



MONDAY, APRIL 10, 2017

RAJAB 13, 1438 AH

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**Defense minister
applauds
Eagle Resolve
maneuver**

**6 people killed,
more than 100
injured during
Kashmir protests**

**Cockfighting
in Kabul:
Bloodsport
takes wing**

**Ibra sparks
Man Utd,
Lukaku ends
Leicester run**


150 FILS

NO: 17194

40 PAGES

PALM SUNDAY IS BOMBINGS AT EGYPT CHURCHES KILL 44

KUWAIT CONDEMNS BLASTS • AMIR SENDS CONDOLENCES • SISI DEPLOYS TROOPS



Min 20°

Max 34°

High Tide

12:03

Low Tide

05:57 & 18:08



(Left) People look at the aftermath following a bomb blast which struck worshippers gathering to celebrate Palm Sunday at the Mar Girgis Coptic Church in the Nile Delta City of Tanta yesterday. (Right) Egyptians load a body onto an ambulance near the Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate in Alexandria after a bomb blast struck worshippers gathering to celebrate Palm Sunday yesterday. — AFP (See Page 8)

TANTA, Egypt: The Islamic State group claimed responsibility for bombing two Egyptian churches as worshippers gathered to mark Palm Sunday, killing at least 44 people in the deadliest attacks on the Coptic Christian minority in recent memory. The attacks followed a Cairo church bombing in December and came weeks before a planned visit by Catholic Pope Francis intended to show support for Egypt's Christian minority.

The first bombing at the Mar Girgis church in Tanta city north of Cairo killed 27 people, the health ministry said. "I just felt fire grabbing my face. I pushed my brother who was sitting next to me and then I heard people saying: 'explosion,'" a wounded witness in hospital told state television. Emergency services had scrambled to the scene when another blast rocked Saint Mark's church in Alexandria where Coptic Pope Tawadros II had

been leading a Palm Sunday service.

Seventeen people including four police officers were killed in that attack, which the interior ministry said was caused by a suicide bomber who blew himself up when prevented from entering the church. The ministry said Tawadros was unharmed, and a church official said he left before the explosion. The private CBC Extra channel aired footage of the Alexandria blast, with CCTV showing what appeared to be the church entrance engulfed in a ball of flame and flying concrete moments after a security guard turned away a man. Eyewitnesses said a police officer detected the bomber before he blew himself up.

At least 78 people were wounded in Tanta and 40 in Alexandria, the health ministry said. After the bombings, President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi ordered military

deployments to guard "vital and important infrastructures", his office said. "The attack...will only harden the determination (of the Egyptian people) to move forward on their trajectory to realize security, stability and comprehensive development," Sisi said in a statement. State television reported that the interior minister sacked the provincial head of security and replaced him after the attack.

HH the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah yesterday sent a cable to Sisi expressing condolences and sympathy over the victims of the "terrorist attack". The Amir voiced Kuwait's strong condemnation of the heinous criminal act that targeted innocents, and the unity of the Egyptian people, running contrary to all heavenly faiths and human values. HH the Amir reaffirmed Kuwait's sup-

port to Egypt and whatever measures Cairo might take to counter such acts of terrorism that target the country's security and stability.

HH the Amir reaffirmed Kuwait's unwavering stance rejecting all forms of terrorism, renewing the country's support to the international community to fight terror and dry up its financing resources. Offering condolences to families of the blast victims, The Amir wished those wounded in the attack speedy recovery. HH Sheikh Sabah also sent a cable to Coptic Pope Tawadros II expressing condolences and sympathy over the victims of the "terrorist attacks". HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent similar cables.

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US ENVOY SAYS ASSAD MUST GO



MEROE, Sudan: A member of the Sudanese forces walks on the tarmac during a joint Sudan and Saudi Arabia air force drill at the Marwa air base yesterday. — AFP

SUDAN, SAUDIS BOOST TIES WITH JOINT AIR FORCE DRILL

MEROE, Sudan: Sudanese President Omar Al-Bashir said a joint Saudi-Sudanese air force drill that ended yesterday had boosted relations between the countries, two years after Khartoum broke ties with Iran. For years, Khartoum's Islamist regime maintained close relations with Riyadh's arch-rivals in Tehran. But as sectarian divisions in the region escalated with the conflict in Syria, Khartoum allied with Riyadh.

In 2015 it said it would take part in a Saudi-led military intervention in nearby Yemen against Iran-backed rebels. "The air force drill showed that relations between Sudan and Saudi Arabia are progressing," Bashir said during a ceremony at the Meroe air base, 350 km north of Khartoum, to mark the end of 12-day drill.

Officials said the first ever joint Saudi-Sudanese air exercise was intended to boost the two air forces' operational capacities and promote cooperation.

Sudan took part in the exercise with more than two dozen fighter planes including MiG-29s and Sukhoi jets, defense officials said. Saudi Arabia sent F-15 fighter jets and Eurofighter Typhoons. Bashir said the Sudanese military was playing a "key role" in improving Khartoum's ties with Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries.

"As Sudanese security is connected with that of countries across the region, we are building military and security cooperation with our neighboring countries," said Bashir, who wore a military uniform for the ceremony. Analysts say warmer ties between Riyadh and Khartoum serve both countries. Sudan is keen to ease its international isolation and Saudi Arabia is looking for avenues for investment to reduce its dependence on oil. Saudi fighter pilots are set to stage an air show in Khartoum from April 10 to 12. — AFP

BEIRUT: Washington's UN ambassador said that Syria's President Bashar Al-Assad cannot stay in power after a suspected chemical attack that prompted the first direct US military action against his government. Nikki Haley's comments in an interview that aired yesterday came as part of an apparent shift in US policy towards Assad's government after the alleged chemical attack last week on the rebel-held town of Khan Sheikhoun that killed 87 people, including many children. Images of civilians suffering the apparent effects of a gas attack, including convulsions, vomiting and foaming at the mouth, provoked international outrage and prompted US President Donald Trump to order a strike on a Syrian airbase.

In the interview with CNN, Haley said peace in Syria was impossible with Assad in power. "There's not any sort of option where a political solution is going to happen with Assad at the head of the regime," she told the "State of the Union" program. "If you look at his actions, if you look at the situation, it's going to be hard to see a government that's peaceful and stable with Assad. Regime change is something that we think is going to happen," she said, adding that Washington was also focused on fighting the Islamic State group in Syria and ending Iranian influence.

US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson insisted ahead of Moscow talks tomorrow that defeating IS in Syria remained Washington's top priority. "It's important that we keep our priorities straight. And we believe that the first priority is the defeat of ISIS," he told CBS television's "Face the Nation" broadcast later yesterday. Tillerson will also press Russia on its failure to prevent Syria using chemical weapons, he said in interviews aired yesterday. "I don't draw conclusions of complicity at all, but clearly they've been incompetent and perhaps they've just simply been out-manuevered by the Syrians," he told ABC's "This Week".

After years of calling for Assad's removal during former president Barack Obama's tenure, Washington appeared to be stepping back from seeking regime change in Syria in recent weeks. Before the Khan Sheikhoun attack, Tillerson said Assad's fate should be decided by the Syrian people, suggesting Washington would not oppose him standing for reelection.

But in the aftermath of the attack, Trump ordered the strike targeting the Shayrat air base in central Syria's Homs province with 59 Tomahawk missiles. And his administration informed Congress that it could "take additional action, as necessary and appropriate, to further its important national interests".

Continued on Page 13

THE DINAR SPENT WISELY

1 KD

Cheeseburger Deluxe Meal (Regular)

Chickenburger Deluxe Meal (Regular)

1 KD

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KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Deputy Premier and Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah and the Interior Ministry's Undersecretary Lt Gen Mahmoud Al-Dosari.



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Deputy Premier and Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah and the Interior Ministry's Undersecretary Lt Gen Mahmoud Al-Dosari. —KUNA photos



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with Deputy Premier and Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah and the Interior Ministry's Undersecretary Lt Gen Mahmoud Al-Dosari.



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with the Chairman of Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) Ali Al-Ghanem and other KCCI officials.



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with Minister of Health Jamal Al-Harbi and other officials.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives a book on Kuwait's humanitarian activities from Chairman of Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) Ali Al-Ghanem.

AMIR RECEIVES INTERIOR MINISTRY'S UNDERSECRETARY

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received yesterday at Bayan Palace Deputy Premier and Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah who presented to His Highness Lt Gen Mahmoud Al-Dosari on the occasion of his appointment as Interior Ministry Undersecretary. The meeting was attended by Deputy Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah. Lt Gen Dosari 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 as well. Meanwhile, His Highness the Amir received Chairman of Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) Ali Al-Ghanem and other KCCI officials. During the meeting, they presented a book on Kuwait's humanitarian activities to His Highness the Amir. The KCCI delegation also presented a copy of the book to His Highness the Crown Prince, who thanked them and high-

lighted Kuwait's humanitarian and charitable activities and initiatives. Earlier yesterday, His Highness the Amir received His Highness the Crown Prince, National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem, His Highness the Prime Minister, and First Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. In the meantime, His Highness the Crown Prince received Ghanem, His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled, and Deputy

Premier and Defense Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. His Highness also received Deputy Premier and Finance Minister Anas Al-Saleh and Chairman of the Kuwait Investment Authority Bader Al-Saad, as well as State Minister for Cabinet Affairs and acting Information Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah. In the meantime, His Highness the Prime Minister received Minister of Health Jamal Al-Harbi, who introduced Chairman and CEO of Ali

Abdulwahab Al-Mutawa Commercial Company Faisal Al-Mutawa, accompanied by French Gustave Roussy Institute of Oncology Director Professor Alexander Mirtchev and the institute's CEO. The meeting was attended by His Highness the Prime Minister's Diwan Chief Sheikhha Itimad Khaled Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and French Ambassador to Kuwait Christian Nakhlah. Furthermore, His Highness the Prime Minister met with minister Saleh and Kuwait Investment Authority's Chairman Saad. —KUNA

KUWAIT SINGULAR IN HELPING FAR-FLUNG SYRIAN REFUGEES: US CONGRESSMAN

‘KUWAIT A STABILIZING FORCE IN THE REGION’

KUWAIT: When talking about helping far-flung Syrian refugees, Kuwait has been 'singular' in terms of its generosity, US Congressman Stephen Lynch said yesterday. "Going beyond your borders to help people in tough situations... as I have seen in refugee camps in southern Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon, the people of Kuwait has been so generous with humanitarian aid that I thought it was important to come and say 'thank you,'" Lynch, a Democrat representing the State of Massachusetts said in an exclusive interview.



US Congressman Stephen Lynch

He is on a visit to the country along with fellow Congressman Dennis A Ross, a Republican from the State of Florida. The second leg of the trip will be Iraq later today. Lynch, a member of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee, noted that the trip to Iraq comes to make sure that the country can function as a "pluralistic" democracy where all sects, as well as religious and ethnic minorities, can share in governing and be strong enough to resist any terrorist group, mainly the so-called Islamic State (IS). "We want to make sure that communities, especially in northern Iraq, are resilient to fight IS." Pointing to

Kuwait's role in this regard as a 'stabilizing force in the region,' Lynch expressed hope that Iraq reaches stability. While in Kuwait, both Congressmen had met with head of the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) with the effort to try to diminish the likelihood that terrorist financing that might be obtained through legitimate financial systems. "We have received great cooperation from Kuwait's FIU. I believe that Kuwait is on the verge of joining the Egmont Group," noted Lynch. The Egmont Group is a united body of 152



US Congressman Dennis A Ross

FIUs, providing a platform for the secure exchange of expertise and financial intelligence to combat money laundering and terrorist financing. Established in 2013, Kuwait's FIU is an independent agency responsible for receiving, requesting, analyzing, and disseminating information concerning suspected proceeds of crime or funds related, linked to or to be used for money laundering or terrorism financing according to the provisions of law. On academic cooperation between the two countries, Lynch said, "It is a great relationship and we hope it continues. US universities are actively recruiting Kuwaiti

students, preparing them for the job market. Those are our future leaders going to school side by side with your (Kuwaiti) future leaders, and only good can come from that." A fresh statistic by US embassy in Kuwait indicated that some 15,500 Kuwaiti students are presently receiving academic education in American universities. On the recent US air strikes in Syria, Lynch said that there was "great unanimity among civilized countries, including Kuwait and the US, over the wrongness of the horrific attack with chemical weapons. "I think the recent response from US military was limited but strong and hopefully we'll see a change in behavior on the part of the (Bashar) Assad government." On his part, Congressman Ross said another reason for the visit was to foster the already-strong relations with Kuwait. In this regard, he noted they visited US troops stationed in Kuwait, and "I encourage more of my colleague congressmen/women to come and see on ground how Kuwait is dynamic and such a contributor to the overall financial wellbeing of the Middle East." Economically speaking, Ross said the volume of Kuwaiti investments in the United States and, vice versa, was discussed, especially in the oil and energy sectors. "The United States is not building new refineries, actually, it is 'refining' its current ones and Kuwait has been very helpful in this regard due to its investment expertise," he noted. On the Middle East peace process, both Congressmen agreed that such process has to be engaged in by everyone in the region. But, also the international community, especially the West, has a responsibility to lend whatever resources necessary to allow such matter to materialize, stressing that the United States has supported a two-state solution, as it is the only true road to peace. —KUNA



KUWAIT: Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah meets with Commander of US Naval Forces' Central Command (CENTCOM) Vice Admiral Kevin M Donegan. —Interior Ministry photo

INTERIOR MINISTER RECEIVES US MILITARY OFFICIAL

KUWAIT: Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah discussed yesterday with Commander of US Naval Forces' Central Command (CENTCOM) Vice Admiral Kevin M Donegan a number of security issues of common concern. The security information department at the Ministry of Interior said in a press statement that the meeting dealt with a number of issues of mutual interest, especially regarding securi-

ty aspects and means of developing and strengthening them between the two friendly countries. Sheikh Al-Jarrah expressed his satisfaction with the progress of this ongoing cooperation which contributes to the security and stability in the region and the world. Meanwhile, the US official praised the security cooperation between his country and the State of Kuwait and the strong relations and exchange of experiences between them. —KUNA

MAN ARRESTED FOR ASSAULTING POLICE TWO DEAD IN ACCIDENTS

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: A man was arrested yesterday after attacking a traffic police officer following an accident in Ahmadi yesterday. Video footage showing a man in a dishdasha (traditional dress) assaulting a traffic policeman went viral on social media yesterday, prompting local authorities to launch an investigation into the matter. Investigations revealed that the police officer intervened to break up a fight between the suspect and an Asian national after the two were involved in a minor accident. The man ended up assaulting the officer before he was arrested. The man faces criminal charges after the motorist he assaulted provided a medical report showing that he suffered a broken nose as a result of the attack, while the officer also suffered bruises due to the assault, the Interior Ministry said in a statement.



KUWAIT: A vehicle involved in an accident on King Fahd Road yesterday morning.

Fatal accidents

A motorist was killed and another was injured when he became trapped inside a vehicle following a traffic accident on King Fahd Road yesterday morning. Firemen cut open the injured man's car and he was taken to hospital. Meanwhile, the other victim's body was recovered by the coroner. An investigation was opened to determine the cause of the accident. In another case, a citizen driving a sports utility vehicle (SUV) on Kabd Road collided with a quad bike driven by an Indian man. The citizen called medical emergency personnel, who rushed the victim to hospital, but he succumbed to his injuries. The case was sent to concerned authorities.

Theft

Farwaniya detectives arrested two citizens who stole a tablet computer from a restaurant, after patrons gave them their car's license plate number. The suspects confessed to the theft, saying they intended to steal money, but ended up with the iPad. Both were sent to concerned authorities.

New bridge

The Interior Ministry's traffic department said a bridge that links the extension of Jamal Abdul Nasser Road with Jaber Al-Ahmad City and Doha Spur will open today. Meanwhile, the ministry's relations and security information department said Jahra police station will be closed for three months from April 16 till July 16 for maintenance. It said complaints and reports will be received at Naeem police station.

Inspection

Kuwait Municipality's public relations department said inspection campaigns will begin at car sale and rental offices to make sure they are in compliance with areas mentioned in their licenses.



KUWAIT: Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Defense Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Sabah and other officials attend the seminar. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

DEFENSE MINISTER APPLAUDS EAGLE RESOLVE PARTICIPANTS

By Nawara Fattahova

KUWAIT: Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Defense Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Sabah praised all those who participated in the Eagle Resolve (Hasm Al Oqban) military exercise held in Kuwait from March 19 to April 9, 2017. "This is the final phase of this military training, which was led by the Kuwait Armed Forces," he said during the Senior Leaders' Seminar held yesterday at Sheraton Hotel. "Various local institutions participated in this training along with military forces from the GCC, Arab countries and the United States."

Sheikh Mohammed said the training strengthens cooperation between the GCC and other friendly countries. "It also allows exchanging experiences between the participants in order to face any local or regional threat or dealing with crises and disasters. Such training also boosts cooperation between local institutions that deal with crisis management and support security and military operations inside and outside the country," Sheikh Mohammed added. "We should systematically increase our efforts to conduct more joint operations and training, which strengthens the military relationship between friendly countries, in addition to raising the efficiency of their armed forces in all fields, which strengthens stability in the region," he concluded.

Maj Gen Ahmad Al-Amiri, Assistant General Chief of Staff for the Operations and Planning Sector, said this was the fourth phase of the 14th edition of Eagle Resolve. "Three phases were concluded prior to this phase that included training the leaders, followed by field training that took place on land, sea and air," he pointed out. Eagle Resolve has a variety of goals. "It aims to improve coordination and cooperation between all ministries and public institutions on crisis management. It also boosts military cooperation between the GCC armed forces and the United States, especially during regional crises. Furthermore, it plans and executes all kinds of extraordinary military operations, and this training covered all these goals," Amiri said.

Long history

Maj Gen Ralph Groover, Head of Training at the US Central Command, thanked the guests from the GCC for attending the Senior Leaders' Seminar after concluding the Eagle Resolve 2017 exercise. "We are also pleased to see so many representatives from the Kuwaiti military and all other ministries represented here today. I also want to thank Kuwait for its gracious hospitality in hosting this exercise. Many in this room have a long history with the Eagle Resolve exercise over the years. I understand the GCC secretary general led the first event in the region around 2009-10. The benefits of this exercise were identified after



Maj Gen Ahmad Al-Amiri, Assistant General Chief of Staff for the Operations and Planning Sector speaks during the seminar.



Maj Gen Ralph Groover, Head of Training at the US Central Command, addresses the audience.

the Camp David Summit of May 2015, where the leaders of the GCC, in close discussion with the US president, laid out the idea of a GCC/US exercise to counter regional threats," stressed Groover.

"Focus areas included CT, CIP, McM, IAMD, cyber defense and asymmetric threats. ER 17 was selected to accomplish this idea. The exercise's design included CPX-FTX and an SLS format that exercised joint, multilateral and interagency operations as part of the US/GCC effort," he explained. "The ministries' and civilian organizations' involvement in this exercise truly represented the entirety of the government's response, which is vitally important to the success of any scenario requiring a national or international response to crises. The process of organizing this exercise and working together over the past year plus allowed us to gain a greater understanding of each other, build trust and strengthen our partnerships," noted Groover.

Legalese

COPYRIGHT PROCESS

By Attorney Fajer Ahmed

Creativity is around us in many forms, from poems to online blogs to paintings, photos, food, games, events and so on. We are blessed to be living in an era where creativity is encouraged through multiple platforms including the Internet, which has made each and every one of us in a sense a producer, publisher or a photographer; a blessing that was only available to a few 20 years ago. Now we can all create and share our creativity. It is truly wonderful.

With all the creativity though comes the need for legislations that protect our intellectual property. Today I will be answering simple questions about copyrights and trademarks in Kuwait, and as always I will be using general English instead of legalese in order to make sure that everyone can understand my article and not just lawyers in Kuwait. I will also be discussing the process instead of the law, because I feel the practical aspect is more important than the theoretical one for those who want to protect their rights.

Copyrighting books

Question: I have written a book and I want to get an ISBN number - where can I copyright my book? And any other thing I should be aware of?

Fajer: We have a department in Kuwait that is specifically for literary copyright - it is located at the National Library of Kuwait. You will need to fill out a form and submit your work to the department. The process for protecting your literary work takes on average around a week, and you will get an international ISBN number that you can use worldwide. Another common question I get for copyrighting books is whether Kuwait guarantees certificates of ownership of literary work that includes explicit material. The answer to this question is yes - you can get your book copyrighted even if the content has explicit material. There are only two topics that if discussed cannot be copyrighted - but these do not include any explicit material. This does not mean that your book can be published or sold in Kuwait, as you will need approval before doing so.

Mobile app

Question: I have worked on a mobile application and I want to know if I can copyright it. Is this possible even if I am not using the app for commercial purposes?

Fajer: Yes, you can also copyright your mobile application at the National Library of Kuwait. You will need to submit the full and complete source-code and pay a KD 10 fee. The process will take not less than two weeks. Yes, it is possible even if you are not using the app for commercial purposes.

Trademarking a logo

Question: I am starting a company and I want to trademark my logo - where can I get it done?

Fajer: Trademarking logos in Kuwait has moved from one department to another, but currently it is located under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry on the 21st floor of KIPCO tower. The process takes more than six months, as the logos are manually compared to other images and are printed in the local newspaper, giving people the opportunity to claim that the logos are infringing on their designs, should they wish to do so. There are costs for doing so and requirements for the submission of the trademark, like the size of the photo of the trademark, the slogan accompanying the logo, and so on. I won't get into it here, but you can check www.moci.gov.kw for more information.

For any legal questions or queries, email ask@fajethelawyer.com.

PANEL APPROVES BILL TO ALLOW CONTESTING CASSATION VERDICTS

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: The parliamentary legislative committee yesterday passed two government projects and a parliamentary proposal about contesting the cassation verdicts and a general pardon since 2011. In this regard, committee rapporteur MP Al-Humaidi Al-Subaei said the committee passed a government bill allowing contests to cassation verdicts made by the criminal court and extending the grace period for filing a contest to 40 days. Meanwhile, MP Saleh Ashour criticized the work of a committee entrusted with studying citizenships withdrawn from 1991 to 2017, noting that limiting cases to this period is a form of discrimination. Ashour urged the committee to reconsider the period in order to achieve justice and equality. He also urged the committee's chairman, former MP Ali Al-Rashed, to expand the period and study all cases of people who feel their citizenships were unlawfully withdrawn.

Insurance bill

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry has finished preparing the semi-final draft of a bill on regulating the insurance sector, said informed sources, noting that the fatwa and legislation department had also studied the bill, which is expected to be passed soon once the minister submits it to the Cabinet pending submission to the parliament

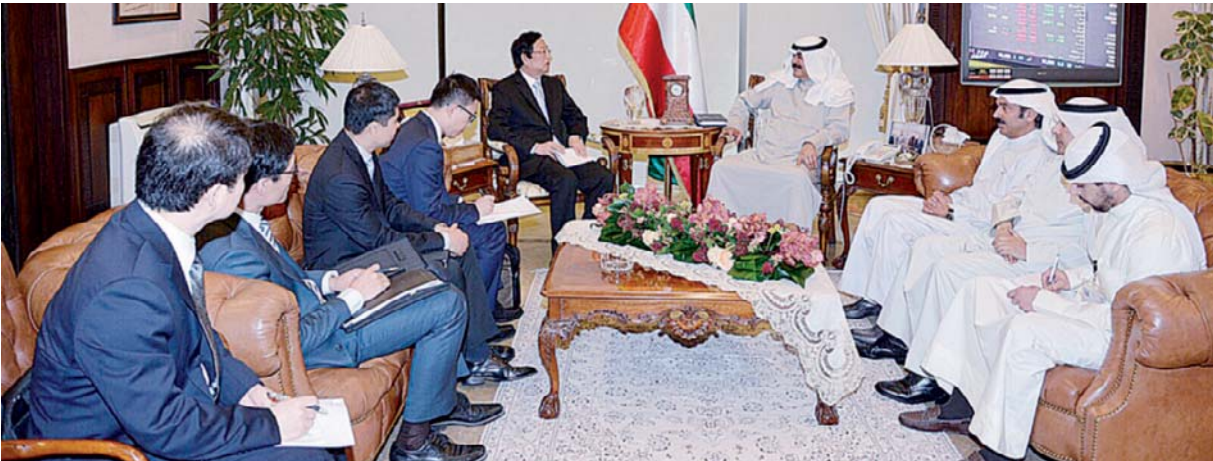
for voting. The bill includes 10 chapters and 69 articles including conditioning that all local insurance companies be fully owned by citizens, have a minimum capital of KD 15 million for companies handling life insurance and KD 5 million for companies handling general insurance.

Investigation

Minister of Public Works Abdul Rahman Al-Mutawa said the committee formed to investigate the recent flooding will finish its work next week and report its recommendations to him. "We will never tolerate any sloppiness and will refer those responsible to the public prosecution," he underlined. Meanwhile, well-informed sources at the Ministry of Public Works said that the advisors' department had finished naming the international consultants to be hired to design the airplane hangar project at the new airport building. The sources said 10 international contractors had qualified to execute the project at a total cost of KD 1.3 billion.

