be stopped. Chihiro said: "People think of kicking or hitting of animals when we think of animal abuse, but it isn't just limited to that. Confining an animal to a small space is certainly a form of abuse. We were particularly shocked to hear that seven owls died within one year at an owl cafe." If managed properly, owl cafes can continue to exist, but work must be done to ensure the safety of the animals. Veterinarian Nobumoto Izawa said: "Owl cafes can exist. But it's important to have checks on how they are kept. And more importantly we need to make sure the birds there are happy and not stressed. So I don't think it's necessary to say owl cafes should not exist."



Playing Tetris soothes stress after a trauma

Playing Tetris has been linked to soothing stress after a trauma. According to an Oxford University study reported in The Times newspaper, playing the video game for 20 minutes acts as a vaccine against post-traumatic stress disorder. Those who took part in the experiment and played the video game soon after a car accident were found to have 62 percent fewer traumatic memories over the days that followed. Scientists put the game down to being a distraction which stops the brain from consolidating troubled memories. A long-term trial is now being planned involving other games.



A lobster is just one of the weird things ever left behind in an Uber

A lobster is among the bizarre things ever left in an Uber. The cab app service launched a new Lost & Found Index of left-behind items along with a video explaining how customers can claim back their lost items. According to the Telegraph newspaper, among the weird items left behind by passengers include a solitary lobster, an engagement ring and a bulletproof vest are just some of the most bizarre items ever left behind in an Uber. Valuable Nordic walking poles, paintings and an expensive slipper also make the list of 50 most unique items forgotten in Ubers. The top 10 list in full:

1. Engagement ring
2. Rubber mallet

3. Elf cut-out
4. Bulletproof vest
5. Expensive slipper
6. Money bag
7. Taser
8. Smoke machine
9. Lobster
10. Lottery ticket



Police arrest 99-year-old woman

Police have 'arrested' a 99-year-old woman who wanted to complete her bucket list. The woman - known only as Annie - wanted to experience being arrested and locked in a police cell before she dies, and police in the Dutch city of Nijmegen-Zuid have granted her wish with a number of photos on their Facebook page which show the elderly woman happily sitting in a jail cell. According to the translations on their Facebook post, they claimed it was "a day to remember" for both the police and Annie, who finally got to live out one of her dreams. The caption also stated how Annie was nearing the milestone age of 100, and had always wanted to 'experience a police cell from within'. It is unknown how long the request had been on Annie's bucket list, but the photos posted by the police show her to be incredibly gleeful at being given the opportunity to tick off the strange goal.



British man sells air for £200

A British man has been selling fresh mountain air for £200 a bottle. John Green, an IT consultant from London, has lived in the Swiss city of Basel for 20 years, and has been using his location to travel to the Swiss Alps to bottle up fresh air, which he plans to sell to people living in heavily polluted cities. He said: "I actually go 3,000 meters (10,000ft) up to fetch it. I don't go into a car park to get it, honest. "I have lived here for 20 years, and the Swiss don't know what they've got. The air really is something special. "When I go up the mountains I really do feel better, I am not imagining it. I seriously feel almost reborn." John's company, mountainairfromswitzerland.com - which sells air in three litre bottles for £200, one litre bottles for £135, or a pint for £75 - keeps the exact location of its air supply a secret, but purchasers will be sent GPS co-ordinates so they know the air is definitely the freshest it can be. Speaking in a promotional video for his company, John said: "If you're sitting in some polluted town, which you probably are, gasping with diesel fumes, we're at 3,000 metres, and we've just got new supplies of mountain air...so get yours. "Only purchasers will know where their jar of air was collected. We keep the extraction location a secret to protect supplies. "All I can say is it is collected near a babbling mountain stream, fed by melt water from a famous glacier, near a very famous mountain."

— Bang Showbiz