Financial reserve

The Cabinet is currently considering a proposal by the Capital Markets Authority (CMA) to dedicate a KD 1.5 billion financial reserve for its use as a barrier to reduce securities risk, said informed sources, noting that the government will also consult the finance ministry and the Audit Bureau because the sum would be funded from the state's general reserves.



KUWAIT: Kuwaiti Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah meets with China-Arab States Cooperation Forum's (CASCF) Representative Li Chengwen. — KUNA

DEPUTY FM MEETS WITH CHINESE ENVOY

KUWAIT: Kuwaiti Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah met yesterday with China-Arab States Cooperation Forum's (CASCF) Representative Li Chengwen and his accompanying delegation. During the meeting, they discussed bilateral relations and the latest

regional and international developments. The meeting was attended by Assistant Foreign Minister for the Deputy Foreign Minister's Office Ayham Al-Omar, Assistant Foreign Minister for Arabs Aziz Al-Daihani and Chinese Ambassador to Kuwait Wang Di. — KUNA



The National Assembly building.

PARLIAMENT TO DISCUSS REVISING GASOLINE PRICES

KUWAIT: The National Assembly will discuss during its ordinary session tomorrow a report by the parliamentary legislative and legal affairs committee on the amendments to the administrative disputes over nationality issues.

The agenda of the meeting includes discussion of the reports of the Parliamentary Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs on fees and financial costs for utilities and public services and the second on the revision of gasoline prices.

Furthermore, the agenda includes discussion of a bill on calling off interest on loans provided by the General

Organization for Social Insurance and a proposal to add an article to the Amiri Decree issuing the Social Insurance Law.

The parliament is also scheduled to consider a request for discussion by some members on the speedy implementation of the Domestic Employment Act No. 68 of 2015 and the effective working hours of this act. The agenda also includes a parliamentary request to discuss and clarify the official procedures of the Kuwaiti government regarding the Khor Abdullah issue and its policy in this regard. — KUNA

BROTHER'S MURDERER ESCAPES DEATH SENTENCE

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: The criminal court sentenced a man to ten years in prison yesterday after he was found guilty of murdering his brother. The sentence passed in spite of a pardon by parents of both of the victim and defendant, who said in official papers filed to the court by their representative that they do not wish to lose another child after they have already lost one. Premeditated murder is punishable under Kuwait's law by death, which was averted in this case by the pardon.

Pollution

The Green Line Environmental Group (GLEG) commented yesterday on a Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) study which suggested that workers and school children around the country breathe polluted air. The group held both lawmakers and the government fully responsible for health and environmental dangers that students in various schools are subjected

to. GLEG added that it had inquired about an earlier report published in Al-Anbaa on May 3, 2015 about contaminated drinking water in schools. However, the Environment Public Authority (EPA) did not reply on the matter, it said. The group also urged KISR to publish the details of the study which showed that air quality in various schools and government buildings is below health standards despite the fact that students and employees spend long hours inside those buildings.

'Illegal practices'

The Municipal Council's Deputy Chairman Meshaal Al-Jowaisri warned of the spread of furnished apartments rented on daily basis in Salwa. He criticized the Interior Ministry and Kuwait Municipality for being silent about what he described as a 'dangerous phenomenon in an area inhabited by families.' Jowaisri added that such apartments are being used for illegal and immoral practices, making Salwa no longer an ideal area for families.



First edition of a 10 Kuwaiti dinar banknote.



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Fourth edition of half a Kuwaiti dinar banknote.

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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.

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Fifth edition of a 20 Kuwaiti dinar banknote.

KUWAIT: Kuwait is celebrating these days the 56th anniversary of the national currency, the Kuwaiti Dinar (KD), as being the financial building block which helped the nation grow and expand. Before replacing the Indian Rupee in 1961, the initial plans for issuing a national currency began in 1958 during which the highest authorities in Kuwait made it imperative for the country to start steps for independence both politically and economically.

With the declaration of Amiri decree 41/1960, the Kuwaiti monetary council was established to look into measures to issue the currency and coins. In April 1, 1961, the Kuwaiti and Indian governments agreed to withdraw the Gulf Rupee, basically the Indian currency, from the Kuwaiti markets to begin efforts for replacing the banknotes with the new bill.

The first issue of the banknote featured the likeness of then Amir Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah. It also had the signature of head of the monetary council Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah who later became the 13th Amir of Kuwait. The back of the first issued banknotes had various illustrations of Kuwaiti landmarks depicted and they varied according to the value of the bill. Various issues and values of the Kuwaiti Dinar have appeared since the banknote was issued with the first variation coming after 1968.

The Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) issued the quarter, half, and 10 dinars first in November 17, 1970 and then in April 20, 1971 the KD one and five came into circulation. The second issues of the KD saw the banknote being smaller with the currency featuring the likeness of then Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah and the signatures of the Ministry of Finance Abdulrahman Al-Aqtqi and CBK Governor Hamza Abbas. In 1980, the third variant of the currency had replaced the likeness of the ruler of Kuwait with the official seal of the State of Kuwait. In 1986, the CBK issued for the first time the KD 20 bill.

When the Iraqi invasion occurred in 1990, the Kuwaiti government decided to cancel the use of the national currency. In 1991, the fourth series of the Dinar was issued with the quality and color of the banknotes being superior to previous incarnations. In 1994, the fifth edition of the Kuwaiti Dinar saw the introduction of a silver line on the bill and other measures to avoid counterfeiting. The sixth and last series to date began in 2014 with the Kuwaiti Dinar displaying an elegant design both depicting various landmarks and also increasing the size of the font to enable shortsighted individuals to read what's written on the bill. — KUNA



Sixth edition of a 10 Kuwaiti dinar banknote.



Sixth edition of a quarter Kuwaiti dinar banknote.

International Monetary Fund

Middle East Center for Economics and Finance
Kuwait

Vacancy Announcement
Capacity Development Advisor (Economist)

Applications are being solicited for the position of Capacity Development Advisor (Economist) at the IMF-Middle East Center for Economics and Finance (CEF) located in Kuwait. The CEF is an office of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) with a mission to strengthen the skills of officials from Arab League countries in economics, finance, and policy formulation, done mainly through the delivery of training courses and seminars. This is a full-time position with an initial appointment term of two-years (renewable), and carries a competitive salary and benefits package commensurate with the successful candidate's experience and qualifications. For non-residents of Kuwait, relocation and living allowances are provided.

Summary Description

We are seeking an experienced Capacity Development Advisor (Economist) to enhance our CEF-based economics and finance faculty. Prime tasks include teaching of selected courses delivered by the IMF, involvement in curriculum development, and conducting research in support of the CEF's training activities, and series of seminars and conferences.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

Teaching : Teach several advanced short courses in conjunction with the IMF and other international organizations. The audience will include public sector official from Arab countries, especially officials from central banks, finance ministries and other government economic agencies.

Course Development : Develop new courses on topics of relevance to the region, in collaboration with staff in IMF headquarters or other international organizations, as needed. Course development will include the preparation of pedagogical material such as lectures and detailed quantitative case studies based on country experiences.

Research : Conduct original research on economic issues of relevance to the CEF's training mission and cooperate with universities, research institutes, and think tanks in the region.

Qualifications

Candidates should have strong analytical skills in macroeconomics or finance, at least five years of practical experience with analyzing economic issues especially in emerging and developing countries, as well as a substantial experience and interest in teaching.

Experience in providing advanced training to public sector officials in applied macroeconomic policy issues, finance and econometrics would be highly desirable. Applicants should hold a Ph.D. degree in economics or finance. Excellent teaching and communication skills and experience in Arabic and English are essential.

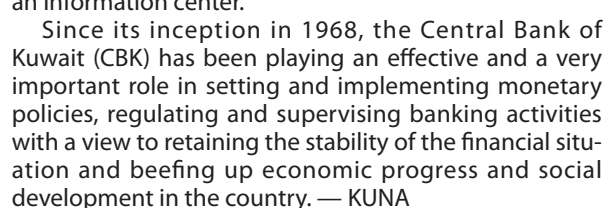
Closing date of the application is April 18 , 2017.

Interested applicants should visit www.imf.org/jobs for the full vacancy information and to apply to job # 1700429.



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—KUNA photos



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الجريدة

Al-Jarida

INSTEAD OF NORWAY, LOOK AT YEMEN, SOMALIA

By Hassan Al-Essa

A local Arabic daily came out with a headline that read: 'Al-Saleh defuses the reform plan crisis by freezing the plan.' This would indicate that the economic reform plan is shelved until the government comes up with a new one. The story also included the following quote: "The government is seeking a compromise with the parliament to avoid tension and filing of interpellations." So, the news hint to a political solution to manage the economic crisis by 'putting the cart in front of the horse.' This kind of approach is not new to state policies; it is based on political appeasing at the expense of the economic situation regardless of whether oil barrels prices were \$100, like they were over three years ago, or around \$40 like they are nowadays.

The recent report said that the real deficit was much larger than the announced figure, which contradicts with so many opinions like that of the IMF president because public finance does not rely on public revenues unless they were sustainable, that is resulting from economic activities and taxes. Selling crude oil is nothing more than selling assets for money. In addition, oil is finite and subject to decreasing demand and prices, which is already happening.

Is there any hope to avoid the inevitable economic devastation? The answer is no, as long as the government remains the same, public awareness remains unchanged and, most importantly, we keep on relying on a revenue that has nothing to do with human labor and effort. Things will remain the same as long as we rely on expatriate laborers and abuse them to extreme limits, be them doctors, nurses or even a housemaid clinging to the edge of a window to escape her sponsor's dungeon or the GCC slavery. All forms of financial corruption like wasta (connections), favoritism, bribe and absence of the rule of law will also keep dominating the process of work in various public facilities.

Just imagine if Kuwait became like Norway where they put aside all oil revenues, separated them from all economic plans and left them for future generations. It is hard to visualize Kuwait or any of the GCC states doing something similar. In Norway, they invested in good education, human resources and liberties, while we are investing in skyscrapers, loads of fancy vehicles and black Bishts (traditional men's cloak) for people appearing daily in our newspapers with empty hypocrite diplomatic smiles on their faces.

Everybody is living today while forgetting all about tomorrow. There is no solution to our dark future. Gentlemen, do not look at Norway or South Korea. Look at Yemen, Somalia and African Sub-Sahara countries. Think about the famine they are suffering from nowadays while the rich world shows no remorse. It is only when we sober up from the effect of rich revenues and all its negative social consequences that we will have hopes of a better future for our generations.

— Translated by Kuwait Times

الجريدة

Al-Jarida

LOTTERY

By Dr Ebtihal Al-Khateeb

I had to review several stories of sorrow and pain to pick up one to write about. Should I write about the Power Point lecture delivered by MP Saleh Al-Fadhlah using photos and fabricated figures with the aim of marginalizing those far worse off? Should I write about the debates that have been recently polluting the National Assembly with shouts, insults and low-class talk? Or should I write about the female lawmaker who put upon herself the responsibility of limiting the number of expats and thus led a lobby attacking them and criticizing them with fiery racist selfish speeches?

She knew how to address the most primitive feelings of citizens who got tired with the government's corruption, and thus have easily responded with using scapegoats to cover up the government's follies and terrible mistakes. Should I write about Fadhlah's angry calls for protecting bedoons' human rights? Should I write about Safa Al-Hashim's statement to Al-Qabas about expats when she said that 'Is it fun to get things for free?'

While doing so, my eyes were struck by a very shocking scene of the Asian maid wearing a colorful shirt and a grey head cover while her fingers were hanging outside the window of her landlady's house, before she banged down with her antagonized body. Summing up everything, all I want to say; all the theories and analysis, the meaning of what the head of the Central Apparatus of Illegal Residents says and the result of lawmaker's speeches simply highlighted a major inquiry about what is penning to us and what we are doing to others.

The maid's action was described as attempted suicide. Come on; does anyone attempting to kill themselves cry out for help? Even if it was a suicide attempt, was the lady's reaction normal? Someone is hanging from a window, whether willingly or accidentally, and the first thing that comes to the lady's mind is to reach out for her smart phone to record a video and simply address the maid as 'crazy' without showing any normal reaction of reaching out to rescue her.

What kind of people are we, the ones living in this 'Humanitarian Center?' We have been hearing about so many of our domestic helpers committing suicide. Really, what kind of people are we? Especially after some people commented by agreeing that the maid should not

have been helped, and instead described her and her fellow citizens as 'criminals who deserve what is happening to them.' We even lost the most primitive innate instinct of assistance and basic compassion. What is left in us, then? We are the very same people who have just extended hands of aid to Somalia. We have become so schizophrenic.

I wonder if this is the result of the racist speeches we have been listening to for a few years now; the ones welcomed and adopted by some lawmakers to pave their way to the parliament. It was such a speech that killed that lady's natural instincts and made her act senselessly. Should I even blame the government's bureaucracy and corruption for murdering such natural instincts because it was such bureaucracy that created the sectarian atmosphere clouding Kuwaiti skies? This could be a silly analogy but whenever I remember the sound of that Ethiopian maid's body when she landed, her cries and the terrified look on her face, I cannot help but feel angry for our contradictions, hypocrisy, for each dinar paid to charity organizations, for all our religious programs, charities and annual Hajj convoys.

I feel angry for our fancy vehicles, our perfect appearances while maids follow us in the uniforms we impose on them to show the difference, and to dig deeper trenches between us and them. I recall her scream and start thinking how ironic this life is because it was only with a stroke of luck that made a poor maid hang over to a window with terror, and made another woman elegantly dressed speak at the Humanitarian Center's parliament and use the random genetic lottery to look down on others who were not as much lucky with the same lottery.

I keep watching that video over and over as I punish myself. I keep considering that plastic-like situation with the house lady clinging to her phone while a life is lost. I keep remembering the maid's fingers clinging to the window's edge in pain. I am trying hard to remember the exact day, hour and year when we all turned into human-less programmed mobile phones. Everything looks so foggy to me as I keep remembering her scream 'Hold me' and someone reply as 'Is it fun to get things for free?'

— Translated by Kuwait Times

Crime

Report

DETECTIVES CHARGED WITH DEFAMATION

KUWAIT: A woman lodged a complaint to the Interior Ministry's Undersecretary Mahmoud Al-Dosari, stating that she was summoned by vice detectives who threatened to take legal action against her if she fails to hand over passports of two of her former employees. The woman explained to the detectives that she already had filed absconding cases against the two Filipina women who used to work at her beauty salon, adding that she did not have their passports. Detectives later released the woman but refused to provide her with the name of the person who pressed charges against her or any other information. She then went ahead and filed a complaint with the under-secretary for defamation.

Banned drugs

Criminal detectives learned about an Egyptian doctor who sold banned medicines used for abortion. They obtained a warrant to raid his house, where they found a large quantity of the medicine inside the kitchen that he had turned into a lab to prepare the illicit drugs. The man told police that a pharmacist helped him in making the drugs, adding that the man has left the country.

Mugging


Jahra prosecutor ordered an investigation to be opened into a forced robbery case involving a Bangladeshi man working for the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, who said that he was stopped by an unknown person who mugged him at knifepoint. The man tried to escape, but the thief chased him, tore his clothes off and stole his mobile phone.

Drunk

A Kuwaiti youth was detained at Al-Dhahar police station for nuisance. A security source said a citizen told police that his son gets drunk with his friends on a daily basis and asked that officers come over and try to wake the young man up.

Bitter ex

An Egyptian man sought police's help to save him from a Moroccan woman, saying that she stormed his house and threatened to hurt him after he broke up with her. The woman was summoned by police and confessed to the charges. Police are investigating. —Translated from the Arabic press


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KUWAIT: KFH Group CEO Mazin Al-Nahedh poses for a group photo with Rawad Alsaleheen school's delegation.

KFH SUPPORTS YOUTH TO DEVELOP THEIR COUNTRY: GROUP CEO

KUWAIT: Group Chief Executive Officer at Kuwait Finance House (KFH) Mazin Saad Al-Nahedh stressed the importance of boosting confidence in the Kuwaiti youth, while endowing them with the core skills that enable them to contribute in the development of their country. Al-Nahedh statement was made on the sidelines of receiving a delegation of students from Rawd Alsaleheen Bilingual School chaired by School General Manager Dr Abdulrahman Al-Elayan, and Deputy General Manager Hamad Al-Elayan at KFH Headquarters.

Al-Nahedh added that the youth and students are the main pillar of society. This calls for attaching great interest in this significant segment by empowering them and equipping them with all the tools they need to overcome challenges and beat the odds. He raised the importance of honing their skills and qualifying them to shoulder responsibility and take part in the development process of

the country, indicating KFH sponsored the United Nations Program for Rawad Alsaleheen High-school Students as part of its endeavors to support students and the youth.

He expressed his pride that Rawd Alsaleheen Bilingual School is the only school in Kuwait to participate in the UN program, noting that the achievement of the students in the program is a plaque students in Kuwait wear proudly upon their chests.

The students demonstrated their experience that had been crowned with success. Two female students from the delegation were honored in recognition of their distinguished participation in the UN program.

Meanwhile, Dr Elayan expressed his thanks and appreciation to KFH for the sponsorship and the support, indicating this motivated students for further hard work and dedication, while reiterates KFH keenness to prioritize the role of education and science in the society and development.

KAZAN MINISTER INAUGURATES RUSSIAN ROAD SHOW IN KUWAIT

KUWAIT: Under the auspices and presence of Minister of Tourism in Kazan Sergey Ivanov, the Russian Ambassador to Kuwait Alexey Solomatin and the Assistant Undersecretary of Tourism at the Ministry of Information Magda Behbehani and Bassel Al-Aswad, head of the Russian National Tourism Office in Kuwait, the Russian Road Show in Kuwait was inaugurated with the participation of a number of hotel representatives and tourism agencies and local and international media.

Ivanov said in a press conference was held yesterday morning that his visit to Kuwait aims to strengthen bilateral relations with Kuwait, especially in tourism sector. He explained that Russia attracts annually about 32 million tourists, mostly from neighboring and European countries depending on diversity of tourism products and Russia has 23 World

Heritage sites on the UNESCO list.

Russian Ambassador to Kuwait Alexey Solomatin stressed the importance of the Russian-Kuwaiti relations and its development in all fields, economic, cultural and social, especially after the signing of several agreements and mutual visits between officials in both countries.

Magda Behbehani, Director of Tourism, Ministry of Information stressed that Kuwait is keen to develop tourism and cultural relations with friendly countries, including Russia. He added that Kuwait is one of the most important exporters of tourism in summer season and Russia has a suitable weather during that period and various attractions.

Bassel Al-Aswad, head of the Russian National Bureau of Tourism in Kuwait, said that many Russian government and private agen-

cies have shown great enthusiasm for the development of relations with Kuwait in various fields, especially the Russian Geographical Association and many industrial, commercial and service companies and chains of hotels Metropole, Petrov Palace, St Regis, Four Seasons, Marriott, Ritz Carleton and Standard.

Marina Zakhara, director of tourism coordination for the Middle East at the Russian Geographical Society, said that RGS is specialized in organizing exploratory tours that require special possibilities, especially in hard-to-reach areas, whether in forests, Siberia or the Arctic.

Natalya Kirilina, Public Relations Manager at Metropole and Petrov Palace Hotel in Moscow, has revealed that some Russian hotels have special facilities to attract tourists from Kuwait, Gulf region and Islamic countries in terms of Halal menus, room facilities and other services.



KUWAIT: Russian Ambassador to Kuwait Alexey Solomatin and other officials pose for a group picture. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat



Who are Egypt's Coptic Christians?

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BOOZE BAN STRESSES BIG INDIAN BUSINESS

THOUSANDS ATTEND STOCKHOLM ATTACK VIGIL

POLICE PROBE SUSPECT'S INTEREST IN IS

STOCKHOLM: Huge crowds gathered in Stockholm for a "Lovefest" vigil against terrorism yesterday, two days after a truck attack that police believe was committed by an Uzbek man interested in jihadist groups. Stockholm city officials said more than 20,000 people took part in the vigil, organized after a driver mowed down shoppers in a stolen truck before slamming into the facade of the bustling Ahlens department store on Friday afternoon.

The motive was not known, but the method resembled previous attacks using vehicles in Nice, Berlin and London, all of them claimed by the Islamic State (IS) group. The suspected driver, arrested hours after the attack, has been identified only as a 39-year-old man from Uzbekistan who had shown interest in extremist groups and who was facing deportation after his residency permit application was denied, police said. He "showed interest for extremist organizations like IS," senior police officer Jonas Hysing told reporters. A second suspect has also been formally placed under arrest over the attack, Stockholm district court judge Helga Hullman said yesterday, revealing no information about his link to the Uzbek.

Frida's attack has deeply shocked the usually tranquil Scandinavian nation, which prides itself on its openness and tolerance. "It's very important to stay strong together against anything that wants to change our society, which is based on democracy," said one participant in the vigil who gave her name only as Marianne, attending with her elderly mother. "We talk, we don't fight," she told AFP as she joined the crowds thronging the Sergels Torg plaza, a stone's throw from the scene of the attack. One woman offered flowers to police officers guarding the plaza.

"Thank you," she said with a smile. "Fear shall not reign. Terror cannot win," Stockholm Mayor Karin Wänggard told the crowd, saying terrorism would be defeated with "kindness and openness." Linking arms, under flags flying at half-mast, the crowd held a minute of silence for the victims. "We don't respond with fear, we respond with love," read one poster held by a woman wearing a headscarf.

Suspect 'went underground'

The Uzbek suspect had been due to be deported from Sweden after his residency application was rejected last year. "He applied for a permanent residency permit in 2014. The Migration Agency rejected it in June 2016 and also decided that he was to be deported," Hysing said.

The man was told last December that he had four weeks to leave the country, but in February his case was handed over to the police "since the person had gone underground," Hysing told reporters. Police apparently never found the man, whom authorities have said was known to Sweden's intelligence service for undisclosed reasons. Media reports said the man, a father of four who worked in construction, did not come across as having been radicalized. "He parted and drank," one of his friends said.

The family of an 11-year-old Swedish girl have meanwhile confirmed she was one of the four people killed in the attack. The Foreign Office in London confirmed that a British man, 41-year-old Chris Bevington, was among the dead, while the Belgian foreign ministry said a Belgian woman had been killed.

The fourth victim was only known to be a Swedish national. Fifteen people were injured, four of whom were in critical condition.



STOCKHOLM: People lay flowers at a memorial ceremony at Sergels Torg plaza close to the point where a truck drove into a department store two days before. — AFP

Police have said they were increasingly sure the Uzbek was the driver of the truck. "There is nothing to indicate that we've got the wrong man. On the contrary, the suspicions have strengthened," national police chief Dan

Eliasson said on Saturday.

Police had found a suspect device in the cab of the truck. "A technical examination is ongoing, we can't go into what it is right now... whether it's a bomb or a flammable

device," Eliasson said. Friday's attack the second terror attack in Stockholm. In December 2010, a suicide bomber blew himself up, also on the Drottninggatan street, slightly injuring several passersby. —AFP

10 DEAD AS NEW SOMALI ARMY CHIEF ESCAPES CAR BOMBING



MOGADISHU: A soldier stand guard the street after a suicide car attack near the Defense Ministry. — AFP

MOGADISHU: Somalia's new army chief escaped a car bombing yesterday that killed at least 10 people in a bloody response by Shabaab militants to the president's declaration of war on the group. A suicide bomber drove a car packed with explosives into Ahmed Mohamed Jemale's convoy near the defense ministry in Mogadishu, just days after he was named to the top army job Thursday by President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed.

"Initial information indicates that the military chief has narrowly escaped the attack," the Shabaab said in a statement published on the website of the jihadist group's Andalus radio station, claiming responsibility for the blast. Senior army official Muktar Adan Moalim told AFP that seven civilians and three members of the security forces had been killed in the bombing.

"A minibus loaded with explosives rammed a civilian bus while trying to hit the convoy of the military chief," he said. An AFP reporter saw five dead bodies and body parts scattered across the scene of the explosion after the attack around midday. Security forces blocked off the entire district around the defense ministry.

Security official Ali Abdirahman confirmed that the army chief-better known to Somalis by his nickname Irfid-was unhurt, as were other senior military leaders who had been in the convoy. A witness, Abdirahman Isa, said the passenger bus that had been passing the scene "was completely destroyed and there were several dead bodies" which were "completely smashed and burned in the blast".

The attack was the latest deadly incident in days, after a car bomb in Mogadishu left sev-

en dead Wednesday, a landmine killed 19 Thursday and a mortar attack left three dead on Friday. While the Al-Qaeda-linked Shabaab have lost large swathes of territory and were forced out of Mogadishu by African Union troops in 2011, they continue to strike in the capital and countryside.

'State of war'

Widely known by his nickname Farmajo, the president took office in February and faces a struggle to improve security in the deeply unstable Horn of Africa nation. Bomb attacks have become a regular and bloody feature of daily life in the capital since the Shabaab were forced out of Mogadishu six years ago.

Farmajo had told a press conference on Thursday that he was declaring a new war on the Shabaab and offering an amnesty to militants who surrendered within 60 days. The rest, he said, would "face the consequences." "I am announcing a state of war in the country and call on the public to stand with the national army to help fight terrorists," said Farmajo.

"We request you put down your arms and call on you to come out of them and join the development of your people. We promise you will get good care if you join us," he said. "We will not wait for the violent elements to continue blowing up people, we must attack them and liberate areas they are stationed." The fragile central government continues to have international backing as well as the 22,000-strong AU force. But the Shabaab have vowed to defeat Fajardo's new administration, promising a "merciless" war against him. — AFP

FIRST PALM SUNDAY SINCE IS IN IRAQ'S MAIN CHRISTIAN TOWN

JIHADIST INSCRIPTIONS STILL VISIBLE ON THE WALLS

QARAQOSH: Members of Iraq's Christian minority celebrated Palm Sunday in the country's main Christian town of Qaraqosh for the first time since it was retaken from the Islamic State group. Hundreds of faithful gathered inside the town's burnt out Immaculate Conception church for mass before starting the traditional Palm Sunday march, a procession during which palms are carried to commemorate Jesus's entry to Jerusalem.

"Thank God, we are returning to our towns and churches after two years," Abu Naimat Anay, an Iraqi priest, said inside the church, which is Iraq's biggest and where jihadist inscriptions were still visible on the walls. Qaraqosh, with an overwhelmingly Christian population of around 50,000 before the jihadists took over the area in August 2014, was the largest Christian town in Iraq.

It was retaken by Iraqi forces late last year as part of a massive offensive to wrest back the nearby city of Mosul from IS but it remains almost completely deserted. The area is now considered safe and the Palm Sunday mass and march were secured by the Nineveh Plain Protection Units, an Assyrian militia. Speakers playing hymns were set up near a large cross recently erected at the entrance of the town. The archbishop of Mosul, Yohanna Petros Mouche, moved back to the town last week but it needs to be extensively rebuilt and basic services restored before displaced Christians can return en masse.

'We will stay'

After the Palm Sunday service, he praised the high turnout and told AFP: "This is a message of trust and hope to our neighbors." When the Islamic State



QARAQOSH: A giant cross built by volunteers from the Iraqi town of Qaraqosh (Hamdaniya) is seen on the main road, some 30 kilometers east of the northern city of Mosul. — AFP

jihadists took over Mosul, the country's second city, the Christian minority there was told to convert, pay tax or face death. "Honestly, this makes the heart happy and sad at the same time, because we were torn away from our birthplace and this kind of devastation we didn't even see during the wars of the 80s and 90s," Aby Naymat Anay said.

Many of the more than 120,000 Christians believed to have fled their homes when IS swept across the region less than three years ago moved in with relatives or into camps in the nearby autonomous region of Kurdistan. "There is a mixed feeling but sadness dominates. We fled to Arbil and we are not back yet," 62-year-old Yusef Nisan Hadaya said, referring to the Iraqi Kurdish capital. — AFP

ERDOGAN WARNS TURKEY EU BID 'ON TABLE' AFTER REFERENDUM

ISTANBUL: President Recep Tayyip Erdogan warned yesterday that Turkey's embattled bid to join the EU will be back "on the table" after next week's referendum on enhancing his powers, raising new doubts about the future of the membership drive. In a speech in the Aegean city of Izmir, Erdogan described Europe as a "sick man", using the jibe that nineteenth century European politicians used to describe the decaying Ottoman Empire.

He once again threatened after the April 16 referendum to sign into law the reinstatement of the death penalty-if it was passed by parliament-a move that would automatically end the European Union membership bid. "Europe will pay for what they have done. God willing, the question of the European Union will again be on the table after April 16," said Erdogan.

He said that Turks living in Europe were "oppressed" and "humiliated": "God willing, our people will bring them (Europe) to account," he said. "They said a century ago that we were the 'sick man'. Now they are the 'sick man'. Europe is collapsing," he added, claiming the European economy weakened every year. The EU is facing the gravest crisis in its six-decade history after last year's British vote to leave the bloc, while populist and eurosceptic movements have gained ground across the continent.

Erdogan reaffirmed that if a bill on restoring the death penalty-abolished in 2004 as part of the EU bid-was brought to him he would sign it "without hesitation". The president has raised hackles in Europe over recent weeks by claiming some EU states were behaving like the Nazis by preventing his ministers from holding pre-election rallies.

While the 'No' campaign has struggled to make its voice heard as the 'Yes' campaign dominates the airwaves, analysts believe the outcome is still too close to call as the race enters the last week of campaigning. Yesterday marked the last day of expatriate voting in the referendum which is expected to be crucial to the outcome with some three million expatriate voters registered, almost half of them in Germany. The 'Yes' campaign is also backed by the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) which yesterday held a giant rally led by its leader Devlet Bahceli in Istanbul at precisely the same shoreside venue used by Erdogan for a giant meeting the day earlier. — AFP

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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 Ixus 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*.

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TANTA: A general view shows people gathering outside the Mar Girgis Coptic Church in the Nile Delta City of Tanta, after a bomb blast struck worshippers gathering to celebrate Palm Sunday. — AFP

WHO ARE EGYPT'S COPTIC CHRISTIANS?

CAIRO: Egypt's Copts, targets of an apparent church bombing north of Cairo yesterday, are the Middle East's largest Christian minority and one of the oldest. Making up about 10 percent of Egypt's population of 90 million, the Coptic Orthodox form the largest Christian denomination in the Muslim-majority country. Here is a recap of their history, their status today and recent attacks against them.

'Dawn of Christianity'

The Copts trace their history to the dawn of Christianity, when Egypt was integrated into the Roman and later the Byzantine empire. The word "Copt" comes from the same root as the word for "Egyptian" in ancient Greek. The community's decline started with the Arab invasions of the 7th century and the progressive Islamisation of the country, which today is largely Sunni Muslim. Several churches and monasteries in Egypt are built on sites Copts believe were visited by the Holy Family. The Bible says Joseph, Mary and Jesus sought refuge in Egypt after Christ's birth to escape a massacre of newborns ordered by King Harod.

Copts today

Copts, represented in all social classes, are present across the whole country, with the strongest concentration in central and southern Egypt. Most adhere to the Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria, headed since 2012 by Pope Tawadros II. A minority is divided between

Coptic Catholics and various Coptic Protestant branches. Tawadros, who succeeded pope Shenuda III, was chosen by a blindfolded altar boy picking his name from a chalice, according to tradition. The Catholic Copts, who form part of the Church's eastern rite, have been headed by patriarch Ibrahim Isaac Sidrak since 2013. The Vatican says some 165,000 Catholic Copts lived in Egypt in 2010. Poorly represented in government, Copts complain that they are sidelined from many posts in the justice system, universities and the police. Authorities often refuse to issue building permits for churches, arguing it would disturb the peace with their Muslim neighbors.

Deadly violence

Egypt's Copts have been the target of several deadly attacks since the 2011 uprising that toppled longtime president Hosni Mubarak. On January 1, 2011, more than 20 people died in the unclaimed bombing of a Coptic church in Egypt's second city, Alexandria.

In March the same year, 13 people were killed in clashes between Muslims and Copts in Cairo's working class neighborhood of Moqattam, where around 1,000 Christians had gathered to protest over the torching of a church. In May 2011, clashes between Muslims and Copts left 15 dead in the Cairo neighborhood of Imbaba, where two churches were attacked.

That October, almost 30 people—mostly Coptic Christians—were killed after the army

charged at a protest in Cairo to denounce the torching of a church in southern Egypt. The 2013 ouster of Mubarak's elected Islamist successor Mohamed Morsi after just one year in power sparked further attacks against Christians. Pro-Morsi Islamists accused the Christian community of supporting his overthrow. They pointed to the appearance of Tawadros alongside President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi on television in July 2013 as the then army chief, also surrounded by Muslim and opposition figures, announced Morsi's removal.

The next month, security forces used deadly force to break up two pro-Morsi protest camps in Cairo. The following two weeks saw attacks against more than 40 churches across the country, according to Human Rights Watch. Amnesty International later said more than 200 Christian-owned properties were attacked and 43 churches seriously damaged, with at least four people killed. In December last year, a suicide bombing claimed by the Islamic State group killed 29 worshippers during a Sunday mass in Cairo.

A spate of deadly jihadist-linked attacks in Egypt's restive Sinai Peninsula in February prompted some Coptic families to flee their homes. About 250 Christians took refuge in the Suez Canal city of Ismailiya after IS released a video calling for attacks against the minority. Pope Francis is set to visit Cairo late this month for talks with the grand imam of the capital's famed Al-Azhar mosque and to show solidarity with Coptic Christians. — AFP

YEMEN POLICE FOIL ATTACK ON CAMERA

ADEN: Yemeni authorities released footage yesterday of the killing of a would-be suicide bomber moments before he detonated his explosives at a checkpoint in the southern city of Aden. In the video posted online, Aden's anti-terrorism squad documented its surveillance of the assailant as he approached his target on Saturday in the Tawahi district of the port city. The video shows the alleged bomber dressed in military fatigues and armed as he walked towards the checkpoint, before a disguised officer shot him dead after getting a tip off from agents in a watching car.

Other officers arrived and quickly stripped off an explosive belt worn by the man whose body was then lying in a pool of blood, the footage showed. Aden security spokesman Abdulrahman Al-Naqeeb said in a statement that police acted on "accurate information that allowed the team to follow the movements" of the would-be bomber. — AFP

CLASHES ROCK PALESTINIAN REFUGEE CAMP IN LEBANON

SIDON: Residents fled the largest Palestinian refugee camp in Lebanon yesterday as clashes between security forces and radical Islamists intensified for the third day. Ambulances rushed the wounded to hospitals near the Ein el-Hilweh camp in the port city of Sidon, and Lebanon's state-run National News Agency reported that four people were killed since the fighting began Friday. Fighters armed with assault rifles and truck-mounted rocket-propelled grenades traded fire inside. Traces of violence spilled beyond the camp's boundaries, and Lebanon's authorities closed the highway connecting the city to southern Lebanon. Sidon's government hospital was struck by a rocket.

Representatives of several of the largest Palestinian factions, including Fatah, ordered the Islamist fighter Bilal Badr and

his followers to hand themselves over to the authorities or face a decisive crackdown. The camp's radical groups have regularly fallen afoul of Palestinian security forces for hiding fugitives from the Lebanese law. Per an agreement with the PLO, Lebanon's security forces are not authorized to enter the camp.

Issuing fatwas

Salah Al-Ali, a resident of the camp, said there was damage from shelling inside the camp. "We ask from God that the situation calms down so that we can return to our homes," he said Sidon's Musally mosque, where he was taking shelter. The spokesman for the Council of Palestinian Scholars in Lebanon said the radical groups were issuing fatwas authorizing the killing of people they disagreed with. — AP

HAWAII LGBT COUPLES SEEK EQUAL ACCESS TO FERTILITY TREATMENT

HONOLULU: Sean Smith and his husband paid more than \$20,000 for a fertility procedure when they decided to have a child using a surrogate mother. They did not know at the time that if they were a heterosexual couple, they might have saved that money. Now, Smith and other members of Hawaii's lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community are lobbying for equal access to the financial help married, heterosexual couples enjoy under state law.

They are pushing legislation that would require insurance companies to cover in vitro fertilization for more couples, including making Hawaii the first state to require the coverage for surrogates, which would help male same-sex couples who must use a surrogate. "Now that marriage equality is the law

of the land and is accepted, now let's turn to family building, and let's figure out how we fix all these inequities that exist," said Barbara Collura, president and CEO of Resolve, a national organization that advocates for access to fertility treatments. Hawaii is one of eight states that require insurance companies to cover in vitro fertilization, a costly procedure where a doctor retrieves eggs from a woman, combines them with sperm from a man and then implants an embryo into a woman's uterus. But Hawaii's mandate applies only to married heterosexual couples because it covers the medical intervention only if a woman uses sperm from her spouse, leaving the LGBT community and single women behind.

'Definitely groundbreaking'

"At the end of the visit, I would be going into the office and pulling out my credit card, and other people are probably just walking out and insurance is picking up the tab," Smith said. "We had to borrow money, refinance a second mortgage, and I'm sure there are people who don't even explore the option because the expenses are too great."

The measure pending in the Hawaii Legislature removes requirements that the egg and sperm come from a married couple and includes surrogates among the people to be covered. No other state has included surrogates in their laws, Collura said. "It is definitely groundbreaking," Collura said. "And it's an often-overlooked way that people choose to build their family, and it should not be left out. It's great

to see that Hawaii is taking the lead."

Kaiser Permanente Hawaii opposed the measure, saying the medical provider and insurer does not perform in vitro fertilization with donor eggs or surrogates because of complex legal issues and medical risks. The company asked lawmakers to remove egg donors and surrogates from the bill, saying requiring coverage of additional procedures would raise costs for the company and its customers. A similar measure in Hawaii failed in previous legislative sessions. But aside from Kaiser, the bill has seen little opposition this year.

A broad coalition including the American Civil Liberties Union of Hawaii, the Hawaii Civil Rights Commission and the Democratic Party of Hawaii are working with LGBT groups to push for

change. The proposal passed the state Senate and is up for a vote in the House this week.

Maryland had a law that also excluded same-sex couples until about a year ago, when the Legislature changed the provision so it no longer required using a husband's sperm. That helped lesbian couples, but gay men were still left out because the law didn't cover surrogates, Collura said. Most state mandates limit insurance reimbursement to a certain number of in vitro fertilization trials or allow coverage only after years of infertility. Some states also allow religious or small employers to get out of the requirement. "We need to change these laws," Collura said. "We need to update them and make them so that they are no longer discriminatory." — AP

MIGRANTS IN TURKEY PRAY FOR SAFE RETURN TO SYRIA

REYHANLI: Ahmad Mustafa fled northern Syria to Turkey four months ago, badly injuring his hand along the way. But while the free healthcare he gets as a refugee is helping him heal, Mustafa and many of the nearly 3 million Syrian migrants who have fled to Turkey are gradually losing hope for their war-ravaged homeland.

"We have no hope for Syria at this stage. Russia, Iran, and the United States are all hitting us from different sides," Mustafa said, his right arm still in a sling. "Our hope is that God will change things," he said, speaking through a translator. Mustafa is part of what Ankara says is the world's largest refugee population, many of whom barely eke out a living in places like Reyhanli, a dusty border town in the southern Hatay province that teems with Syrian refugees and where some signs in shop windows are printed in both Arabic and Turkish.

Ankara has also set up refugee camps on the Syrian side of the border and the Turkish Red Crescent estimates it is providing aid to around 5 million people inside Syria. But while a US missile strike against a Syrian government air base this week may have kindled some optimism that Washington could step up pressure on President Bashar Al-Assad, nobody in Reyhanli expects to be able to go home soon. "They are hitting us from the air, killing civilians in cities," said Samial Dude, a former truck driver from the area around rebel-held Idlib, who also now lives in Hatay. "We don't have guns. We don't even know who's bombing us, we are just being bombed. Even animals are treated as more important than Syrian people," he said. The United States fired missiles at a Syrian air base on Friday in retaliation for a chemical attack that killed 87 people, including chil-

dren, in the northwest Idlib province.

Both Washington and Ankara blame the Syrian government for the poison gas attack, but Damascus has denied responsibility. Six years of civil war have killed an estimated half a million people and set new standards of savagery for civilians, with half of Syria's population uprooted in the world's biggest refugee crisis.

Seasonal labor

In Turkey, where Ankara provides the migrants with some aid, many work as seasonal laborers on farms to survive. "I have been paying rent for six years and all my earnings go to pay it off," said Mohammad Hammadi, adding that he spends much of his time working with an aid organization to help migrants who are even worse off than he is.

President Tayyip Erdogan, long one of Assad's most vocal critics, is popular with the migrants in Hatay, who say he opened Turkey's borders to them when leaders in the Arab world did not. Erdogan has called on the West should do more to help Turkey shoulder the humanitarian burden.

Turks will go to the polls on April 16 for a referendum on whether to change the constitution and give Erdogan sweeping presidential powers. Although they will not be able to vote, some Syrians migrants hope that Erdogan does secure more power. "Of course we want Erdogan to become stronger, maybe then he can help us more. Maybe then he can build homes for us here," said Gaceel Al Awaad, who earns about 30 lira (\$8) a day working in fields, almost all of which goes to pay rent. "We just pray to God that we can return as soon as possible. This is the only concern for Syrians in Turkey." — Reuters



JUAREZ: In this March 29, 2017, file photo, a youth looks at a new, taller fence being built along US-Mexico border, replacing the shorter, gray metal fence in front of it, in the Anapra neighborhood of Ciudad. — AP

TRUMP'S WALL THREATENING ANIMALS WITHOUT BORDERS

LENGTH OF THE BORDER WALL COULD CAUSE EXTINCTIONS

SONOYTA: They are not "bad hombres," as Donald Trump might say—or any kind of hom-bres at all. But like the human migrants targeted by the US president, the jaguars, bighorn sheep and deer-like Sonoran pronghorns of northern Mexico have a lot to lose from his planned border wall. Such species currently roam at will back and forth across the border of Mexico and the United States in reserves specially protected by both countries' governments. Conservationists fear Trump's vow to build a wall the length of the border to keep criminals out of the United States will doom the beasts to extinction. It would stop them getting where they need to go to feed and mate.

'Fauna crossing'

"Caution, fauna crossing," reads a sign among the cactus and wild bushes in the northeastern desert, where deer, wild cats, coyotes and wolves crisscross the frontier. The habitat spans the Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge in Arizona and the Pinacate and Gran Altar Desert over in the Mexican state of Sonora. The latter is certified as a world heritage site by UNESCO.

The reserve is divided only by a simple fence with gaps big enough for the animals to pass through. "It was designed specially so as not to hurt the animals and so they would have no problem crossing," said Miguel Angel Grageda, head of natural resources at El Pinacate.

Food and water

Rain is scarce in the parched desert, where the heat soars as high as 55 degrees Celsius (131 Fahrenheit). The animals have to trot long distances to look for water, food and shelter. They must also be mobile to keep their numbers up when drought or sickness kill off the species in certain areas.

"If you just go and put a giant border wall between their habitat then you can cut movements off for some species which will prevent them from recolonizing their habitat," said Aaron Flesch, an environmental specialist at the University of Arizona. "When animals have trouble moving across the landscape to re-colonize those places, the population in those places will never be restored."

Gerardo Ceballos of the Ecological Institute at Mexico's National Autonomous University estimates there are only about five jaguars left on the US side. They rely on partners from the Mexican side to mate. If the animal populations were split in two and each group left to reproduce only with the limited number of mates on its side, the species would degenerate. "If we divide the population of the species in two, there will start to be crosses between related animals," said Grageda. "Later on we could have problems of inbreeding."

Resistance to wall

It is not clear when the United States will start putting up Trump's wall or how exactly its course might be plotted through protected zones such as this one. But conservationists are imagining the worst. "We don't know exactly what the results are going to be," said Flesch. "But we know they won't be good." Ceballos said vari-

ous Mexican and US non-governmental groups are preparing a challenge to the wall plan. "Over here it would require a political decision at the level of Congress" to block it, said Grageda. "We may not be able to convince Donald Trump."

It is not just the animals who would suffer from a wall, experts say, but the whole desert ecosystem. Desert mammals break up the sun-baked ground with their hoofs so that when it

does rain, the water drains underground. By tearing up the vegetation to eat it, they help spread the seeds so that desert flowers bloom anew. A wall could have "a big impact" by blocking and shifting watercourses, Ceballos said. That, and the untold impact on the soil and atmosphere, could affect humans too. "When you put up a wall, you destroy everything," he warned. —AFP

US MILITARY VETERANS IN NEW FIGHT—AGAINST DEPORTATION

CHICAGO: Miguel and Esperanza Perez stood outside Chicago's immigration courthouse, clutching an American flag folded into a triangle in a gesture of respect. The flag once flew over a US military base in Afghanistan, where the couple's son Miguel Perez Jr served two tours in a Special Forces unit.

The 38-year-old was now jailed, and at the mercy of an immigration judge inside the courthouse. The military veteran, a legal permanent resident, was subject to deportation after being convicted of a drug crime. Had he been a citizen, he simply would have served his prison time and been released. But now he was trying to avoid becoming one of the hundreds of US military veterans, all honorably discharged, to be similarly deported.

Perez thought he had automatically become a naturalized citizen when he joined the military—a common misconception among immigrants enlisted in the US armed forces. Enlistees qualify for expedited naturalization, but they still have to apply and go through the process. Some are unaware of the requirements, and others cannot comply—because they are serving in foreign lands. Still others have been victims of bureaucratic bungling.

Convicted in 2010 for the manufacture or delivery of more than two pounds (one kilo-

gram) of cocaine, Perez was sentenced to 15 years in jail. He was remanded in custody by immigration authorities last year after being granted early release from prison. In Perez's case, his family hoped their son's military service would mitigate his crime and convince the judge to let him stay.

"I hope today I bring home my son," Esperanza Perez said before a cluster of television news cameras outside the courthouse. "My son is my hero, is your hero." She was optimistic that the judge would consider the mental scars of war that drove her son to drug use, and the potential dangers he could face in Mexico, with its drug cartels. But it would take weeks for the judge to rule in March and for the Perezes to learn whether their son could come home.

'Your life is over'

On the other side of the US-Mexico border, Hector Barajas lives the life Miguel Perez Jr is trying to avoid. Barajas, a 40-year-old US Army veteran, was deported to Mexico in 2004. He had pleaded guilty to shooting at a car. When he first arrived in Mexico—a country he had not seen since he was seven—Barajas said his first thought was that his "life is over." "You have to come to grips with the reality," he said. —AFP



CARACAS: Demonstrators protest against President Nicolas Maduro's government. —AFP



TIJUANA, Mexico: Hector Barajas, a deported veteran, works on his desk at the Deported Veterans Support House on March 31, 2017. — AFP



MARSEILLE: People wave French national flag and placards as the French presidential election candidate for the far-left coalition La France insoumise delivers a speech during a public meeting at the Old Port of Marseille. — AFP

FRANCE'S MACRON UNVEILS PRIORITIES AS RACE TIGHTENS

‘WE ARE ENTERING A CRUCIAL PHASE’

PARIS: French presidential frontrunner Emmanuel Macron detailed his priorities yesterday for his first few months in office if elected, as polls showed the unpredictable race tightening just two weeks before voting. Macron, 39, told the Journal de Dimanche newspaper one of his first measures would be to pass a law setting new ethical standards for parliament, followed by related legislation that will cut the number of MPs by a third.

He also foresees a visit to Berlin and a tour of European capitals to drum up support for his plan to deepen economic integration in the eurozone, create a European border force and put in place greater protections for European industry. Asked about a slight fall in support according to recent surveys, the independent centrist replied: “They show exactly what I feel: that nothing is decided yet. We are entering a crucial phase.”

Elsewhere yesterday, his main rivals far-right leader Marine Le Pen and scandal-hit

rightwinger Francois Fillon were seeking to persuade the roughly 30 percent of voters who are yet to make their minds up. Analysts say the widely-watched election remains extremely unpredictable after a rollercoaster campaign. Fillon will hold what could be one of his largest rallies so far in southern Paris later in the afternoon, with the defiant ex-prime minister convinced he can still win despite a series of damaging revelations about his finances.

‘Fragile favorite’

“Everything that doesn’t kill you makes you stronger,” he told a cheering crowd in Clermont-Ferrand in central France on Friday. Le Pen and her closest allies will hit the airwaves in a series of interviews intended to sway voters tempted by her vision of a nationalist France, unburdened by the European Union and the euro currency.

The latest poll published late on Saturday confirmed shifting momentum seen earlier this week following a second and final televised

debate between the 11 candidates vying to be France’s next leader. Le Pen and Macron-dubbed the “fragile favorite” by the Journal de Dimanche—are neck and neck but both have lost ground slightly and would win 23 percent if the vote were held today.

This would mean they both qualified for the second round run-off scheduled on May 7 which Macron is seen winning comfortably. But behind them, Communist-backed firebrand Jean-Luc Melancon continues to surge after strong performances during the debates when he repeatedly tackled Le Pen over her headline views on immigration and Islam.

The often witty left winger, an admirer of late Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez and staunch critic of the European Union, is seen winning 19 percent of votes, up four points over a week, which puts him at the same level of support as Fillon. The survey of 1,421 people was carried out online at the end of last week by the BVA Salesforce polling group. — AFP

‘FAKE NEWS’ ANOTHER WEAPON IN ORBAN’S ILLIBERAL HUNGARY

BUDAPEST: Few outlets illustrate better the cozy relationship between Hungary’s media and Prime Minister Viktor Orban than Origo, once an independent news source, now seemingly another weapon in the government’s armory. Last month, the website alleged that Budapest’s Central European University (CEU), founded by Hungarian-born billionaire George Soros, was engaged in “concrete fraud” by issuing fake degrees.

Hours later the EU country’s government published a bill proposing tighter rules for foreign-registered universities, with the CEU, set up in 1991 after the fall of communism, seen as the main target. The internationally respected CEU, long eyed with suspicion by Orban as a hotbed of liberalism financed by his bete noire Soros, has warned it may have to close as a result. But despite an international outcry and the CEU threatening to sue over Origo’s “outrageous falsehoods”, parliament, dominated by Orban’s Fidesz party, rubber stamped the legislation on Tuesday.

‘Lie factory’

Origo’s transformation began in 2014 when the then-editor was sacked soon after the site published an expose alleging extravagant travel expenses by a government minis-

ter. That prompted a mass walkout by staff who suspected political interference. The site’s German owner Deutsche Telekom quickly offloaded the site to a media firm linked to Fidesz. Origo’s content openly lurched toward government agendas only with the arrival of a new editorial team in 2016.

Since then its front page has been dominated by hit pieces on Orban’s favorite targets: opposition parties, migrants and the Hungarian-born Soros. “The site was turned into a lie factory of fake news,” former Origo sports journalist Bence Martha, who was fired last month, told AFP. Martha said he and colleagues were cautioned about “negative” reporting and that articles were rewritten by editors without journalists’ consent. Pieces even “remotely critical” about state funding of sports or other politically sensitive subjects were “asking for trouble,” he said.

Overhaul

After sweeping to power in 2010, Orban, an admirer of “illiberal democracy”, set about radically overhauling the media landscape as well as a raft of state institutions. Public television and radio channels were merged and given the same content from the state news agency. Monitors including the OSCE have since criticised public

news channels for coverage overwhelmingly biased toward the government before 2014 elections and in a 2016 referendum on migrants.

At the same time business interests close to the government, like Hungarian-born Hollywood producer Andy Vajna who bought the television channel TV2, have snapped up commercial outlets. An unlikely new magnate is Lorinc Meszaros, a former gas fitter who is now mayor of Orban’s hometown Felcsut. Now one of Hungary’s richest men, Meszaros recently picked up a large share of the Mediaworks publisher that owns most of the regional newspapers, as well as top sports and business dailies.

One of its titles, Nepszabadsag, used to be the main opposition newspaper until the portfolio’s previous owner, an Austrian investor, abruptly suspended production in October citing commercial reasons. In December Mediaworks said the paper would not be reopened.

Meanwhile a formerly independent business weekly Figyelo, bought in December by another Orban ally, Maria Schmidt, recently deleted its archive and featured a double-spread government anti-EU campaign advert “Let’s Stop Brussels”. “A clear coordination has emerged between government propaganda and the media army

controlled by Fidesz, including Origo and all the other platforms,” Gabor Polyak, an analyst with the Merteck media watchdog, told AFP. Without advertising from state bodies and companies, media still not aligned with the government struggle to break even. An opposition daily Nepszava also printed the “Let’s Stop Brussels” advert but with a disclaimer: “Independent journalism continues unaffected by the propaganda campaign”.

‘Shrink the space’

Orban has tried to “shrink the space” for critical voices, said Andras Petho, the journalist who broke the ministerial expenses story in Origo three years ago. “I wouldn’t be surprised if they decided to go after the few remaining independent outlets before the next elections (in 2018),” he told AFP. One media tycoon will be hard to shake off though; Lajos Simicska, a college friend of Orban’s and financier of Fidesz who in 2015 spectacularly fell out with the prime minister. Simicska’s billboards recently carried opposition party Jobbik posters branding Meszaros and Orban thieves while his newspaper and TV channel, formerly pro-government, have turned hostile. Neither the government nor Origo responded to AFP requests for comment for this article. — AFP



BUDAPEST: In this April 4, 2017 file photo a woman holds a placard with a photo of Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban, center, as demonstrators protest against the amendment of the higher education law seen by many as an action aiming at the closure of the Central European University, founded by Hungarian born US billionaire and businessman George Soros, outside the university’s central building. —AP

ITALY POPULISTS SUFFER GROWING PAINS WITH ONLINE DEMOCRACY

ROME: It aspires to govern Italy but the populist Five Star Movement (M5S) is suffering growing pains linked to the model of direct democracy on which it is run, analysts say. Using an internet portal called “Rousseau” after the 18th-Century French philosopher, M5S uses online votes of members to decide its policies, draft legislation and candidates.

Created by the late Gianrobert Caleggio, a computer expert who co-founded the movement with comic Beppe Grillo in 2009, the platform is presented by the party as a reflection of its unique commitment to grassroots democracy and a new politics untainted by Italy’s long tradition of behind-the-scenes, self-serving deals among an exclusive political class. But it has become increasingly criticized, notably by former members, for its lack of transparency and the party leadership’s tight control over how it works.

And as M5S seeks to fight an ever larger number of elections at every level, its use in the selection of candidates, typically on the basis of one short video post, has also come under scrutiny. Virginia Raggi, 37, was elected mayor of Rome in June 2016 after being plucked from relative obscurity to join a long list of 200 potential M5S candidates. The photogenic lawyer shone on the small screen and won the selection battle.

‘Just trust me’

But in office her lack of experience has been exposed as the new administration has lurched from one crisis to another. With little sign of the movement demonstrating it can address the capital’s myriad problems this has led to tensions between Raggi and Grillo, who has been branded a control freak tyrant by rivals in Italy’s mainstream parties.

In Genoa, Grillo’s home town, Marika Cassimatis topped the movement’s poll of activists only to be struck off the list when the leader deemed her positions on certain issues, and some of her backers, to be “contrary to the principles of the movement.” He then compounded the damage caused by that incident by adding on his blog: “I’d ask anyone who does not understand this decision just to trust to me.”

That proved to be the final straw for some activists who quit the movement in its first significant defections. “What the M5S shows us is that electronic democracy does not work, notably because it can be subject to all sorts of manipulation, either technological or ideological,” said Leonardo Morlina, a political science professor at Rome’s social studies university. “The Genoa example was symptomatic. We don’t really know why the choice of candidates was not approved. We just have Beppe Grillo’s explanation to go on, which poses a problem for internal party democracy.”

Support strongly underpinned

Anti-euro and anti-immigration but also with a green tinge to some policies, M5S emerged as a major political force in the 2013 general election when it snapped up 25.5 percent of the vote, becoming the second biggest political force behind the PD. It has built on that level of support since and last year won control of Rome and Turin as well as a string of smaller municipalities.

Polls suggest it could win around 30 percent of the popular vote when the next election is held, most likely early next year. But the University of Bologna’s Gianfranco Pasquino thinks the appeal of its supposed ultra-democratic structure is limited. “The number of people involved in these online votes makes up a very small proportion of the electorate. From the democracy perspective, they are of very little interest.”

Despite its millions of supporters, only 140,000 people are registered on “Rousseau” and less than a quarter of them participate in votes, on average. “It is not a party it is an algorithm,” former Prime Minister Matteo Renzi recently joked. M5S has also been hit recently by allegations of involvement in propagating “fake news” via its extensive network of websites, including items favorable to Russia and Donald Trump or lending credence to various conspiracy theories. “But so far this has not had any impact on Five Star’s core support,” emphasizes Pasquino. “Their rejection of the traditional parties is so strong it seems Five Star’s level of support is currently strongly underpinned.” — AFP



VENICE: A gondola and a boat navigate on the Canale Grande (Grand Canal) in Venice. — AFP

SERBIAN PRESIDENT-ELECT ACCUSED OF POLL FRAUD

BELGRADE: Serbian president-elect Aleksandar Vucic’s main poll rival accused the former premier yesterday of “scandalous irregularities” in an election which handed him a first-round victory earlier this month. Pro-EU candidate Sasa Jankovic, who garnered 16 percent in the April 2 polls compared to 55 percent for Vucic, called for a partial recount of ballots.

Thousands of demonstrators, mostly students, have gathered daily in Belgrade and other cities to protest Vucic’s election, but this is the first time one of his rivals has alleged poll irregularities. Jankovic’s office said a recount of 25 bags of polling cards, carried out Friday at the request of the centre-left independent candidate, showed that Vucic had been awarded 964 more votes than were actually counted. “The irregularities we found in favor (of Vucic) are scandalous,” it said in a statement.

He added that the average difference

per polling station between the number of votes officially attributed to Vucic and the actual number counted was 38. “If this average figure, based on a random sample, were multiplied by the number of all the 8,396 polling stations, it would produce a sinister conclusion: Aleksandar Vucic potentially stole 319,000 votes,” the statement added.

Centre-right politician Vucic, a former ultranationalist who was elected prime minister in 2014, won in the first round by garnering more than 50 percent of votes, way ahead of the 10 other candidates. After the results were announced he trumpeted his “clear ... victory” in winning 12 percent more votes than all the other candidates combined. On Saturday an estimated 10,000 protestors gathered in Belgrade. Jankovic said the crowds were unhappy with the “injustice of the autocratic regime which threatens Serbia with dictatorship”. — AFP

TEEN ASYLUM-SEEKER NAMED AS SUSPECT IN NORWAY BOMB CASE

COPENHAGEN: A 17-year-old asylum-seeker from Russia was arrested yesterday in connection with an explosive device found near a busy subway station in Norway’s capital and defused before it detonated, authorities said. The youth was detained on suspicion of handling explosives, but investigators do not know if he planned to carry out an attack with the homemade device, Signe Aaling, chief prosecutor for Norway’s PST security service, said. “PST is now working on finding his intentions and find out whether others are involved,” Aaling said.

The youth was not identified, but security service head Benedicte Bjornland said intelligence agencies were aware of him. He is an asylum-seeker from Russia who arrived in Norway with his family in 2010, Bjornland said. Bjornland also alleged that the youth was part of “extreme Islamism” circles in Norway. “It is likely that that attacks in France, German, Great Britain,

Russia and Sweden can create a copycat effect in Norway with people with Islamic sympathies,” Bjornland said, listing of the locations of extremist attacks that have devastated Europe in the last year. The discovery of the explosive Saturday night - found on the street just outside the Greenland subway station - prompted police to evacuate late bars and restaurants in the Norwegian capital. The Oslo explosive was found less than a mile from the government buildings that were damaged in a deadly bomb attack carried out by right-wing extremist Anders Breivik in 2011. That bomb and a subsequent gun massacre at a Norwegian island killed a total of 77 people. Norway was put on high alert after neighboring Sweden suffered a truck attack in Stockholm on Friday that killed four people and injured 15. Norway intelligence agency raised the terror threat in the country on Sunday to “likely” for “a two-month period.” — AP

FRENCH GUIANA FACES CALL TO SHUTDOWN AFTER PROTESTS

CAYENNE: The movement behind more than two weeks of social unrest in French Guiana has called for a complete shutdown of the overseas territory from today, after a police officer was injured. Activists are protesting decades of under-investment in the French territory in South America, paralyzed by a general strike which 37 unions called on March 25.

Locals last week rejected an offer from Paris to inject a billion dollars of aid to the territory, home to 250,000 people, demanding \$2.5 billion immediately. The protests also led to the indefinite postponement of an Arianespace rocket launch at Europe's

Guiana Space Centre in Kourou. A "Collective to Get Guiana Moving," spearheading protests to improve economic development and job creation programmes, on Saturday called for a complete blockade from Monday of the territory, which relies on huge injections of public funds. Friday saw demonstrations in which one police officer was injured. One member of the collective told local radio that nobody would be able to pass the blockade after midnight on Sunday "even on foot." But the collective's call to ramp up protest has sown some division, spawning an anti-blockade Facebook group and a 1,000-signature online petition to that effect.

An ongoing blockade of the port in the capital Cayenne has seen the flow of fresh produce slow to a dribble in the territory bordering Surinam and northern Brazil on the northeast coast of South America, some 7,000 kilometers from Paris. Last Tuesday's protest in Kourou escalated the tension, police using teargas as locals pressed demands for a "Marshall Plan" of French aid, along the lines of the huge US economic support given to help Western Europe to recover after World War II.

The Kourou space centre has become a symbol of economic disparity in Guiana and a focus for anger, given many locals have no electricity or run-

ning water and around one in four is jobless. Guiana has been administered as a French region since the end of the 18th century and was also used as a place to send convicts for forced labor between 1852 and 1946. The police officer injured Friday received a delegation from the "500 brothers against delinquency" group whose hooded members have been at the heart of the protests. "The values we share are much more important than our differences," the injured officer said, stressing his "respect" for the group, whose spokesman insisted that "the forces of law and order are not our enemies". — AFP

US SOLDIER KILLED IN ANTI-IS OPERATIONS IN AFGHANISTAN

KABUL: An American special forces soldier has been killed while conducting operations against the Islamic State group in Afghanistan, the US military said. The US-backed Afghan military has vowed to wipe out the group in its strongholds in the eastern province of Nangarhar as IS challenges the more powerful Taliban on its own turf.

"A US soldier was killed in action while conducting operations against ISIS-Khorasan in (Nangarhar) Afghanistan," US Navy Captain Bill Salvin said on Twitter, referring to a regional affiliate of the jihadist group. The identity of the soldier, killed late on Saturday, was not revealed. "On behalf of all of US Forces - Afghanistan, I offer our deepest condolences to the family and friends of our fallen comrade," General John Nicholson, the top US commander in Afghanistan, said in a statement. "We will always remember our fallen comrades and commit ourselves to deliver on their sacrifice," Nicholson added.

Nangarhar, which borders Pakistan, is a hotbed of IS militancy. US forces have con-

ducted a number of air strikes on jihadist bases in the area since August last year. IS, notorious for its reign of terror in Syria and Iraq, has been making inroads into Afghanistan in recent years. It has attracted disaffected members of the Pakistani and Afghan Taliban as well as Uzbek Islamists. But the group has been steadily losing territory in the face of heavy pressure both from US air strikes and a ground offensive led by Afghan forces.

Islamic State's strength in Afghanistan has fallen to 600-800 fighters from 3,000 in early 2016, NATO has said, adding that it killed the top 12 IS commanders in the country last year. The jihadists claimed a deadly assault on Afghanistan's largest military hospital last month, but survivors who spoke to AFP said the attackers chanted "Long live Taliban" in Pashto. Last month three American troops have sustained injuries when an Afghan soldier opened fire on them in the southern province of Helmand, the first known "insider attack" on international forces this year. — AFP

BANGLADESH ISLAMISTS TO HANG AFTER PRESIDENT REJECTS PLEAS

DHAKA: A top Islamist extremist under sentence of death has lost his last hope of avoiding the gallows after Bangladesh's president rejected a mercy plea, an official said yesterday. Bangladesh's highest court last month upheld a 2008 death sentence on Mufti Abdul Hannan and two associates for an attack on a shrine that left three people dead and injured the British high commissioner at the time.

Last month the trio wrote to President Abdul Hamid seeking clemency. "But the president has rejected all three mercy petitions," his press secretary Joyнал Abedin told AFP. Jail authorities would now go ahead with the executions, deputy inspector general of prisons Touhidul Islam told AFP. Authorities have not announced a date but the executions are expected sometime this month.

Hannan headed the Harkat-ul Jihad Al Islami (HuJI) group. The attack on the British ambassador in 2004 was among the most high-profile of a series of assaults by the group across Bangladesh in the late 1990s and early 2000s. The decision to

reject clemency comes just weeks after militants attempted to free Hannan by hurling bombs at police vans as police transferred him between prisons.

By the time Hannan was arrested in late 2005 more than 100 people had been killed in attacks by HuJI on a church, secular gatherings and mosques used by Islam's minority sects. Bangladesh has suffered a spate of attacks on secular activists, foreigners and religious minorities in recent years. Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State group have claimed responsibility in some cases but Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's secular government has pinned the blame on local outfits. There has been a resurgence of Islamist extremist attacks in recent weeks, with at least three being claimed by IS. The fatalities included the head of intelligence of an elite security force tasked with tackling Islamist militancy across the Muslim-majority country. Police and army commandos have arrested scores of suspected extremists and killed more than 60 people since an attack on a Dhaka cafe last year that left 22 dead. — AFP



CHENNAI: A Indian Christian worshippers receives Holy Communion during Palm Sunday Mass in Chennai on April 9, 2017. Palm Sunday marks the sixth and last Sunday of Lent and the beginning of Holy Week. — AFP



NEW DELHI: In this photograph taken on April 7, 2017, closed pubs and restaurants affected by a liquor ban are seen in a neighborhood in Gurgaon on the outskirts of New Delhi. — AFP

BOOZE BAN STRESSES BIG INDIAN BUSINESS CURBING DRINK DRIVING ON INDIA'S ROADS

GURGAON: When Shailja Singh headed to her favorite bar for a post-work beer this week she found it shut, victim of a Supreme Court ruling that has stopped India's burgeoning alcohol and leisure industries in their tracks. Thousands of liquor outlets were forced to close on April 1 after the order, which barred the sale of alcohol within a 500-metre range of a highway.

The ruling was meant to curb drink driving on India's roads, the world's deadliest, but has also shut down many bars, restaurants and hotels that serve tourists and office workers like Singh. Fortunately for the 23-year-old, only half the bar and restaurant-filled area in Gurgaon, a satellite city of New Delhi, is affected.

In a sign of the ruling's arbitrary impact, the bars that fall just outside the 500-metre range are open, meaning she won't have to go far to get a drink. But for the businesses affected, the problem is not so easily solved. "This is one of the most regressive steps that I've seen," said one investor in a pub forced to go dry. "The prime minister is talking about improving the ease of doing business. But first tell us can we do business to begin with? What are we telling foreign investors-overnight your investments can go?" said the investor, who asked not to be named.

No beer at Beer Cafe

India's expanding middle class has made it a sparkling market for the alcohol industry. In

2016 India alcohol sales were worth \$40 billion, making it the eighth largest market by value globally. It is expected to grow by six percent on average annually for the next four years, according to a Euromonitor International estimate.

"The liquor players, the tourism industry, they all had a strategy in place when they set up their businesses and then this verdict came in," said an analyst at a Mumbai brokerage who asked not to be named. "This was completely unexpected and they will have to re-strategise." Share prices of listed alcohol makers have already been hit. United Spirits, which makes Black Label whisky and Smirnoff vodka in India, saw its shares fall by around nine percent on the Bombay Stock Exchange in the days immediately after the ban, despite a rising market.

Hotel and bar operators have also been affected. Shahira Khan, assistant brand manager at The Beer Cafe chain of bars, said business was struggling. "Earlier on normal weekdays we would get around 200 people each day. On weekends, around 250 people would walk in. Now we are hardly getting anyone," she told AFP.

"After all, why would people come in? There is no beer at The Beer Cafe." Staff at a luxury hotel in Jaipur, a popular tourist destination in northern India, said they'd had several cancellations after they were forced to stop selling alcohol because the property falls within 500 metres of a highway. The manager of the Chokhi Dhani said one group of Russian tourists were incensed

when they were told they couldn't get a drink. "We tried telling them that it was a court order and we couldn't do anything about it but they were obviously not pleased," hotel manager Nupur Jain told AFP. "They complained about how it spoiled all their plans and that they'd come there to have a good time."

Highways reclassified

State governments and entrepreneurs have begun finding creative ways around the 500-metre limit. Some states like Punjab have begun reclassifying highways as local roads to escape the ban, according to media reports. Meanwhile some shopping malls and bar complexes are reportedly rerouting customers to a different entrance to increase their official distance from the road.

India has the world's deadliest roads with nearly 150,000 people killed in 2015, according to the ministry of road transport and highways. Of those, 6,755 deaths were due to drunk driving. The government has proposed more stringent sanctions for drunk drivers including fines of Rs.10,000 (\$154) and a jail term. For the angry pub investor whose business has been wiped out, that is the solution. "Instead of saying the law will be more stringent on anyone caught driving drunk, you're saying let's not sell alcohol. This is like saying there are rapists out there so women should not go out," he said. "What kind of a society are we living in?" — AFP

SIX KILLED IN KASHMIR DEADLY POLL VIOLENCE

SRINAGAR: Six civilians were killed in Indian-administered Kashmir yesterday when police opened fire at protesters who stormed polling stations during a by-election for a parliamentary seat, a top officer said. State and paramilitary police fired bullets and shotgun pellets as thousands of protesters shouting slogans against Indian rule charged into voting booths in Budgam district near the main city of Srinagar.

"Violent protests happened at many places in Budgam. Protesters damaged and snatched EVMs (electronic voting machines) at some places," Shantmanu, the state's chief electoral officer, told AFP. "It was not a good day for all of us. Six civilians were killed and 70 were wounded," Shantmanu, who uses only one name, told reporters. Many were grievously injured with bullets fired by police and paramilitary troops, hospital sources in Srinagar said.

The electoral officer said more than 100 government personnel, including police and paramilitary officers were also injured

in the clashes. In the Charare-e-Sharif area of Budgam two people were killed when the paramilitary Border Security Force fired at protesters, he said. Another person was killed in the Beerwah area of the same district when paramilitary police opened fire at a stone-throwing crowd.

Three more were killed in the day-long clashes, with two of them succumbing to multiple pellet injuries from the shotguns which Indian paramilitary forces use in Kashmir for crowd control. Polling had to be halted in more than dozen places amid a call by top Kashmiri separatist leaders opposed to Indian rule to boycott the by-election. Only 6.5 percent of voters turned out to cast their ballot, Shantmanu said, 26 percent less than in the last elections held in 2014 and the lowest ever participation recorded in any election in the disputed territory.

Internet suspended

Former state chief minister Farooq

Abdullah, who is contesting the Srinagar seat, slammed the government for its failure to maintain law and order. "Elections should have been peaceful. This government has failed in giving a peaceful atmosphere for people to come and vote," he told reporters. Ahead of the polling, authorities suspended internet services across the Kashmir Valley for fear of widespread protests.

Police had also detained hundreds of young people and separatist activists in the run-up to the poll, sources told AFP. Kashmir has been divided between India and Pakistan since the end of British rule in 1947. Both claim the disputed territory in its entirety. Rebel groups in Indian Kashmir have for decades battled troops and police, demanding independence or a merger of the territory with Pakistan.

Around 500,000 Indian soldiers are deployed in the region. Ahead of yesterday's polling, the Indian government had sent in 20,000 additional paramilitaries. Armed encounters between rebels and gov-



SRINAGAR: Kashmiri protesters throw stones on Indian security men outside a polling station during a by-election to an Indian Parliament seat. — AP

ernment forces have become more frequent since the killing of a popular rebel leader by security forces last July sparked widespread unrest. Police and army officials say dozens

of local youths have joined the rebel ranks since then. At least 29 armed militants, mostly locals, have died fighting government forces this year. — AFP

UN URGES MYANMAR TO RELEASE DETAINED ROHINGYA CHILDREN

YANGON: The UN children's agency UNICEF has called on Myanmar's government to release Rohingya children detained as part of a sweeping military campaign in Rakhine state. More than 600 people were arrested in an army crackdown on Rohingya Muslims in the north of the restive state. The operation was launched after deadly attacks by militants on police posts in October.

Rohingya escapees in neighboring Bangladesh, where more than 70,000 have fled, gave UN investigators accounts of beatings, torture and food deprivation inside the jails. Minors are among those detained. UNICEF's deputy executive director Justin Forsyth said he had given the country's de facto civilian leader Aung San Suu Kyi details of

around a dozen youngsters being held in Buthidaung prison. "There are some children that are detained in prison, so those are the cases that we're raising," he told AFP late on Saturday at the end of a brief trip to Myanmar. "Any child that's detained is an issue for us." Nobel Laureate Suu Kyi and Myanmar's army chief both recognized "that there's an issue here" but made no firm commitment for their release, he added. Government spokesman Zaw Htay declined to comment when contacted by AFP yesterday.

The UN Human Rights Council has agreed to send a mission to Myanmar to probe allegations that troops and police raped, killed and tortured Rohingya in their months-long campaign.

Myanmar has rejected the accounts collected by UN investigators in the Bangladesh refugee camps, who said the crimes could amount to ethnic cleansing. "I think ethnic cleansing is too strong an expression to use for what is happening," Suu Kyi said in an interview with the BBC last week.

Myanmar's police and the military have both launched separate probes to investigate the deaths of at least eight people in custody in northern Rakhine. UN rights envoy for Myanmar Yanghee Lee said some 450 people were being held in Buthidaung prison when she visited in January, most without access to lawyers or their families.

Myanmar has long faced criticism for its treat-

ment of more than one million Rohingya, who are vilified as illegal "Bengali" immigrants and forced to live in apartheid-like conditions even though many have lived in the country for generations. A group calling itself the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army has claimed the October attacks, which it said were intended to defend the rights of the persecuted minority after years of worsening conditions.

Forsyth said there was a growing recognition among both Myanmar's civilian government and army that depriving Rohingya children of opportunities had bred militancy. "The reality is if you don't address these issues particularly for these communities then it will come back to haunt them, which is partly what has happened," he said. — AFP



PALM BEACH: In this Friday, April 7, 2017 file photo, President Donald Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping pause for photographs at Mar-a-Lago. — AP

US MISSILES SEND MESSAGE TO N KOREA, CHINA WITH STRIKE

‘THE US HAS A NEW SHERIFF IN TOWN’

SEOUL: The US missile strike on Syria contained a clear message for North Korea and its main ally China, analysts said, but not one strong enough to push Pyongyang off its nuclear weapons path.

While the timing was largely coincidental, the fact that US President Donald Trump ordered the strike while hosting a summit with Chinese leader Xi Jinping carried particular resonance given that the North's nuclear ambitions and how best to thwart them was among the top agenda items of their meeting.

And exercising the military option added some extra weight to Trump's recent threat of unilateral action against Pyongyang if Beijing fails to help curb its neighbor's nuclear weapons program. Kim Yong-Hyun, a professor at Dongguk University, said the strike against Syria was a statement of intent that was meant for a wide readership. "It signals to Pyongyang that the US has a new sheriff in town who isn't hesitant about pulling his gun from the holster," Kim said.

But while the move might have given the North pause, Pyongyang on Saturday said the strikes only confirmed its view that nuclear weapons were key to guaranteeing its future survival. "The reality of today shows that we must stand against power with power and it proves a million times over that our decision to strengthen our nuclear deterrence has been the right choice," state media reported an unnamed foreign ministry spokesman as saying. The Syria strikes were an "intolerable act of aggression," he added.

Nuclear determination

The North has carried out five nuclear tests-

two of them last year-and expert satellite imagery analysis suggests it could well be preparing for a sixth. US intelligence officials say Pyongyang could be less than two years away from developing a nuclear warhead that could reach the continental United States. If Thursday's strike was a warning to other countries, it was one with which Pyongyang, which regularly cites US hostility as the driving force behind its nuclear weapons development, is quite familiar.

"Trump's attack on Syria is unlikely to have any significant effect on a North Korea that is already well versed in the threat posed by the United States," said Joel Wit, a senior fellow at the US-Korea Institute at Johns Hopkins University. At the time of the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, then North Korean leader Kim Jong-Il disappeared from public view for around six weeks-and was widely believed to have gone into hiding for fear of a US attack.

Chang Yong-Seok, a senior researcher at the Institute for Peace and Unification at Seoul National University, said Kim's son, current leader Kim Jong-Un, had no reason to take such precautions. "Armed with nuclear weapons, he would hardly flinch at the attack in Syria," Chang said. As if to underline the point, North Korean state media released photos of a smiling Kim inspecting a mushroom farm.

Warning to China?

The question then arises as to what impact the US president's willingness to exercise his military muscle may have on China's thinking. China is North Korea's economic lifeline and as such

enjoys more leverage over its maverick neighbor than any other country. Like his predecessors in the White House, Trump wants China to do more to influence the North's behavior, but has gone further than others in threatening to go it alone if Beijing fails to step up to the plate.

In that context, the strike against Syria may resonate more firmly in Beijing than Pyongyang. "It's a signal that Trump's administration will not only talk, they will act," said Wang Dong, Associate Professor and Director of the School of International Studies at Peking University. While China has clearly lost patience with Pyongyang's nuclear provocations, it is extremely wary of any response that might bring about North Korea's collapse and chaos on its doorstep.

"From the Chinese point of view, there is still room to explore a path for a diplomatic solution," Wang said. Jia Qingguo, a professor of International Relations at Beijing University, said the North's nuclear arsenal and highly sensitive geopolitical position meant the fallout of any military action could be catastrophic. "A small kick could provoke big disasters. It's not like Iraq," Jia said. Although China's state media went strong on photos and coverage of the Xi-Trump summit, it gave little space to news of the strikes against Syria, with few editorials or commentaries. One exception was the nationalist-leaning Global Times, which suggested that Trump's "show of force" was rash and ill-considered. "This was Trump's first major move in international affairs, and it leaves an impression that the decision was made in haste and not without contradiction," the newspaper said. — AFP

MYANMAR WEDDING BOAT ACCIDENT TOLL RISES TO 30

YANGON: Rescuers yesterday found more bodies from a boat accident in western Myanmar that has now claimed the lives of at least 30 people, most of them guests returning from a wedding. The boat, called "Silver Star" in Burmese, sank Friday evening in a river near Patheingyi, a port city west of Yangon. It was believed to be carrying around 60 passengers when it collided with another vessel in the dark. Rescuers pulled 21 bodies from the river on Saturday and have since discovered more victims.

"We got nine dead bodies, three men and six women, today," a police officer at Patheingyi police station told AFP, asking not to be named. It is unlikely there are many more victims to be found. On Saturday evening a local MP said nine people were missing. Local media photos showed fren-

zied scenes as rescuers worked throughout the early hours of Saturday to wheel stretchers away from the river and lay bodies onshore.

Fatal boat accidents are common in Myanmar, a poor country with rudimentary transport and weakly-enforced safety regulations. Vessels ferrying people along the coastline and rivers are often dangerously overcrowded, and accidents can have staggering death tolls. It can also take several days for all bodies to be retrieved. Last October 73 people, including many teachers and students, drowned when their overloaded vessel capsized in central Myanmar on the Chindwin River. Around 60 people died in March 2015 when their ferry sank in rough waters off the western state of Rakhine. — AFP

INDIAN ANCHOR READS REPORT OF HER HUSBAND'S DEATH ON LIVE TV

RAIPUR: An Indian television presenter has been praised for her calmness and bravery after reading out a breaking news report of a road accident which killed her husband. Supreet Kaur was presenting a news bulletin on the IBC-24 news channel in Chhattisgarh state on Saturday when a reporter phoned in live with details of an accident which killed three of the five people travelling in a SUV.

The report did not name the victims. But Kaur, 28, realized her husband was probably among those killed as he was travelling on the same route and at the same time with four others, the channel's news chief Anshuman Sharma told AFP. "When the reporter said all the victims were from Bilai and were travelling in a

Renault Duster, she immediately had a hunch her husband had died in the crash." Kaur nevertheless kept her composure.

Only when the bulletin was over did she rush from the studio to confirm her fears. "She is an extremely brave woman. She has been with us for the last nine years. We are really proud of her," said Sharma of Kaur, who was married two years ago. Social media users heaped praise on Kaur, calling her a hero. "Salute Supreet's strength in dealing with her husband's demise with extraordinary bravery & professionalism," tweeted the state chief minister Raman Singh. "Supreet Kaur: Salute. And deepest sympathies," author and commentator Shobha De wrote on Twitter. — AFP

INDIAN, CHINESE NAVIES RESCUE SHIP HIJACKED BY SOMALI PIRATES

NEW DELHI: The navies of India and China carried out a joint operation yesterday to rescue a merchant ship hijacked by Somali pirates in the Gulf of Aden, the Indian defense ministry said. After receiving a distress call on Saturday night, the Indian warships established contact with the captain of the merchant vessel who had locked himself in a strong room along with the rest of the Filipino crew.

"An Indian Navy helicopter undertook aerial reconnaissance of the merchant vessel... to sanitize the upper decks of the merchant ship and ascertain the location of pirates, if still on board," a statement from the defense ministry said. Emboldened by the helicopter cover and on receiving the all-clear signal that no pirates were visible on the upper decks, some crew members gradually emerged from the strong room.

They searched the ship and confirmed that the pirates had fled overnight. A

boarding party from the nearby Chinese Navy ship then arrived on the merchant ship, while the Indian Naval helicopter provided air cover for the rescue operation. "It has been established that all 19 Filipino crew members are safe," the statement added. The bulk carrier, OS 35, was travelling from Kelang in Malaysia to the port city of Aden in Yemen when it came under attack from Somali pirates on Saturday night.

The Indian warships were in the region as part of an overseas deployment. The joint action comes amid a recent strain in ties following the Dalai Lama's visit to the Indian border state of Arunachal Pradesh, parts of which China claims as its territory. Somali pirates began staging attacks on ships in 2005, disrupting major international shipping routes and costing the global economy billions of dollars. At the peak of the piracy crisis in January 2011, 736 hostages and 32 boats were held. — AFP

HIGH-FIVES AND PORTRAITS AT PYONGYANG MARATHON

PYONGYANG: Hundreds of foreigners lined up in Pyongyang's Kim Il-Sung Stadium yesterday for the city's annual marathon, the highlight of the tourism calendar in isolated North Korea. The 40,000-plus capacity ground was packed for the event, the crowd warmly applauding as the runners gathered on the artificial pitch, with portraits of the North's founding father Kim Il-Sung and his late son and heir Kim Jong-Il smiling down benignly from the roof.

The event is part of the commemorations for the anniversary of Kim Il-Sung's birth on April 15, 105 years ago, and a row of dignitaries was in attendance-at least four of them in military uniform. Nearly 2,000 people entered the event, more than half of them foreigners-mostly Europeans and other Westerners. They took part even though the North is under multiple sets of United Nations sanctions over its nuclear and ballistic missile programs, and Washington is diverting a carrier strike group towards the Korean peninsula as tensions mount.

"It's a bit surreal, where we are," said Irishman Richie Leahy, 35, who likes holidays that are "more of an adventure". "This just ticked all the boxes," he told AFP. "I took part in a sporting event in North Korea: it's not something that everyone can say." Soon after the start the course passed an obelisk declaring "The great leaders Kim Il-Sung and Kim Jong-Il will always be with us". The runners made their way on past city landmarks including Kim Il-Sung Square and Mansu hill, where giant bronze statues of the two men gaze out over their capital.

Local runner Pak Chol, 27, established a commanding lead in the men's race several

kilometres out and recorded his third victory in the event in 2 hours 13 minutes and 56 seconds. His compatriot Jo Un-Ok was the first woman across the line in 2:29:23". Despite the geopolitical tensions-only last week the UN Security Council condemned the North's latest missile launch-knots of spectators gathered along the route, cheering the runners on and exchanging high-fives with them.

‘Experience of a lifetime’

Spontaneous encounters with North Koreans are normally rare on visits to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), as the country is officially known. "Really being with people, greeting them, touching them. It's really quite something," said Soleiman Dias, an international school admissions director from Fortaleza in Brazil, who described the run as "the experience of a lifetime".

American artist Tamara Bedford added: "To have so many people here to watch all of us is really an honor." Critics say that tourism to the North helps to bolster a regime accused of widespread human rights abuses as well as its weapons ambitions, which include developing a missile capable of delivering a nuclear warhead to the continental United States. Among a host of measures, the United Nations sanctions include a cap on coal exports, by far the North's biggest foreign currency earner, but do not directly ban tourism.

The US State Department, though, "strongly urges" its citizens to avoid all travel to the North on its website, urging would-be visitors to "consider what they might be supporting". Nick Bonner, director of Koryo Tours, a specialist agency which has the exclusive rights to

bring Europeans and other Westerners to the marathon, estimates that, excluding visitors from China-the North's sole ally and main business partner-the country receives only around 5,000 tourists a year.

That means the marathon accounts for nearly a fifth of them. After costs, a portion of visitors' funds will end up in the government's

hands, he acknowledged, but said: "If you are trying to run a country on that amount it wouldn't last you a day." "For over 20 years I have seen what (effect) engagement has had and I've also been told by Koreans living in the country that they want what we do, they want film, they want to do sports exchange.

"It's not just them understanding us but it's

also us understanding them." Artist Bedford is based in Beijing and told AFP: "The Western media's portrayal of these places is different than the reality on the ground." "That's one reason I wanted to come here, as much as my government says not to. I didn't do it in defiance, but I just wanted to experience it firsthand myself." — AFP



PYONGYANG: Competitors line up for the start of the Pyongyang Marathon at Kim Il-Sung stadium in the North Korean capital. — AFP

IRAN'S EXILED PRINCE WANTS REVOLUTION IN AGE OF TRUMP



Reza Pahlavi

DUBAI: Iran's exiled crown prince wants a revolution. Reza Pahlavi, the son of the last shah to rule before the 1979 Islamic Revolution, has seen his profile rise in recent months following the election of US President Donald Trump, who promises a harder line against the Shiite power. Pahlavi's calls for replacing clerical rule with a parliamentary monarchy, enshrining human rights and modernizing its state-run economy could prove palatable to both the West and Iran's Sunni Gulf neighbors, who remain suspicious of Iran's intentions amid its involvement in the wars in Iraq, Syria and Yemen.

But the Mideast is replete with cautionary tales about Western governments putting their faith in exiles long estranged from their homelands. Whether Pahlavi can galvanize nostalgia for the age of the Peacock Throne remains

unseen. "This regime is simply irreformable because the nature of it, its DNA, is such that it cannot," Pahlavi told AP. "People have given up with the idea of reform and they think there has to be fundamental change. Now, how this change can occur is the big question."

Pahlavi left Iran at age 17 for military flight school in the US, just before his cancer-stricken father Mohammad Reza Pahlavi abandoned the throne for exile. The revolution followed, with the creation of the Islamic Republic, the takeover of the US Embassy in Tehran and the sweeping away of the last vestiges of the American-backed monarchy. Yet the Pahlavis and the age of the monarchy have retained their mystique in Iran, even as the majority of its 80 million people weren't alive to experience it. Television period pieces have focused on their rule, including the recent state TV series "The Enigma of the Shah", the most expensive series ever produced to air in the country. While incorporating romances or mobsters into the tales, all uniformly criticize the royal court.

But Pahlavi, 56, insists young Iranians increasingly look toward Iran's past. He pointed to recent demonstrations at the tomb of the pre-Islamic King Cyrus the Great, which have been claimed by a variety of anti-government forces as a sign of unrest. Under his father's secular and pro-Western rule, Iran experienced a rapid modernization program financed by oil revenues. "If you look at the legacy that was left behind by both my father and my grandfather ... it contrasts with this archaic, sort of backward, religiously rooted radical system that has been extremely repressive," Pahlavi said.

Since the US election, Pahlavi has given a growing number of media interviews, including with Breitbart, the far-right website once run by Trump's chief strategist, Steve

Bannon. Pahlavi also has sent letters to the Trump administration. Gauging national sentiment toward restoring the monarchy in Iran is impossible, especially after the crack-down that followed the country's disputed 2009 election. Iranian state media routinely refer to the Pahlavi monarchy as "despotic", but there has been some reassessing of history in other quarters.

A book published last year, "The Fall of Heaven: The Pahlavis and the Last Days of Imperial Iran," offered a revisionist view of the shah. While acknowledging the abuses of his feared SAVAK intelligence service and the corruption surrounding his rule, the book portrays him as a fatalist in an era of disappearing Mideast monarchies. "The regime has repressed discussion of the Pahlavis for so long that it has had the opposite effect of making young Iranians inside the country curious about what they don't know," said historian Andrew Scott Cooper, the book's author.

"There's an interesting generational divide going on here to where young Iranians are saying to their parents and grandparents, the same people who marched against the shah and Pahlavis, 'Why did you get rid of that system and put this one in place?'" He added: "The family name still retains a lot of magic, more than ever today among Iranians. How that translates practically into support for Reza as a credible alternative leader, I just don't know."

Asked how his envisioned peaceful revolution could play out in Iran, Pahlavi said it would need to begin with labor unions starting a nationwide strike. He said members of the hardline Revolutionary Guard, a paramilitary organization established to protect the clerical system, would be assured they wouldn't be "all hung and shot". Most importantly, he said Western governments need to keep their distance and not threaten military action. — AP

PALM SUNDAY IS BOMBINGS AT EGYPT CHURCHES...

Continued from Page 1

An official source at the Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry yesterday expressed Kuwait's sharp condemnation of the "terrorist" explosions. The source voiced Kuwait's absolute solidarity with Egypt in all measures it is taking in order to protect its security and stability, believing that Egypt is well aware of the "criminal" goals of such "disgraceful acts" which undermine national unity and the social fabric. The source reiterated Kuwait's principled positions based on rejecting all forms and manifestations of violence and terrorism, and calling for more international efforts to uproot this serious phenomenon. It concluded by offering heartfelt condolences to the Egyptian leadership, government, people and victims' families and wished the swift recovery of the injured.

A UN Security Council statement condemned the bombings as "heinous" and "cowardly". Egyptian officials denounced the violence as an attempt to sow divisions in Egypt, and Francis sent his "deep condolences" to Tawadros. IS claimed its "squad" carried out both attacks, in a statement by its self-styled Amaq news agency published on social media. There were bloodstains on the floor of the church in Tanta, next to shredded wooden benches.

On March 29, the Mar Girgis church's Facebook page said a "suspicious" device had been found outside the building that security services removed. "I heard the blast and came running. I found people torn up... some people, only half of their bodies remained," said Nabil Nader, who lives in front of the Tanta church. Worshipers had been celebrating Palm Sunday, one of the holiest days in the Christian calendar, marking Jesus' (PBUH) triumphant entrance to Jerusalem.

Copts, who make up about one tenth of Egypt's population of more than 92 million and who celebrate Easter next weekend, have been targeted by several attacks in recent months. Jihadists and Islamists accuse

Copts of supporting the military overthrow of Islamist president Mohamed Morsi in 2013, which ushered in a deadly crackdown on his supporters. In December, a suicide bombing claimed by IS killed 29 worshippers in a Cairo church adjacent to the papal seat. The group later released a video threatening Egypt's Christians with more attacks.

A spate of jihadist-linked attacks in Egypt's restive Sinai Peninsula, including the murder of a Copt in the city of El Arish whose house was also burned, led some Coptic families to flee. About 250 Christians took refuge in the Suez Canal city of Ismailia after IS released a video in February calling for attacks on the minority. US President Donald Trump led international condemnation of yesterday's attacks. "So sad to hear of the terrorist attack in Egypt. US strongly condemns. I have great confidence that President Al Sisi will handle situation properly," he tweeted.

Prime Minister Sherif Ismail condemned the attack, stressing Egypt's determination to "eliminate terrorism". The Cairo-based Al-Azhar, an influential Sunni Muslim authority, said it aimed to "destabilize security and... the unity of Egyptians". Egypt's Copts have endured successive attacks since Morsi's ouster in July 2013. More than 40 churches were attacked nationwide in the two weeks after the deadly dispersal by security forces of two pro-Morsi protest camps in Cairo on Aug 14 that year, Human Rights Watch said.

Sisi, who as then army chief helped remove Morsi, has defended his security forces and accused jihadists of attacking Copts in order to divide the country. In Oct 2011, almost 30 people - mostly Coptic Christians - were killed after the army charged at a protest outside the state television building in Cairo to denounce the torching of a church in southern Egypt. A few months earlier, the unclaimed New Year's Day bombing of a Coptic church killed more than 20 people in second city Alexandria. — Agencies

US ENVOY SAYS ASSAD MUST GO

Continued from Page 1

Syria's government has denied any involvement in Tuesday's attack on Khan Sheikhoun, suspected to be the second-deadliest chemical weapons attack since the country's war began in March 2011.

It killed at least 87 civilians, including 31 children, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a Britain-based monitor. Hundreds more suffered symptoms that the World Health Organization said were in some cases consistent with exposure to chemicals that include nerve gas. The nature of the substance used has not been confirmed, and Syria has insisted it would not and has not used chemical weapons.

Assad's government signed the Chemical Weapons Convention and agreed to turn over its chemical armaments in 2013, after being accused of a sarin attack outside Damascus that killed hundreds of people. But there have been repeated allegations of chemical weapons use by the government since then. Syria's closest allies Russia and Iran have defended Damascus against the allegations of chemical weapons use, with Moscow saying a conventional strike hit a rebel depot containing "toxic substances".

Iran's President Hassan Rouhani called Assad to reaffirm

his support for the Syrian leader in the wake of the US strike, Rouhani's office said yesterday. Rouhani said allegations that Assad's regime was behind a chemical weapons attack were "baseless" and suggested it was carried out by rebel groups to influence global public opinion. Rouhani and Russian President Vladimir Putin also spoke by telephone about "the unacceptable nature of American aggression", a statement from Moscow said. Both leaders also said they backed "an objective inquiry" into the Khan Sheikhoun incident has also caused a diplomatic spat between Moscow and London.

British Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson has cancelled a trip to Russia over its support for Assad, prompting Moscow's foreign ministry to say London has "no real influence". And yesterday, British Defense Secretary Michael Fallon accused Russia of being responsible "by proxy" for deaths in the suspected chemical attack. More than 320,000 people have been killed in Syria since the conflict began, and strikes have continued since the suspected chemical attack. On Saturday, one woman was killed in a suspected Russian air strike on Khan Sheikhoun, the Observatory said. New strikes hit outside the town yesterday, with no immediate reports of casualties, the monitor added. — AFP



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Washington Watch

THE TRUMP DIVIDE

By Dr James J Zogby

Over the years, there have been many divides that have defined the American social, cultural, or political landscape. Some have been philosophical, regional, issue-based, racial, economic, gender or age-related. But none have been as deep or as disturbing as the divide that is currently fracturing the American people.

This one is different because it crosses demographic lines (except for race) and isn't as much about ideas or issues as it is about the person of Donald Trump. I'm not sure if he is the source of this rupture or if he is a symptom of it. But whether it is one or the other or both, it should be clear that this division is about Trump. In listening to conversations about the president, it feels as if we have become two separate nations, with each seeing him and what he represents so differently that we can no longer understand each other or even speak with each other.

About 60 percent of Americans just don't trust Trump. They see him as impulsive, erratic, and unbalanced; they are either disgusted by or embarrassed by his behavior; and they are frightened at the prospect of the lasting damage they fear he will do to the country and its institutions.

This past week, the Los Angeles Times ran a series of six lengthy "no holds barred" editorials that captured the mind-set of this 60 percent. Collectively the editorials constituted a scathing indictment of the dangers posed to America, its political culture and institutions by the presidency of Donald Trump. They charged him with: repeatedly demonstrating "an utter disregard for truth"; giving voice to race-based conspiracy theories; "targeting the darkness, anger, and insecurity that hide in each of us and harnessing them for his own purposes"; and "undermining public confidence" in core American institutions (a free press, an independent judiciary, and the electoral process, itself).

In one particularly devastating paragraph the Times' editorial board wrote: "What is most worrisome about Trump is Trump himself. He is a man so unpredictable, so reckless, so petulant, so full of blind self-regard, so untethered to reality that it is impossible to know where his presidency will lead or how much damage he will do to our nation. His obsession with his own fame, wealth, and success, his determination to vanquish enemies, real and imagined, his craving for adulation—these traits were, of course, at the very heart of his scorched-earth outsider campaign; indeed, some of them helped him get elected. But in a real presidency in which he wields unimaginable power, they are nothing short of disastrous."

While I confess that I identify with the views of the Times, I recognize how important it is to remember the nearly 40 percent of Americans who hold a dramatically different view of the president they elected. They see him as a truth-teller who represents their last, best hope to restore traditional values they feel are in danger of being lost. They have placed their trust in him and believe that he is the strong and principled leader who defends them, fight for their interests and "make America great again". Even now, they turn out at Trump rallies, they cheer him on, and they continue to believe in him.

True Believers

They are true believers who reject any criticism of their president and appear to be resistant to letting truth or facts get in the way of their support. He has backtracked on issues that were central to his candidacy (building a wall paid for by Mexico) or told bold-faced lies (that his crowds or ratings were bigger than those of President Obama) and yet his most ardent followers haven't blinked an eye.

It is difficult to understand how Evangelicals could vote for and continue to support a thrice-married hedonist. Or why so many women would vote for and continue to support a misogynist who has spoken of women in such degrading terms. Or why honest, hard-working Americans facing economic hardships could put their faith in an individual who in his multiple bankruptcies has brought economic ruin to tens of thousands of folks just like them. Equally confounding is how, in an election year: where "elites" were rejected; where voters rallied against "out of touch" politicians who couldn't be trusted to defend the interests of the common man; and where a key concern for many was the class-based issue of the "rich getting richer, while the poor get poorer" - some voters chose and still stand by a president who was: Born rich and parlayed "pay-for play politics" to get richer, and flies, at the public's expense, between the White House and his Florida golf resort while his children continue to fly around the world making business deals in foreign lands (while receiving publicly financed security protection).

NOTE: Dr James J Zogby is the President of the Arab American Institute

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'MAKE TRUMP FURIOUS' CAMPAIGN RATTLES REPS

After the crushing electoral losses that swept Donald Trump into the White House and sealed Republican control of the US Congress, the Democrats' road to recovery winds through the leafy, well-heeled suburbs of north Atlanta. Here, Democrats are threatening a stunning special election upset that could signal how well the party can turn Trump's low approval ratings into political gains. And they appear to have an ally in the April 18 vote: Trump himself.

In the first congressional election of the Trump era, a wave of grassroots anti-Trump fervor has positioned Democrat Jon Ossoff, a 30-year-old political newcomer, to possibly capture a House of Representatives seat held by Republicans for decades, one of 24 seats Democrats need nationwide to reclaim the House. "The grassroots intensity here is electric, and it's because folks are concerned that what is happening in Washington doesn't represent our values," Ossoff said in an interview. "This is a chance for this community to stand up and make a statement about what we believe."

With Democrats desperate for signs of hope after Hillary Clinton's loss to Trump, Ossoff's underdog "Make Trump Furious" campaign has endeared him to national anti-Trump activists and pushed him well ahead of 17 rivals in polls. The documentary filmmaker and former congressional aide raised a jaw-dropping \$8.3 million in the first quarter, his campaign said. "I've never seen the Democrats around here so engaged, and it's Donald Trump who got us so engaged," said Carolyn Hadaway, 77, a veteran party activist and retired software engineer from Marietta, a city of about 60,000 people in Georgia's central Cobb County.

Georgia would seem an unlikely venue for a Democratic revival. Trump won it by about 5 percentage points in November. And its voters backed Republican nominees in eight of the last nine presidential contests, including the last six in a row. But demographic changes are brewing. Growing minority communities and transplants from other regions have made Atlanta's suburbs increasingly competitive for Democrats. Georgia's sixth congressional district, the location for April's special election, exemplifies changes common in booming southern cities like Atlanta, Charlotte and Nashville.

The district is white collar, educated and doing well economically, with median household incomes of \$80,000 ver-

sus \$50,000 statewide, and nearly 60 percent of adults holding a college or professional degree, more than twice the statewide average. It is also increasingly diverse, and in recent years became a magnet for well-educated immigrants from India and other parts of Asia. The district was about 80 percent white at the turn of the century. But since then, the black share of the population has grown from 10 percent to 13 percent, the Hispanic share has doubled to 12.5 percent and Asian representation doubled to more than 10 percent. About a fifth of the district is now foreign born - twice the statewide average, according to census data.

Though newer immigrants may not be eligible to vote, census data indicate more than 40 percent are naturalized citizens, potentially bringing a different set of views on issues like immigration to the table than the voters in this district who sent Trump adviser and former speaker of the House Newt Gingrich to Congress for 10 straight terms. April's special election fills the seat vacated by Tom Price, the new secretary of health and human services. It gives both parties a chance to test their messages for election battles next year in suburban districts where Democrats need to make inroads and where Trump's populist economic message did not sell well in November.

While Price sailed to re-election with 62 percent of the vote, Trump barely beat Clinton in Georgia's sixth district by one percentage point. In 2012, Republican Mitt Romney beat Democratic President Barack Obama in the district by 23 points.

'Jump Over a Cliff'

Republican candidates nationwide will closely watch the result as they calculate whether to embrace the president. The 11 Republicans in the race have split between those who portray themselves as Trump supporters and establishment candidates who keep a respectful and sometimes wary distance. "I'm ready to support him," former state senator Dan Moody, who was endorsed by US Senator David Perdue, said of Trump in an interview. But "I'm not going to jump over a cliff with him."

Grassroots Democratic groups flood the district's tidy suburban neighborhoods on the weekends, busing in volunteers from as far away as Maryland to go door to door on Ossoff's behalf. The Ossoff momentum worries Republicans, say party officials, and outside help has arrived. A super PAC

aligned with House Republican leaders put more than \$2 million into ads painting Ossoff as too young and inexperienced. Ossoff played down the strategic value of a possible upset. "The national implications here will be about how this affects the political calculus for folks in the Republican conference in the House, not about how Democrats are supposed to run in the midterms," he said.

'Concern, Not Panic'

In a low turnout special election, getting supporters to the polls is vital, and Democrats have voted early in greater numbers than Republicans so far. "We aren't panicking, but there is concern," said Maggie Holliman, a member of the Republican state executive committee. Ossoff's best chance is to win the April 18 vote, a "jungle primary" that features all 18 candidates from both parties on the same ballot. If no one reaches 50 percent, the top two vote getters square off on June 20.

Republicans are confident they can win a one-on-one race with Ossoff, as the party unites with organizational and financial help pouring into the Republican-majority district. "There is a chance Ossoff can win without a runoff, but that's his only chance. He's benefiting from unified Democratic support and Republicans being highly divided," said Georgia-based Republican strategist Joel McElhannon.

Polls show Ossoff hovering in the low 40s, not enough to avoid a runoff. The leading Republican, former Secretary of State Karen Handel, is well behind. Handel has been cautious in talking about Trump. She said in an interview she expected to work with him on issues such as tax reform and border security, but "first and foremost" she would be a conservative advocate for her district.

By contrast Republicans Bob Gray, a local business executive, and Bruce LeVell, head of Trump's national diversity coalition, pledge undivided loyalty to the White House. Gray said he was the Republican in the race who performed the behind-the-scenes political groundwork for Trump in the district. LeVell pulled out his cellphone and showed a reporter text messages from Trump aides Kellyanne Conway, Sarah Huckabee Sanders and even Trump son-in-law Jared Kushner to prove his insider status with the White House. "If people are looking for someone to help Trump, I'm their guy," he said. — Reuters

GORSUCH A WIN FOR TRUMP AND GOP

Judge Neil Gorsuch's confirmation to the Supreme Court has given President Donald Trump - the first truly outsider president in recent memory - his first major legislative achievement. And it's a victory for the insiders. Gorsuch, a well-respected, conservative legal star with a traditional background, won Senate approval on Friday, serving as a testament to the power of well-organized establishment Republican forces and a reminder of the ability of judicial fights to unite Republicans.

Gorsuch's confirmation required Republicans, led by Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, to eliminate the 60-vote threshold, dubbed the "nuclear option," to ensure approval with a simple majority. But after weeks of wrangling in the House over a plan to repeal and replace the so-called Obamacare law, the confirmation battle amounted to a badly needed triumph for Trump.

"This is a big win and it feels good to get this win," said Republican Sen Roger Wicker prior to Friday's vote. "The nuances of a bill containing a myriad of provisions is totally different, totally different. But I do think the president can prevail with a good repeal-and-replace bill if he'll put the weight of his credibility and office behind the effort, and I think he's prepared to do that."

To be sure, a Supreme Court battle is far different from a complicated policy fight involving health care, which covers one-fifth of the nation's economy and has been a central political fight since President Barack Obama entered the White House in 2009. But that doesn't mean it was a walk in the park. In some ways, conservative outside groups were preparing for Gorsuch's nomination process for months. His name first surfaced as a potential Supreme Court pick in late September when Trump included him on a list of 21 possible successors to

the late Justice Antonin Scalia. (Gorsuch was not on an initial list of potential justices he released in May 2016.)

That heads-up gave outside groups like the Federalist Society and the Heritage Foundation time to review the potential jurists and create buy-in for Republicans once Trump made his choice. When Trump named Gorsuch in late January, the choice quickly won praise from groups like the Club for Growth, the Koch brothers-backed Americans for Prosperity and the National Rifle Association. "Gorsuch is somebody who pretty much everyone on the right wants to vote for and wants to support. We were starting with a good product," said Michael Needham, chief executive officer of Heritage Action for America, one of several conservative groups that did not back the president's health care law. "On health care, they kind of started with an egg and were surprised to find that the whole experience has been frustrating."

Internal Struggle

For a new administration, the dual legislative battles over Gorsuch and health care have coincided with an internal struggle between the anti-establishment forces that helped propel Trump to the White House and establishment figures seeking to consolidate power. The tensions spilled out into public this week when Steve Bannon, Trump's chief strategist and a proponent of take-no-prisoners politics, lost his seat on the Principals Committee of the National Security Council, a group of high-ranking officials who meet to discuss pressing national security needs.

Bannon's addition to the NSC had sparked criticism that it was inappropriate for the political adviser to play a role in national security matters. His departure suggested reduced influence and rising

tensions amid Trump's West Wing staff, particularly between Bannon and a more moderate group led by Trump's senior adviser and powerful son-in-law, Jared Kushner. The two senior aides have clashed of late, with Kushner holding Bannon responsible for the controversies surrounding the failures of the president's travel ban and the health care bill. Bannon, meanwhile, believes the president's son-in-law is trying to shift away from the populist rhetoric he believes won the White House, according to associates of the two men who requested anonymity to discuss private conversations.

Last week, Vice President Mike Pence, a solid member of the establishment wing of the White House, tried to revive the health care bill, working with the bloc of hard-line conservatives in the House Freedom Caucus to find a compromise that could pass the Republican-led House. That effort came after Trump, seizing his anti-establishment role, threatened to work to unseat

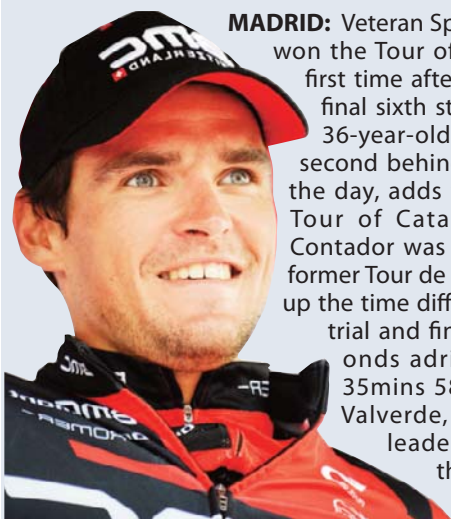
conservative Republicans who did not line up behind him. Republican lawmakers left for Easter recess with no deal, but have vowed to press on.

Gorsuch's success - and health care's failure - shines a light on the ability of judicial battles to energize Republicans, who have long rallied against judicial overreach and courts acting in ways reserved for the legislative branch. Matt Schlapp, chairman of the American Conservative Union, said the importance of McConnell's decision to refuse to consider Obama's nomination of Judge Merrick Garland and ability to eliminate the filibuster for Supreme Court picks could not be overstated. He said Gorsuch's selection managed to unite Republicans and pave the way for a more conservative court. "Some people will try to say this makes the win less," Schlapp said of the use of the nuclear option. "It makes the win bigger because it makes the next pick even easier to confirm." — AP



This photo taken on March 22, 2017 shows Neil Gorsuch as he testifies before the Senate Judiciary Committee during a hearing in the Hart Senate Office Building in Washington. — AFP

VALVERDE SECURES OVERALL VICTORY IN BASQUE TOUR



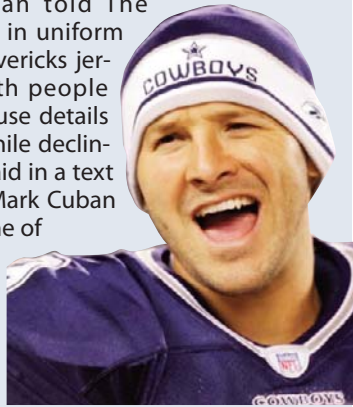
MADRID: Veteran Spanish rider Alejandro Valverde won the Tour of the Basque Country for the first time after coming in second in today's final sixth stage, a time trial in Eibar. The 36-year-old Movistar rider, who finished second behind Slovenia's Primoz Roglic on the day, adds the title to his victory in the Tour of Catalonia last month. Alberto Contador was Valverde's main rival but the former Tour de France winner could not make up the time difference in the day's 27km time trial and finished second overall, 14 seconds adrift. Roglic won the stage in 35mins 58sec, nine seconds ahead of Valverde, who had seized the overall leader's yellow jersey by winning the fifth stage on Friday. — AFP

KYRGIOS BEATS QUERREY TO SEAL DAVIS CUP TIE

BRISBANE: Nick Kyrgios sent Australia into the Davis Cup semi-finals when he beat American Sam Querrey in the first of the reverse singles in Brisbane yesterday. Kyrgios's 7-6 (7/4), 6-3, 6-4 win gave the Australians an unassailable 3-1 lead over the US. Kyrgios and Jordan Thompson put Australia in the box seat when they won the opening singles on Friday. The Americans hit back in the doubles on Saturday but Kyrgios, who has been in superb form this week, was too good for Querrey and wrapped up the match in two hours, five minutes. The manner of the victory will go a long way to winning over an Australian sporting public who have grown tired of the world number 16's on-court behaviour. His past was all but forgotten by the packed crowd at Pat Rafter Arena, who chanted his name as he ran to captain Lleyton Hewitt and carried him around the court in delight. Australia will now play either Belgium away or Italy at home in September's semi-finals. Belgium lead Italy 2-1 in their quarter-final in Charleroi. —AFP

RETIRING QB TONY ROMO TO WEAR NO. 9 FOR MAVERICKS

DALLAS: Tony Romo will wear No. 9 one more time. The Dallas Mavericks are planning a tribute and "very special sports experience" for the retiring Cowboys quarterback before their final home game. Two people with knowledge of the plan told The Associated Press that Romo would be in uniform wearing his familiar number - on a Mavericks jersey - while sitting on the bench. Both people spoke on condition of anonymity because details of the tribute haven't been released. While declining to offer details, coach Rick Carlisle said in a text message Saturday that he and owner Mark Cuban "very much look forward to honoring one of Dallas' all-time best athletes and people with a very special sports experience." Dallas is currently carrying 14 players, and the maximum is 15, leaving room for the honorary player. — AP



NHL

MAPLE LEAFS BEAT PENGUINS TO CLINCH FINAL PLAYOFF SPOT

TORONTO: Connor Brown scored the go-ahead goal late in the third period and the Toronto Maple Leafs clinched a post-season berth for the first time in four years with a 5-3 victory over the Pittsburgh Penguins on Saturday. Toronto rookie Auston Matthews added an empty-net goal for his 40th tally of the season. The Maple Leafs meet Ottawa in the first round of the playoffs if they earn at least one point versus Columbus tonight. If they lose in regulation, they play Washington.

WILD 3, COYOTES 1

Erik Haula, Eric Staal and Martin Hanzal scored and Darcy Kuemper made 20 saves as Minnesota finished the regular season with its fourth straight victory. The Wild are 11-1-2 in the past 14 games against Arizona and have at least one point in 11 straight games, equaling the longest point streak against one opponent in franchise history. Minnesota set franchise records with its 49th victory and 106th point.

SENATORS 3, RANGERS 1

Mike Hoffman, Jean-Gabriel Pageau and Derick Brassard scored as Ottawa clinched home-ice advantage in the first round of the playoffs. Former Senator Mika Zibanejad broke Craig Anderson's shutout with the last of 19 shots-a wrap-around with 46 seconds left. Ottawa clinched second place in the Atlantic Division and meets Boston or Toronto in the first round.

BLUES 5, HURRICANES 4 (SHOOTOUT)

Vladimir Tarasenko scored in the fourth round of the shootout as St. Louis clinched third place in the Central Division. Ivan Barbashev, Alexander Steen, Ryan Reaves and Scottie Upshall scored in regulation for the Blues, who meet Minnesota in the first round of the playoffs. Carter Hutton made 34 saves for St Louis.

CAPITALS 3, BRUINS 1

Justin Williams had a goal and an assist as Washington, which already secured the Presidents' Trophy, continued its dominance of Boston. The Bruins could have wrapped up the third seed and a first-round playoff series against Ottawa. Instead, they play the Senators only if Toronto loses in regulation to Columbus tonight.

OILERS 3, CANUCKS 2

Iiro Pakarinen's power-play goal proved to be the winner as Edmonton clinched home-ice advantage for the first round of the playoffs. The Oilers win the Pacific Division title and play Calgary if they defeat Vancouver and Anaheim loses in regulation to Los Angeles. If the Ducks earn a point or Edmonton loses, the Oilers finish second and meet San Jose.

SHARKS 3, FLAMES 1

Daniel O'Regan scored his first NHL goal to lead San Jose, which will finish third in the Pacific Division. The Sharks open the playoffs on the road against Anaheim or Edmonton, whichever team does not win the division. San Jose defenseman Brent Burns earned an assist for his career-high

76th point, which broke the franchise record of 75 he set last year.

ISLANDERS 4, DEVILS 2

Jaroslav Halak made 37 saves as New York kept its playoff hopes alive with its fifth straight victory. About an hour later, though, Toronto defeated Pittsburgh 3-2 to eliminate the Islanders.

JETS 2, PREDATORS 1

Blake Wheeler scored a shorthanded goal with 44.6 seconds left in regulation to lift Winnipeg to its season-high seventh straight victory. The win was ultimately without much meaning for the Jets other than sending their MTS Centre fans home on a happy note after the season wrapped up Saturday without a post-season appearance.

KINGS 3, BLACKHAWKS 2 (OVERTIME)

Drew Doughty scored the game-winning goal and Jeff Carter registered three assists as Los Angeles defeated Chicago. The Kings won for the fourth time in their last six games. Tyler Toffoli and Dustin Brown scored the other goals while Jonathan Quick made 25 saves.

FLYERS 4, BLUE JACKETS 2

Pierre-Edouard Bellemare, Jakub Voracek, Michael Del Zotto and Ivan Provorov scored on Philadelphia's first 15 shots and Steve Mason made 20 saves in the victory over struggling Columbus. The win snapped a two-game losing streak for the Flyers, who close out the regular season Sunday against Carolina. Despite a 5-1-1 run, Philadelphia will miss the playoffs for the third time in five seasons.

CANADIENS 3, RED WINGS 2 (OVERTIME)

Alex Galchenyuk scored at 1:42 of overtime as Montreal defeated Detroit. Artturi Lehkonen and Nathan Beaulieu each scored for the Canadiens, the Atlantic Division champions who await a first-round playoff series with the New York Rangers. Nikita Nesterov notched two assists and Charlie Lindgren finished with 25 saves.

STARS 4, AVALANCHE 3 (SHOOTOUT)

Tyler Seguin scored the only goal in the shootout as Dallas defeated Colorado. Kari Lehtonen was perfect in the shootout and stopped Matt Duchene, Nathan MacKinnon and Mikko Rantanen to seal the win in the Stars' season finale. Dallas appeared to have won the game with 1:08 remaining in overtime when John Klingberg scored on a wrist shot, but the Avalanche challenged for offside and the goal was overturned.

PANTHERS 3, SABRES 0

Jonathan Huberdeau scored twice as Florida prevailed in its final home game of the season. James Reimer made 30 saves for his second shutout of the season and Nick Bjugstad added a goal. The Panthers broke a season-worst six-game losing streak with their sixth victory in its past 23 games. — Reuters

NHL results/standings

Edmonton 3, Vancouver 2; San Jose 3, Calgary 1; Minnesota 3, Arizona 1; Dallas 4, Colorado 3 (SO); Winnipeg 2, Nashville 1; Toronto 5, Pittsburgh 3; Montreal 3, Detroit 2 (OT); Florida 3, Buffalo 0; St. Louis 5, Carolina 4 (SO); NY Islanders 4, New Jersey 2; Los Angeles 3, Chicago 2 (OT); Washington 3, Boston 1; Ottawa 3, NY Rangers 1; Philadelphia 4, Columbus 2.

Western Conference													
Central Division													
	W	L	OTL	GF	GA	PTS							
Chicago	50	23	9	244	213	109	Ottawa	44	27	10	210	210	98
Minnesota	49	25	8	266	208	106	Toronto	40	26	15	249	239	95
St. Louis	45	29	7	232	216	97	Boston	44	31	7	234	212	95
Nashville	41	29	12	240	224	94	Tampa Bay	41	30	10	230	225	92
Winnipeg	40	35	7	249	256	87	Florida	34	36	11	208	237	79
Dallas	34	37	11	223	262	79	Buffalo	33	36	12	199	233	78
Colorado	22	55	4	164	275	48	Detroit	32	36	13	203	243	77
Pacific Division							Metropolitan Division						
Anaheim	45	23	13	219	197	103	Washington	55	18	8	263	180	118
Edmonton	46	26	9	242	210	101	Pittsburgh	50	20	11	280	231	111
San Jose	46	29	7	221	201	99	Columbus	49	24	8	246	193	106
Calgary	45	33	4	226	221	94	NY Rangers	47	28	6	253	218	100
Los Angeles	39	35	7	198	201	85	NY Islanders	40	29	12	237	240	92
Arizona	30	42	10	197	260	70	Philadelphia	39	33	9	216	232	87
Vancouver	30	42	9	180	238	69	Carolina	35	31	15	211	233	85
Eastern Conference							New Jersey						
Atlantic Division							28	39	14	182	240	70	
Montreal	47	26	9	226	200	103	Note: Overtime losses (OTL) are worth one point in the standings and are not included in the loss column (L)						



PARIS: (COMBO) This combination of pictures created on April 09, 2017 shows Kenya's Purity Rionoripo (L) and her husband Kenya's Paul Lonyangata crossing the finish line to win the 41st Paris Marathon in Paris yesterday. Kenya's Paul Lonyangata won the 41st Paris marathon yesterday with his wife Purity Rionoripo making it a memorable family day out in the French capital with success in the women's race. — AFP

ATHLETICS

KENYAN MR AND MRS TIE UP PARIS MARATHON

PARIS: Paul Lonyangata won the 41st Paris marathon yesterday with his wife Purity Rionoripo tying up the women's race to make it a memorable day out for the Kenyan couple in the French capital. Lonyangata recorded his biggest career win in a time of two hours six minutes and 10 seconds despite losing valuable time when doubling back after missing the penultimate water station.

His compatriot, pre-race favourite Stephen Chebogut, came in second at 2hr 6min 56sec, with Solomon Yego completing the all-Kenyan podium in third at 2hr 7min 13sec.

"I feel good now as my aim was to come here to win," said Lonyangata who was going one better after taking second in the Paris half-marathon in March. With Paris bathed in spring sunshine Rionoripo made it a red letter day for the couple, the 23-year-old setting a new record time of 2hr 20min 50sec to smash her personal best by almost four minutes. The couple's success put a smile back on the face of Kenyan athletics 48 hours after the shock news of Olympic marathon champion Jemima Sumgong's failed dope test.

Sumgong was the first Kenyan woman to win an Olympic gold in the marathon when she triumphed in Rio last year.

The 32-year-old, who is also the reigning London Marathon champion, tested positive for the banned blood booster EPO in a test by the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) in her native Kenya. Lonyangata, 24, made his decisive move after the 35km marker, surging clear of Chebogut in the Bois de Boulogne to add Paris to his previous marathon wins in Shanghai in 2015 and Lisbon two years earlier. In the women's race Rionoripo was followed across the line by her compatriot Agnes Barsosio at 2hr 21:02 with Flomena Cheyech (2hr 21:23.) completing the podium.

"It's great for my wife, I'm very proud of her," beamed happy husband Lonyangata.

"I'm so happy, it's a great day for me to win and to beat my personal best," said Rionoripo, who had last year's winner Visiline Jepkesho (fourth) among the more fancied contenders in her slipstream. She lowered the previous women's Paris marathon record time set by Ethiopia's Feyse Tadese of 2hr 21:06 in 2013.

In the men's race her husband's winning time was 53sec outside the record established by Ethiopian Kenenisa Bekele of 2hr 05:04 in 2014. Britain's six-time Paralympic champion David Weir tuned up for his career swansong in the London marathon on April 23 with success in Paris. The 37-year-old wheelchair racer won four gold medals at London 2012 but crashed out of last year's Rio Games marathon. —AFP

BOXING

LOMACHENKO TAUNTS SOSA EN ROUTE TO 9TH RD TKO

WASHINGTON: Vasyl Lomachenko easily retained his WBO junior lightweight title on Saturday, with a dominating boxing display over Jason Sosa, whose corner pulled the plug at the end of the ninth round.

The 29-year-old Ukrainian cemented his status as one of the best pound-for-pound fighters in the world with a ninth round TKO in just his ninth pro fight. "I came into the ring to do my job. I think I did my job really well," said Lomachenko.

Lomachenko used his speed, skill and power to improve to 8-1 by outclassing American Sosa who wouldn't quit despite taking a beating from the opening round.

In the fifth round, Lomachenko mocked Sosa by pretending to hold out a cape as if he was a matador toying with an angry bull in the ring. Sosa's trainer stopped the fight after the ninth round, first removing his boxer's mouthpiece in the corner then motioning to the referee. Sosa was not supposed to be in this fight, coming in as a 25-1 underdog, and it showed. He was a willing participant but was Lomachenko's third choice after the others declined. But he did manage to bait Sosa into

this one and no amount of banderillas or mounted picadors could save Sosa from the inevitable. Lomachenko's inability to get anyone to fight him in the 130-pound division has him seriously considering moving up in class to 135. "I am going to call Top Rank (promoter) Monday and see if I can fight any of the 130 pound champions. If we can't get anybody we can move to 135," he said Saturday.

Lomachenko turned pro after a superb amateur career that saw him record 396 wins and just one loss. He won back-to-back Olympic gold medals (in different weight classes) for Ukraine in 2008 and 2012, as well as a pair of amateur world titles.

A brilliant boxer who is above average in every category including power, speed, defence, technique, ring intelligence, the quick start to his pro career has been historic.

He won a featherweight world title in his third fight to tie the boxing record for fewest bouts needed to win a world title, and set a boxing record by becoming a two-weight titleholder in his seventh fight.

Lomachenko landed 275 punches compared to just 68 for Sosa. —AFP



OXON HILL: Vasyl Lomachenko (L) of Ukraine exchanges punches with Jason Sosa during their WBO Super Featherweight World Championship bout at The Theater at MGM National Harbor on Saturday in Oxon Hill, Maryland. — AFP

BADMINTON

CHINA'S LIN GRABS FIRST EVER WIN IN MALAYSIA OPEN

KUCHING: China's Lin Dan, a two-time Olympic champion, yesterday engineered a brilliantly ruthless strategy against arch-rival Malaysian world number one Lee Chong Wei to win his first ever Malaysia Open badminton title.

Showing no sign of fatigue, 33-year-old Lin pushed Lee, one year his senior, from back to front, forcing the recent All England Open winner into unforced errors to bag a win 21-19, 21-14 in 55 minutes. The two badminton veterans started cautiously, and Lee, the favourite in the tournament, began securing points with his killer cross-

court smashes. But Lin kept his calm, resorting to long rallies, swift returns and precision net play to defeat Lee.

With the unexpected victory, Lin has now won every major title the sport has to offer. "My main target was to break my jinx at this Malaysian Open. We both played well and showed a high level of badminton. Me and Lee are both ageing, and so I cherish every moment we play each other in a big tournament," he said.

Although partisan, the crowd cheered both ageing icons, boosting the morale of the shuttlers who demonstrated agility and power play and

reminded critics that they are not ready to retire.

Lee began the contest as the attacking player, pushing Lin to make unforced errors, but he could not hold on to his 19-15 advantage in the first game. This allowed Lin to storm back into contention with six straight points to win 21-19. Lin continued his domination in the second game, staying focussed and sticking to long rallies to build a lead of 11-8. Lin's strong challenge for points saw Lee in the final shot hitting the shuttle wide, allowing Lin to take the second game 21-14. As

has become the norm for the Chinese player, Lin dropped his racket, flung off his shirt and collapsed to the floor to rejoice in a victory that had eluded him in 2006.

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 as he led 20-13 in the deciding game, but Lee staged a phenomenal comeback to win 23-21 at the same venue. Although he went down in straight games this time, Lee vowed to

return stronger. "It wasn't my best performance today. I lost some confidence after losing the first game, but overall I am satisfied with my overall performance to have made the final," he said. The Malaysia Open began Tuesday in Kuching, the capital of Sarawak state on Borneo island.

Meanwhile, Taiwan's Tai Tzu Ying emerged champion in the women's singles. The world number one was, however, made to work hard for her win, defeating Spain's Carolina Marin 23-25, 22-20, 21-13 in a 85-minute triumph. —AFP

BASKETBALL

WADE RETURNS BUT NETS HAND BULLS POTENTIALLY COSTLY LOSS

NEW YORK: Dwyane Wade returned but the Chicago Bulls sustained a potentially costly loss when the Brooklyn Nets beat them 107-106 on Saturday. Spencer Dinwiddie made four free throws in the final 13.6 seconds for the Nets in their home finale. He scored 19 points, as did rookie Caris LeVert. Jimmy Butler scored 33 points for the Bulls, who fell into a tie with Miami for eighth in the Eastern Conference. Wade started and played 25 minutes, scoring 14 points. He had been expected to miss the remainder of the regular season when he sprained his right elbow on March 15. But the Bulls allowed 32 points in the fourth quarter, with Dinwiddie snapping a 103-all with two free throws with 13.6 seconds to play. Butler missed a jumper and Dinwiddie put it away with another pair with 2.4 to play.

TRAIL BLAZERS 101, JAZZ 86

Damian Lillard scored a franchise-record 59 points and matched his career high with nine 3-pointers to help Portland beat Utah. Lillard surpassed Damon Stoudamire's previous record of 54 points with a step-back 3-pointer. The win kept the Blazers ahead of the Denver Nuggets for the eighth and final playoff spot in the Western Conference with just two games left. It was Lillard's 27th game with 30 or more points this season, a franchise high. Stoudamire set the previous franchise record for points on Jan. 14, 2005, at New Orleans. Gordon Hayward had 21 points for the Jazz, battling with the Los Angeles Clippers for the fourth spot in the West and home court advantage.

WARRIORS 123, PELICANS 101

Kevin Durant's first touch after missing 19 games with a knee injury? Just a driving baseline reverse and emphatic one-handed slam, and KD triumphantly returned to finish with 16 points, 10 rebounds and six assists in helping Golden State rout New Orleans. With two-time reigning MVP Stephen Curry sidelined by a bruised left knee, Durant shined in 31 minutes and the balanced Warriors won their 14th straight game - the longest unbeaten run in the NBA this season. He hadn't played since getting hurt Feb. 28 at Washington, then resumed full practice Friday. Klay Thompson scored 20 points, Draymond Green had 13 points and eight rebounds, and the do-everything Warriors sure look poised for another deep playoff run.

CLIPPERS 98, SPURS 87

Chris Paul had 19 points and Los Angeles beat San Antonio for its fifth straight victory. DeAndre Jordan added 17 points and 17 rebounds to help Los Angeles preserve its hopes of hosting a first-round playoff series. Doc Rivers tied Mike Dunleavy for the Clippers franchise record with his 215th regular-season victory. Kawhi Leonard had 28 points, and LaMarcus Aldridge added 18 points for San Antonio. The Spurs closed out their home schedule with just their 10th loss at the AT&T Center. San Antonio is playing out the regular season after securing the No. 2 seed and first-round matchup against seventh-seeded Memphis.

CELTICS 121, HORNETS 114

Isaiah Thomas scored 32 points, and Boston remained in contention for the No. 1 seed in the Eastern Conference

playoffs with a victory over Charlotte. Al Horford added 16 points and Kelly Olynyk had 13 points and 11 rebounds for his first double-double of the season as the Celtics swept the four-game series and pulled within a half-game of the Cleveland Cavaliers. The Cavaliers (51-28) have road games remaining against Atlanta and Miami before closing at home against Toronto. The Celtics (51-29) have two home games left, against Brooklyn and Milwaukee. Nicolas Batum had 31 points and Kemba Walker added 23 for the Hornets, who were eliminated from postseason contention. Boston led by as many as 19 in the second half, but the Hornets battled back to take a seven-point lead midway through the fourth quarter before Thomas took over.

HEAT 106, WIZARDS 103

Hassan Whiteside scored 30 points and James Johnson hit a layup with 11 seconds left to give Miami a victory over Washington. Johnson beat Markieff Morris to the basket for the go-ahead basket, Kelly Oubre Jr. threw away the inbounds pass and Josh Richardson made two free throws to seal it as the Heat moved into a tie for eighth in the Eastern Conference. The Chicago Bulls, who lost to the Brooklyn Nets earlier, own the tiebreaker. The Wizards had no answer inside for Whiteside, who was 12 of 19 from the floor and grabbed 12 rebounds. His 30 points were two short of a career high. After missing his first four shots, Goran Dragic finished with 18 points, and Tyler Johnson scored 19 with four 3-pointers. Morris led Washington with 21 points. John Wall shot 5 of 18 for 16 points.

BUCKS 90, 76ERS 82

Giannis Antetokounmpo had 20 points, 10 rebounds and six assists, and Milwaukee beat Philadelphia to clinch a playoff berth. The Bucks, who snapped a three-game losing streak, began the night needing a victory and a loss by either Chicago, Indiana or Miami to secure their second postseason berth in three years. The Bulls lost 107-106 to Brooklyn. Antetokounmpo scored eight points in the third quarter, when the Bucks (41-39) outscored the Sixers 25-12 to take command. Greg Monroe added 17 points off the bench for Milwaukee, which limited Philadelphia to 35 percent shooting, including 25.8 percent from 3-point range. Matthew Dellavedova contributed 14 points for the Bucks. The Sixers, who dropped their sixth straight, shot 22 percent from the floor in the third quarter (4 of 18) and 29.7 percent in the second half (11 of 37).

PACERS 127, MAGIC 112

Paul George scored 37 points and Myles Turner added 23 points and 10 rebounds to help Indiana move a step closer to a playoff berth with a victory over Orlando. The Pacers pulled a game ahead of Chicago and Miami for seventh place in the Eastern Conference and climbed back to .500 with their third straight victory. Terrence Ross had 29 points for the Magic, while Evan Fournier had 23 and Aaron Gordon added 17. Orlando has lost six of its last seven. Elfrid Payton had 10 points and 10 assists, but Orlando's perimeter game was no match for the Pacers' strength around the basket. Indiana's starting frontcourt of George, Thaddeus Young and Turner was a combined 20 of 24 (83.3 percent) in the first half, when the Pacers took a 68-59 lead. —AP



SHANGHAI: Mercedes' British driver Lewis Hamilton holds the trophy as he celebrates on the podium after winning the Formula One Chinese Grand Prix in Shanghai yesterday. —AFP

MOTOR RACING

HAMILTON POWERS TO VICTORY IN CHINESE GP

SHANGHAI: Lewis Hamilton powered to victory in a chaotic Chinese Grand Prix in Shanghai yesterday, taking swift revenge for his defeat by Sebastian Vettel in the Formula One season-opener. The Briton, who started on pole, steered his Mercedes to his fifth Chinese Grand Prix win, beating Vettel's Ferrari by just over six seconds with Red Bull's Max Verstappen finishing third after early safety car drama. "Get in there Lewis!" Hamilton's engineer said over team radio after the three-time world champion took the chequered flag in China for the third time in the last four years.

"That's a great race, mate. An absolute masterclass," Hamilton replied: "We've worked really hard for this, we've got to keep pushing."

Vettel recovered from a poor start from row one and, after being stuck behind Ferrari teammate Kimi Raikkonen early on, began to show the pace that swept the German to victory in Melbourne two weeks ago. First Vettel blew past Raikkonen before going wheel-to-wheel with Red Bull's Daniel Ricciardo at turn seven, producing puffs of blue smoke as the cars touched tyres. Verstappen loomed ahead but the young Dutchman, who produced an astonishing first lap after starting from 16th on the grid, suffered a lock-up going into the hairpin allowing Vettel, rather anti-climactically, to take second place. Hamilton, meanwhile, never looked seriously threatened despite a sequence of fastest laps from his German title rival.

"Grazie a tutti!" said Vettel over the radio. "I think we were a bit unlucky. It felt like we were the quickest, man. We couldn't prove that today but next time we will."

Ricciardo took fourth behind Verstappen after a furious late scrap between the two Red Bulls with Raikkonen finishing in fifth ahead of fellow Finn Valtteri Bottas's Mercedes.

Carlos Sainz finished seventh for Toro Rosso with Kevin Magnussen's Haas eighth and the Force Indias of Sergio Perez and Esteban Ocon rounding out the top 10. Bottas apologised to his team for an embarrassing spin while weaving to warm his tyres behind the safety car, which dropped him down to 12th. "Really sorry, guys, for the amateur mistake," said Bottas, who had earlier been called "Nico" over team radio. "I'll make up for it in the next race." A wet track caused havoc early on with the virtual safety car deployed on lap one after Lance Stroll spun off in his Williams. The safety car was called again after Antonio Giovinazzi smashed his Sauber into a wall. — AFP

RUGBY

FIJI CLAIM RECORD 17TH HONG KONG SEVENS TITLE

HONG KONG: Defending champions Fiji clinched a record 17th Hong Kong Sevens title yesterday after blowing away South Africa to hand new coach Gareth Baber a victory in his former home town. The Pacific islanders recorded a badly-needed first win on the world series this season as they finally vanquished a post-Olympic hangover, after taking gold in Rio last summer.

Baber has been under huge pressure after taking over mid-season from Ben Ryan, who enjoys legendary status in Fiji after guiding them to their first-ever Olympic medal.

His team triumphed in the city he used to call home when coach of tournament hosts Hong Kong, with whom he agonisingly missed out on securing promotion to the world series last year.

But there was no hint of nerves as he returned to the biggest venue of the sevens circuit. His charges swept away South Africa 22-0 with four unanswered tries, including two spectacular second-half scores from Kalione Nasoko who was named player of the final.

"There's huge expectation with Fiji—they are the world champions, the Olympic champions for a reason," Baber said. "When you look back on your career as a coach or player, there are moments where perhaps things didn't go so right, and they make perhaps coming back to the scene of the crime and doing it well that bit more special."

'DREAM TO PLAY IN HONG KONG'

He added: "I love being here in Hong Kong... I thoroughly developed my coaching here and now I come back and put it out for everybody to see with a

great group of people and a great country as well." Sevens is Fiji's national sport and the team enjoy a phenomenal record in Hong Kong, winning five of the last six tournaments. Fiji captain Osea Kolinisau said: "Every young Fijian grows up dreaming to play one day in Hong Kong." He added: "I'm stoked for Gareth. I know he's been under the thumb, a lot of pressure, people questioning his credentials... it's special for him to come back to Hong Kong and to get his first title." South Africa must wait another year to try and claim their first sevens title in Hong Kong. But the Blitzboks remain top of the standings with 145 points, with Fiji leapfrogging England to claim second place on 122 points with three events still to play.

Coach Neil Powell said he had fielded a young squad after losing several experienced players to injury but admitted his team was beaten "fair and square".

Hong Kong was the seventh of 10 tournaments in the global series, with Singapore hosting the next leg before it ends in May in Paris and London. "They (Fiji) will definitely come out guns blazing in Singapore to see if they can close that gap—we need another strong performance in Singapore next weekend," Powell said.

Australia overcame a talented USA side—who overpowered England in the quarterfinals and pushed South Africa to extra time in the semis—to claim third place. USA coach Mike Friday admitted he was frustrated with the loss but added: "It's an unbelievable sevens tournament, unbelievable carnival and celebration of rugby, and the world does come to play here." — AFP



NEW YORK: Chicago Bulls forward Cristiano Felicio (6) guard Jerian Grant (2) and Brooklyn Nets center Brook Lopez fight for a rebound during the first half of an NBA basketball game, Saturday, in New York. —AP



‘FCB Remuntada’ to the World Final in Brazil

Neymar Jr’s Five National Championship Concludes



FCB Remuntada - The winning team of Neymar Jr's Five Kuwait

FCB Remuntada team was announced Neymar Jr's Five Kuwait champion after an intense national final held last Thursday at Al-Kout Mall. The final took place in partnership with Intersport, Acqua Eva, Al-Rai Media Group, Kuwait Times, Al-Kout Mall, and Instituto Projeto Neymar Jr in front a group of spectators. The winners, who won the final match against "Real Madrid", will be representing Kuwait at the world final in Brazil in July this year where they will compete against the winning teams from more than 50 countries.

Running from 21st March to 3rd April, 150 teams signed up to the 6 national qualifiers showcasing their football skills in a first and only Neymar Jr signature football tournament where 5 players compete against 5 in a unique last man standing modus, with an eye on meeting Neymar Jr.

The championship is the world's first and only unique five-a-side championship with Neymar Jr's signature. This year, the fast-paced game opened its doors to participants between the ages of 16 and 25, and for the first time this year, the rules of the tournament allowed the participation of players over the age of twenty-five, giving the opportunity to a larger segment of participants. Two teams of five players each play 10-minute games with no goalkeepers. When one team scores a goal, a player on the opposing team is eliminated until the whole team is completely out or 10 minutes are up.

It was interesting that teams of young talents crowded to sign up in this year's round. The teams registered vying the dream of meeting their beloved star Neymar Jr, especially after learning about last year's unique experience. The ambience of last year's World Final spread through

social media highlighting that qualified teams actually saw the Brazilian star Neymar Junior, who came to the stadium to share memorable moments with the teams and take pictures with them. He also crowned the winners and formed a team of five to play a five-game match against the winners.

During Kuwait's national final, the knockout games were both exciting and challenging amid the applause of the audience, FCB Remuntada managed to outplay their opponents until the championship approached to the end and neither teams could score any goal. In light of tying up, one player from both teams was nominated to compete in an one-on-one match. Hassan Mohamed Ali gave his team FCB Remuntada the winning goal, guaranteeing the boarding pass on the plane that will fly the winning team to Brazil this summer.

When interviewed on their win in the national final, "FCB Remuntada" captain Ali-AIMasri expressed great joy, saying: "We heard about the championship through a friend and we decided to register at the Hassan Abul qualifiers in Al Dasma, we participated in the championship with a plan to win and we did".

"We are very excited about the World Final and hope to be lucky enough to meet Neymar. We will do our best to win the world championship of Neymar Jr's Five and represent Kuwait in the best way possible".

FCB Remuntada's Youssef Daikh, Hassan Mohamed Ali, Ahmed Khalid, Ali Sheet, Ali Al-Masri and Yasser El Najjar, are looking forward to the grand prize for the crowned world champion team in Brazil which is meeting Neymar Jr in Barcelona, Spain, and being his guests at the famous Camp Nou in a game by Barcelona as VIPs.



Al-Sayer announce new partnership with Motul



Specialist lubricants for over 160 years from France

KUWAIT: Mohamed Naser Al-Sayer & Sons (MNSS) and Al-Sayer Engineering Company, one of the Al-Sayer Group Holding Companies has announced a brand new partnership with Motul a world-class French lubricant company established over 160 years ago and currently selling products in more than 80 countries across the globe. With this partnership Al-Sayer marks yet another milestone in its remarkable book of success becoming the authorized distributor of Motul oil and lubricants in Kuwait.

Commenting on the new partnership Mubarak Naser Al-Sayer Chief Executive Officer Al-Sayer Group Holding said “Our strategic vision in Al-Sayer Group (ASG) Holding Company since inception back in 1950’s has been focused on reinforcing our role as a prominent market leader in Kuwait as fit and consistent with the values and traditions of our nation on which we pride ourselves. This vision translated into the transformation of all our group companies to Al-Sayer Group Holding Company as a most efficient operation to meet the expectations and aspirations of Kuwait market providing best products and services in a most efficient manner.”

Moto GP: Technical partner to the finest teams in history

Commemorating the partnership signing agreement, Motul officials from France Headquarters invited Al-Sayer to the Qatar Moto GP at the exclusive VIP stand at Losail International Circuit. The team that visited Qatar included representatives from the press, social media influencers along with members from Al-Sayer Management and MNSS Operations. Motul officials accompanied Al-Sayer team members on a visit to Monster Yamaha’s paddock to catch a glimpse of the engineer’s work stations and also explore the advanced and professional products from Motul brand, which will soon be officially launched in Kuwait. Motorsport is the prime creative and ingenious laboratory of Motul since it first steps in motorsport disciplines in the 1950s. For over a quarter of a century Motul has been associated with Moto GP and forging technical partnerships with some of the world’s leading motor and motorcycle manufacturers. There will be 23 riders, 12 teams and no fewer than 6 manufacturers lined up on the grid for the 2017



Al-Sayer & MOTUL Team

Moto GP season, and Motul will once again be a key player in the World’s premier motorcycling championship from start to finish.

According to Bengt Schultz Chief Operating Officer Al-Sayer Group Holding “On behalf of ASG Holding Chairman and Board Members, I would like to welcome all the guests for being with us in this event celebrating our new partnership with

Motul. I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to Motul Oil Company for their kind invitation, and also our esteemed guests for joining us on this special event.”

Technologically advanced for all types of engines Motul oil has received appreciation around the world for its high-performance and brilliant quality. The brand has evolved over the decades to progress as one of the globally leading lubricants specializing in the formula-

tion, production and distribution of high-tech engine lubricants as well as gaining experience as an official supplier to many racing teams and manufacturers contributing with them towards further technological development.

“Al-Sayer is committed to providing best facilities and services meeting all requirements of our customers in Kuwait working together with Motul as our distinguished partner” added Bengt Schultz.

Superstars, Super Fans and Superb Racing Motul’s involvement in Moto GP comes in many forms and as well as its support for the three teams, it will



also be title sponsor of four rounds: Gran Premio Motul de la Republica Argentina (ARG 9 April), Motul TT Assen (NLD 25 June), Motul Grand Prix of Japan (JAP 15 Oct) and Gran Premio Motul de la Comunitat Valenciana (ESP 12 November). The company also continues its official partnership with the Grand Prix of France, held at Le Mans this year on 21 May, for a remarkable 21st consecutive year.

Another major element of Motul's participation in Moto GP is its commitment to fans, enthusiasts, motorcyclists and consumers everywhere. In association with Dorna, the Champion's promoter, Motul will select a Motul Superfan at every race. The lucky winner of this title, which is selected via social media channels, will have the opportunity to experience a dream weekend meeting teams and riders, taking part in grid walks and a safety car lap, going places and doing things that others can only dream of.

Motul is supporting many teams in international competitions such as: 24 Hours of Le Mans (cars and motorcycles), FIA World Endurance Championship, IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship, Super GT, Drift, Pikes Peak, Japanese championship Super Formula, Blancpain Endurance Series, Dakar, Tour Auto, Le Mans Classic, MotoGP, World Superbike, World MX, FIM Endurance World Championship, IOM TT, MOTUL FIM Ice Speedway Gladiators World Championship.



GP Qatar



Motul Team Presentation



MOTUL Racing



Team Photo at Losail International Circuit Grand Stand.



Paddock Visit



Al-Sayer MOTUL Team

Sports

Kenyan Mr and Mrs
tie up Paris marathon

15

Hamilton powers to
victory in Chinese GP

16

MONDAY, APRIL 10, 2017

FIJI CLAIM RECORD 17TH HONG KONG SEVENS TITLE

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SUNDERLAND: Manchester United's Swedish striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic (C) tries but fails to squeeze between Sunderland's Italian striker Fabio Borini (L) and Sunderland's English defender Billy Jones (R) during the English Premier League football match between Sunderland and Manchester United at the Stadium of Light in Sunderland, north-east England yesterday. — AFP

SOCCER

IBRA SPARKS MAN UTD AGAINST 10-MAN SUNDERLAND

	Sunderland	0
	Man United	3

SUNDERLAND: Zlatan Ibrahimovic scored his 28th goal of the season as Manchester United closed on the Premier League top four with a routine 3-0 win at relegation-threatened Sunderland yesterday. Jose Mourinho's side extended their unbeaten run to 21 league games at a sun-drenched Stadium

of Light, with Henrikh Mkhitaryan and substitute Marcus Rashford also on target. United closed to within four points of fourth-place Manchester City, on whom they retain a game in hand, but will drop back to sixth if Arsenal win at Crystal Palace today. Sunderland, who had Seb Larsson contentiously sent off in the first half, now lie 10 points from safety at the foot of the table and look destined for the Championship. Victory set United up nicely for Thursday's trip to Anderlecht in the quarter-finals of the Europa League, a competition which guarantees a Champions League place to the eventual winners. Mourinho's men won with plenty to spare, enjoying 70 percent of possession and playing against 10

men for more than half the game. Any hope Sunderland had of replying to Ibrahimovic's 18th league goal of the season on the half hour were all but ended when his former Sweden team-mate Larsson was sent off as the interval approached. Larsson was shown a straight red card by referee Craig Pawson for leading with a raised foot in a challenge on Ander Herrera, sparking furious Sunderland protests. With left-back Luke Shaw enjoying a rare United start as England manager Gareth Southgate looked on from the directors' box, Ibrahimovic broke the deadlock with a bolt from the blue. The 35-year-old took a pass from Herrera on the edge of the Sunderland area, easily held off Billy Jones and fired

a low shot into Jordan Pickford's bottom-left corner. **POGBA WAYWARD** Pickford had already saved well from Jesse Lingard and only a brave block from Bryan Oviedo prevented Marouane Fellaini from stretching the visitors' lead following Herrera's inviting cut-back. It proved to be Jones's last intervention before the Sunderland right-back was forced off by a hamstring problem. Mkhitaryan had scored with a stunning 'scorpion kick' in the victory over Sunderland at Old Trafford on Boxing Day. He got his name on the scoresheet again in more prosaic circumstances just 46 seconds after the restart. From the kick-off, Sunderland failed to touch

the ball as the Armenian was afforded time and space to send a low angled drive past Pickford from 15 yards to notch his ninth goal of the season. Paul Pogba should have made it three, but produced a wayward volley from an Ibrahimovic flick, before the France midfielder aimed a long-range free-kick narrowly wide. Rashford put a more realistic slant on the final score a minute from the end as Sunderland were stretched to breaking point by a swift counter-attack. It ended with Rashford swapping passes with Ibrahimovic before finding the bottom-left corner with a confident finish. Sunderland have lost five of their last six games and failed to score for the seventh consecutive game, a desperate run of over 11 hours. —AFP

EVERTON'S LUKAKU HALTS LEICESTER REVIVAL

	Everton	4
	Leicester	2

LIVERPOOL: Romelu Lukaku scored twice for Everton in a 4-2 victory yesterday as Craig Shakespeare suffered defeat for the first time since becoming Leicester City manager. Shakespeare had won all of his first six matches in charge, five of them in the Premier League, since replacing the sacked Claudio Ranieri in February. A much-changed Leicester side, without their regular full-backs or midfielder Wilfred Ndidi, and with Riyad Mahrez appearing only as a substitute, were unable to cope with the threat of Lukaku. The Premier League's leading scorer took his goal tally in the competition to 23 for the season with a fine header and a clinical close-range finish. Shakespeare's decision to make five changes suggested he had one eye on Wednesday's Champions League quarter-final first leg away to Atletico Madrid. Leicester were behind after just 31 seconds, yet were soon in front. Everton scored from their first attack as Kevin Mirallas raced through the centre and was pulled down by Daniel Amartey. As the home fans appealed for a foul, teenage midfielder Tom Davies latched onto the loose ball and pushed it past Kasper Schmeichel. Shakespeare's side responded positively and were

level with just four minutes on the clock. Demarai Gray broke and with the Everton defenders standing off, rolled a pass to his right for Islam Slimani to slot under Joel Robles. Everton's goalkeeper, exposed for the equaliser, was at fault as Leicester took the lead in the 10th minute. Jamie Vardy won a free-kick after he was fouled out on the left. Marc Albrighton swung it in with his right foot and the ball sailed in at the far post, with Robles caught out of position anticipating a cross. The goalkeeper looked uncertain after that as he used his feet to block a tame Gray shot that appeared easy to gather. **MIRALLAS AND HUTH TANGLE** But Everton did recover their composure to draw level midway through the half with a fine goal. Ross Barkley found space on the right to whip over a cross with plenty of pace and Lukaku escaped Leicester's centre-backs to power a header past Schmeichel. Still there was time for more drama before the half came to a close, with Mirallas and Huth booked following a tangle that became a full-on confrontation that drew in several players from both sides. After that, Barkley was sent clear as Leighton Baines won the ball 40 yards out and went round Schmeichel, who recovered superbly to block as the midfielder looked set to find an empty net. From the resulting corner, taken by Mirallas, captain Phil Jagielka rose to head in his second goal in two matches. The chances continued to come after half-time, although not with quite as much frequency. Mirallas steered a curler into Schmeichel's arms at one end and Slimani's cross-shot from the left rolled

just past Robles's near post at the other after taking a deflection off Morgan Schneiderlin. The game's sixth goal was not far away, though, and it turned out to be Everton's fourth. It came from another Mirallas corner, which Jagielka headed against the back of Leicester midfielder Andy King, before the ball dropped to the far post for Lukaku to drive in. Shakespeare brought on Mahrez for the final half hour in an attempt to make life uncomfortable for Everton. His counterpart, Ronald Koeman, responded by introducing Gareth Barry to shore up the home side's midfield. Leicester were not quite finished, though. Leonardo Ulloa, their final substitute, would have pulled one back, but his header from a Mahrez corner struck Idrissa Gueye full in the face and he was then foiled by Robles. — AFP

 **Matches on TV**
(Local Timings)

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE	
Crystal Palace v Arsenal	22:00
beIN SPORTS HD 2	
beIN SPORTS HD 12	
SPANISH LEAGUE	
Real Sociedad v Sporting Gijon	1:45
beIN SPORTS	



LIVERPOOL: Everton's English defender Matthew Pennington (L) vies with Leicester City's Algerian striker Islam Slimani during the English Premier League football match between Everton and Leicester City at Goodison Park in Liverpool, north west England yesterday. —AFP



The new E-Class Coupe and transformative technology

FLIGHT TO SAFETY ON RISING TENSIONS



VENICE: Gondolas and boat-taxis drive on the Canale Grande (Grand Canal) in Venice. —AFP

TRUMP SEEKS CONSENSUS ON US TAX OVERHAUL

SEARCH FOR REPUBLICAN ACCORD VEERS INTO UNEXPECTED CORNERS

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump has scrapped the tax plan he campaigned on and is going back to the drawing board in a search for Republican consensus behind legislation to overhaul the US tax system. The administration's first attempt to write legislation is in its early stages and the White House has kept much of it under wraps. But it has already sprouted the consideration of a series of unorthodox proposals including a drastic cut to the payroll tax, aimed at appealing to Democrats.

Some view the search for new options as a result of Trump's refusal to set clear parameters for his plan and his exceedingly challenging endgame: reducing tax rates enough to spur faster growth without blowing up the budget deficit.

Administration officials say it's now unlikely that a tax overhaul will meet the August deadline set by Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin. But the ambitious pace to figure out a plan reflects Trump's haste to move quickly past a bruising failure to broker a compromise within his own party on how to replace the health insurance law enacted under President Barack Obama.

The White House is trying to learn the lessons from health care. Rather than accepting a bill written by the lawmakers, White House officials are taking a more active role. Administration officials have signaled that they want to pass tax legislation with only Republican votes, yet they've also held listening sessions with House Democrats. White House aides say the goal is to cut tax rates sharply enough to improve the economic picture in depressed rural and industrial pockets of the country where many Trump voters live. But the administration so far has swatted down alternative ways for raising revenues, such as a carbon tax, to offset lower rates.



WASHINGTON: In this Oct 22, 1986 file photo, lawmakers watch closely as President Ronald Reagan signs into law a landmark tax overhaul on the South Lawn of the White House in Washington. —AP

Trump, who brands himself as a deal-maker, has not said which trade-offs he might accept and he has remained noncommittal on the leading blueprint, from Rep. Kevin Brady, chairman of the Ways and Means Committee. Brady, R-Texas, has proposed a border adjustment system, which would eliminate corporate deductions on imports, to raise \$1 trillion over 10 years that could fund lower corporate tax rates.

But that possibility has rankled retailers who

say it would lead to higher prices and threaten millions of jobs, while some lawmakers have worried that the system would violate World Trade Organization rules. Brady has said he intends to amend the blueprint but has not spelled out how he would do so.

Other options are being shopped on Capitol Hill. One circulating this past week would change the House Republican plan to eliminate much of the payroll tax and cut corporate tax rates. This

would require a new dedicated funding source for Social Security.

The change, proposed by a GOP lobbyist with close ties to the Trump administration, would transform Brady's plan on imports into something closer to a value-added tax by also eliminating the deduction of labor expenses. This would bring it in line with WTO rules and generate an additional \$1.2 trillion over 10 years, according to budget estimates. Those additional revenues could then enable the end of the 12.4 percent payroll tax, split evenly between employers and employees, that funds Social Security, while keeping the health insurance payroll tax in place. This approach would give a worker earning \$60,000 a year an additional \$3,720 in take-home pay, a possible win that lawmakers could highlight back in their districts even though it would involve changing the funding mechanism for Social Security, according to the lobbyist, who asked for anonymity to discuss the proposal without disrupting early negotiations.

Bipartisan solution

Although some billed this as a bipartisan solution, and President Barack Obama did temporarily cut the payroll tax after the Great Recession, others note it probably would run into firm opposition from Democrats who loathe to be seen as undermining Social Security.

The White House would not comment on the plan, but said a value-added tax based on consumption is not under consideration "as of now," according to a White House statement.

The lack of detail about how to significantly rewrite tax laws for the first time in 30 years may provide Trump some time to build consensus among Republicans. But without Trump laying

down his hand, lawmakers appear reluctant to back a plan that will likely stir controversy.

"Because there are trade-offs, congressmen need cover from the president to withstand the lobbyists and constituents who are going to complain," said Bill Gale, an economist at the Brookings Institution who worked at the White House Council of Economic Advisers during President George H.W. Bush's administration. The Trump administration appears to have shut out the economists who helped assemble one of his campaign's tax overhaul plans, which independent analyses show would have increased the budget deficit.

"It's a little frustrating that they feel they have to write a new tax plan when they have a tax plan," said Steven Moore, an economist at the conservative Heritage Foundation who helped formulate tax policy for the Trump campaign.

Sen. Rob Portman, R-Ohio, a member of the Senate Finance Committee, said that all of the trial balloons surfacing in public don't represent the work that's being done behind the scenes.

"It's not really what's going on," Portman said. "What's going on is they're working with on various ideas." Investors are beginning to show some doubts that Trump can deliver. Stocks rallied after his election on the promise of lower taxes and fewer regulations, but the Dow Jones Industrial Average has dipped 1.2 percent over the past month as the path for health care and tax revisions has become muddled.

"The White House is going to need its own clear direction, or it's going to need to defer to Congress, but saying that your plan is forthcoming and then not producing a plan kind of puts everything in stasis," said Alan Cole, an economist at the conservative Tax Foundation. —AP

BREXIT TRIGGER HAS HELPED LONDON: FINANCE CHIEF

LONDON: The outlook for London's financial sector has improved since Brexit was triggered, insists the man charged with its policy, even as banks remain set to move some jobs abroad.

Mark Boleat, who spoke on Thursday to AFP after British Prime Minister Theresa May activated the process for Britain's EU exit, nevertheless urged speedy trade talks to minimize disruption. The signing of Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty late last month has kick-started a two-year countdown to Brexit. "On the whole, I think things are looking rather better," Boleat said when asked about the impact on London's financial sector, otherwise known as the City. "We would hope that the negotiations go quickly and go well," he said. If early agreement could be reached on the

terms for exit and on the rights of EU nationals, "there will be the minimum of disruption to business and consumers in this country-and in Europe," said Boleat, who steps down next month as policy chairman of the City of London Corporation.

Bank of England chief Governor Mark Carney on Friday warned of sector-wide consequences of leaving without a trade deal, but was optimistic for an agreement.

London to lose bank jobs

In the run-up to last year's Brexit referendum, the business community threw its weight behind the failed Remain campaign, arguing it would prompt large-scale City job losses. So far, HSBC has stated it would likely shift 1,000 jobs to

Paris, where the banking titan already has a significant operation. US player Goldman Sachs will meanwhile move 1,000 staff from London to Frankfurt. Boleat sought, however, to calm jitters over banks shifting jobs to other major European hubs.

"Banks have had contingency plans since before the Brexit referendum in some cases. They have known there is a possibility that Britain will not be in the single market-that has now been confirmed." Many banks "will need to restructure what they are doing-perhaps cease doing a few things, in some cases build up business elsewhere in the European Union. They are getting on and doing that."

And he cited US investment bank JPMorgan's chief executive Jamie Dimon, who stated this week that he did not

foresee shifting many staff from Britain over the next two years because of Brexit. "I don't think businesses are going to announce what they are doing in a great fanfare," Boleat said.

As executives such as Jamie Dimon had pointed out, "we are going to need to build up our resources in other EU member states." A few people would be moved, but "no one is going to say: we are closing down in London," he said. Historic insurance market Lloyd's of London was the first group to respond to the Brexit trigger, announcing it will open a Brussels subsidiary in early 2019.

The market, which insures against catastrophes such as earthquakes, shipwrecks and revolutions, is seeking to ensure its continued access across the bloc. —AFP



Mark Boleat, City of London policy chief, posing for a photograph following an interview. —AFP

SALINI IMPREGILO CEO ON US INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN

MILAN: Italian engineering and construction firm Salini Impregilo is ready to make the most of the Trump administration's planned \$1 trillion spending bonanza on renewing the nation's infrastructure. With its purchase last year of Lane Construction, based in Cheshire, Connecticut, the Italian firm gets a valid US passport to bid on American projects.

While Lane gives Salini Impregilo important inroads into American infrastructure, Salini Impregilo's expertise in hydropower and tunneling projects, as seen in the Panama Canal extension, adds new sectors. CEO Pietro Salini, who has been guiding the family-owned, publicly traded business through a period of expansion, spoke to The Associated Press before a trip to the United States to feel out US President Donald Trump's plans.

Q. Have you seen Trump's plans and do you know where to concentrate your initial bids?

A. He made the first statements. Obviously a complete plan takes time, to give a series of indications of where principally to invest. It also remains to be seen what is meant by maintenance and renovation. One of the characteristics of the United States is that it is a country that invested before others in infrastructure, and having invested before others, today its infrastructure is old. As it is also in Europe. But while Europe doesn't seem to be aware of this, the United States is feeling constrained because their economy is growing.

Q. Have you included the Trump spending promises in your plans?

A. No, we haven't factored that in yet. But seeing the speed at which the Trump administration makes decision, I expect it

very soon. Our business plan foresaw the market that existed.

Q. Are you bidding on the wall that Trump has pledged to build along the border with Mexico?

A. Walls are not our specialty. We make bridges, more than walls. Our specialty is ways of communications: Water, energy, roads. We are more involved with these things.

Q. When you consider bidding on projects, do you also take into consideration the ethics, if it is something good for the world?

A. We reflect a lot on what we do, on what is the mission of the company. ... The mission is to realize work that is useful for people. We don't do symbolic works, or works that represent any political party or any government. We only do works that are useful for people.

Q. Considering Salini Impregilo's expertise with dams, have you looked at possible interventions at the Oroville Dam in California that recently threatened to collapse, forcing the evacuation of nearly 200,000 people?

A. It is a very interesting market and a sector where we can bring a big added value. There are around 14,000 dams in the United States that need intervention or maintenance, because they are old. ... In the United States, everything is insured, so if a dam collapses today, imagine the damages beyond the loss of life - the economic damage like houses, jobs, etcetera... Today you could think of reducing the comprehensive risk for the insurance companies and do a sort of bond to be able to intervene on these structures without spending too much money.—AP



Salini-Impregilo CEO Pietro Salini speaks during an interview.—AP



NEW YORK: This June 30, 2008 file photo shows the Casicano Memorial Bridge at center and the Manhattan, New York skyline in the background as a passenger airplane lands at Newark Liberty International Airport in Newark, N.J.—AP

NY DERAILMENT HIGHLIGHTS INFRASTRUCTURE CONCERNS

ACCIDENT LEADS TO CASCADE OF EXASPERATING DELAYS

NEW YORK: When a train jumped the tracks this past week at New York's Penn Station, the seemingly minor accident led to a cascade of exasperating delays for hundreds of thousands of commuters. When a flood forced authorities to condemn a one-lane, century-old bridge in rural Ozark, Missouri, it was no less frustrating for the residents and business owners cut off from their shortest route into town.

The two episodes highlight a reality about the US transportation system - it is aging, congested and so vital that when things go wrong, big and costly disruptions can result for which there is no quick fix.

Though President Donald Trump has promised a \$1 trillion infrastructure-rebuilding program, not all of that may go toward transportation. Even then, it would fall well short of the many trillions needed to fix the country's web of roads, bridges, railways, subways and bus stations.

The commuter train in New York derailed because of a weakened railroad tie. No one was seriously injured. But the incident shut down eight of the station's 21 tracks, disrupting Amtrak service in the Northeast from Boston to Washington, as well as delaying commuter trains in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut for the better part of a week.

Business meetings were canceled, ballgames, dinners and doctor's appointments missed, and commuters fumed.

Lawyer Dominic Boone, who travels into New York from New Jersey, complained that because he arrived late to the office and had to leave early to catch a different train, he lost 10 hours of work for which he could have billed clients.

"They should have been working on Penn Station forever ago," Boone said. "As a nation, we should be spending more on our crumbling infrastructure."

Brief example

The disruption was only a brief example of the frustration travelers could face if the region can't find a way to replace a pair of deteriorating, overcrowded, century-old rail tunnels that run

under the Hudson River and connect New York and New Jersey.

The tunnels, which were severely damaged in Superstorm Sandy in 2012, could cost more than \$20 billion to replace. But the money has yet to be lined up. And construction, whenever it begins, may take more than a decade.

The Penn Station derailment came less than two weeks after another one there, caused by a misaligned track. And it happened just days after motorists in Atlanta were forced to begin taking long, bumper-to-bumper detours because a fire collapsed an Interstate 85 overpass linking the city to some of its biggest suburbs. Arson - not aging steel and concrete - is suspected there. It could take until mid-June to repair the highway.

Earlier this year, a cracked steel beam forced the closing of a major bridge between Pennsylvania and New Jersey for 11/2 months.

Improving the nation's roads and bridges would require \$120 billion a year through 2020, according to a recent US Department of Transportation estimate. But annual spending at all levels of government is just \$88 billion. And the nation's mass transit systems have over a \$90 billion backlog of maintenance and repair needs. The capacity of the nation's transportation system is lagging behind population growth, leading to ever greater congestion. By 2040, nearly 30,000 miles of the nation's busiest highways are expected to be clogged on a daily basis.

Rural communities also face challenges, partly because they have fewer residents over whom to spread the cost of transportation improvements. Grant County, Oklahoma, for example, has more than 3,500 bridges with a population of about 4,500 and an economy based on agriculture and energy production.

"While this infrastructure was ideal 70 years ago for transporting livestock and crops, it is inadequate to support today's heavier trucks, increased traffic and higher operating needs," county commission chairwoman Cindy Bobbitt told US senators at a recent hearing.

The complexities of government can some-

times slow down improvements, as cities, counties, states, port authorities, special taxing districts and federal agencies all have a say in which projects get built, when to do the work and how to pay the bills.

Plans for wider roads and new rail lines can also face opposition from the communities they pass through because of concerns about noise, pollution and diminished property values.

"Of course I believe there needs to be more" infrastructure investment, said Martin Wachs, a retired professor of civil and environmental engineering and urban planning at the University of California, Los Angeles. "At the same time, political decisions have to be made that weigh that against investments in education and health care and so forth."

At least 20 states have raised taxes or fees for transportation over the past five years. California became the latest to do so Thursday, as legislators passed a bill to raise \$5 billion annually through higher fuel taxes and vehicle fees to pay for road and bridge repairs, public transit and pedestrian trails.

The plan tackles part of a \$137 billion backlog of deferred maintenance on state highways and local roads. It came together after a destructive winter in which flooding caused nearly \$600 million in damage to highways.

Replacement

Indiana and Tennessee are among other states considering raising fuel taxes and fees for transportation this year. In Ozark, a town of fewer than 20,000 people in Missouri, voters approved a transportation sales tax Tuesday of three-eighths of a cent, with some of the proceeds going toward a new, \$3 million two-lane bridge to replace the narrow structure that has been closed since it was damaged by flooding in 2015.

The bridge closing has forced 75-year-old Gary Jenks to drive an extra 10 minutes along a circuitous route every time he needs to go the doctor or pharmacy or visit his family on the opposite side of town. "It's just been a total inconvenience and a burden," Jenks said. —AP

MRC ANNOUNCES ENHANCED EARNINGS PERFORMANCE IN 2016

KUWAIT: Metals and Recycling Company (MRC) - Kuwait's leading eco industrial company and its subsidiaries, exhibited significantly enhanced earnings performance across various sectors during the financial year (FY) ended 31 December 2016 in comparison to the financial year ended 31 December 2015.

Revenue: Revenue increased 7.32 percent in 2016, a total of KD 828K, from KD 11.3 million during FY 2015 to KD 12.1 million during FY 2016. Gross Profit increased 51.60 percent from KD2.2 million during FY 2015 to KD 3.3 million during FY 2016, an increase of KD 1.1 million resulting mainly from realized cost efficiencies and optimization.

Gross Profit Ratio: Improved cost savings, efficiencies and optimization are reflected in the gross profit ratio, which increased from 19 percent in FY 2015 to 26.89 percent in FY 2016.

Earnings and Income: The increases in EBITDA, EBIT and Net Income all reflect the increase in gross profit as well as reduced impairment provision charges in FY 2016 in comparison to FY 2015.

EPS: Earnings per share (EPS) increased 112.50 percent from (35) fils per share during FY 2015 to 4.40 fils per share during FY 2016.

Liquidity: Liquidity position demonstrated considerable improvement as reflected in the Quick and Current Ratios, mainly resulting from significant reduction in the overdraft balance during FY 2016

Solvency Ratios: MRC's solvency ratios improved through significant reduction of leverage.

Overdraft: Outstanding overdraft balance reduced by KD 1.2 million during FY 2016.

Ratios: Debt-to-Equity leverage

ratio decreased to 0.15 in FY 2016 compared to 0.23 in FY 2015.

RoA: Return on Assets increased by 13.40 percent, from (10.79 percent) in FY 2015 to 2.62 percent in FY 2016.

RoE: Return on Equity increased by 18.50 percent from (15.01 percent) in FY 2015 to 3.49 percent in FY 2016.

Core businesses

The plastics and waste management business units' contribution to the results came from strategic streamlining aimed at maximizing capacity, raising the efficiency of processes, cost optimization, and intelligent materials sourcing. In the metals and steel division, competitive sourcing and participation in more auctions to maximize capacity as well as an increased utilization of existing assets. Improved cash flow management and better streamlining of the sales cycle were also major contributors to the results.

Subsidiaries

United Engineering Services (UES) continues to exhibit solid earnings performance as a result of its large base of ongoing government contracts, and successful bids for new government contracts, ensuring that its earnings performance will remain strong. UES is a leading provider of HVAC, maintenance and other related services in the State of Kuwait.

Silver Ocean continues its growth as a provider of cleaning services for the public and private sectors, with strong performance as a result of successfully bidding for new cleaning contracts across various clients and customers.

Kawoosh has positioned itself as a reputable player in the medical waste incineration industry as it seeks to bid for new contracts for medical waste incineration in Kuwait.

EXCHANGE RATES

AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

ASIAN COUNTRIES

Japanese Yen	2.753
Indian Rupees	4.763
Pkistani Rupees	2.914
Srilankani Rupees	2.013
Nepali Rupees	2.972
Singapore Dollar	219.570
Hongkong Dollar	39.550
Bangladesh Taka	3.804
Philippine Peso	6.096
Thai Baht	8.854

GCC COUNTRIES

Saudi Riyal	81.588
Qatari Riyal	84.032
Omani Riyal	794.569
Bahraini Dinar	812.410
UAE Dirham	83.299

ARAB COUNTRIES

Egyptian Pound - Cash	20.250
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	16.922
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.228
Tunisian Dinar	134.570
Jordanian Dinar	431.330
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.038
Syrian Lira	2.180
Morocco Dirham	30.822

EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES

US Dollar Transfer	305.750
Euro	327.150
Sterling Pound	308.960
Canadian dollar	229.890
Turkish lira	82.520

Swiss Franc	305.780
Australian Dollar	232.370
US Dollar Buying	304.550

GOLD

20 Gram	256.450
10 Gram	131.150
5 Gram	66.420

DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

Rate for Transfr

US Dollar	305.400
Canadian Dolla	227.935
Sterling Pound	382.705
Euro	327.520
Swiss Frank	308.105
Bahrain Dinar	810.020
UAE Dirhams	83.545
Qatari Riyals	84.770
Saudi Riyals	82.335
Jordanian Dinar	430.647
Egyptian Pound	17.012
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.013
Indian Rupees	4.696
Pakistani Rupees	2.912
Bangladesh Taka	3.819
Philippines Peso	6.087
Cyprus pound	168.535
Japanese Yen	3.765
Syrian Pound	2.425
Nepalese Rupees	3.930
Malaysian Ringgit	69.695

Selling Rate

Chinese Yuan Renminbi	44.705
Thai Bhat	9.810
Turkish Lira	82.710

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL

CURRENCY BUY SELL

British Pound	0.372628	0.382628
Czech Korune	0.004243	0.016243
Danish Krone	0.039759	0.044759
Euro	0.319360	0.328360
Norwegian Krone	0.031547	0.036747
Romanian Leu	0.084736	0.084736
Slovakia	0.009162	0.019162
Swedish Krona	0.029908	0.034908
Swiss Franc	0.297080	0.308080
Turkish Lira	0.076889	0.087169

Australian Dollar	0.221703	0.233703
New Zealand Dollar	0.206315	0.215815

America

Canadian Dollar	0.222904	0.231904
Georgina Lari	0.138094	0.138094
US Dollars	0.301650	0.306050
US Dollars Mint	0.302150	0.306050
Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003428	0.004012
Chinese Yuan	0.042839	0.046339
Hong Kong Dollar	0.037336	0.040086
Indian Rupee	0.004131	0.004819

Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002690	0.002870
Kenyan Shilling	0.003049	0.003049
Korean Won	0.000259	0.000274
Malaysian Ringgit	0.065330	0.071330
Nepalese Rupee	0.002960	0.003130
Pakistan Rupee	0.002729	0.003019
Philippine Peso	0.006008	0.006308
Sierra Leone	0.000068	0.000074
Singapore Dollar	0.213189	0.223189
South African Rand	0.016279	0.024779
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001641	0.002221
Taiwan	0.009788	0.009968
Thai Baht	0.008492	0.009042

Arab

Bahraini Dinar	0.804437	0.812937
Egyptian Pound	0.014695	0.020603
Iranian Riyal	0.000085	0.000086
Iraqi Dinar	0.000196	0.000256
Jordanian Dinar	0.425883	0.434883
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000158	0.000258
Moroccan Dirhams	0.020111	0.044111
Nigerian Naira	0.001287	0.001902
Omani Riyal	0.787735	0.793415
Qatar Riyal	0.083170	0.084620
Saudi Riyal	0.080447	0.081747
Syrian Pound	0.001297	0.001517
Tunisian Dinar	0.130277	0.138277
Turkish Lira	0.076869	0.087169
UAE Dirhams	0.081820	0.083520
Yemeni Riyal	0.000994	0.001074

MORE ANNUAL SHAREHOLDER MEETINGS GO VIRTUAL IN US

NEW YORK: Big US corporations have identified a new strategy for managing irate investors at annual shareholder meetings: Going virtual. This year, about 250 companies are expected to convene their yearly investor tete-a-tete via audio or video, up from 155 in 2016 and just 26 in 2012, according to investors communications firm Broadridge.

The set of companies forgoing the face-to-face encounters includes number-two US automaker Ford and energy giants ConocoPhillips and Duke Energy.

"We take very seriously the trust that our shareholders place in our leadership team," said Bill Ford, Ford's executive chairman. "The virtual nature of this year's meeting will enable us to increase shareholder accessibility, while improving efficiency and reducing costs." Duke

Energy also defended the practice, saying the format would permit chief executive Lynn Good "to answer more shareholder questions, either during the meeting or afterward through a web posting," according to a press release.

But not everyone is persuaded of the nobility of intent. "What's really going on is that corporations are trying to hide-from shareholders, from protesters, from anyone trying to hold them accountable," said Marni Halasa, founder of protest consulting firm Revolution is Sexy, who has previously criticized large banks.

Duke shareholder Danielle Fugere of the non-governmental organization "As You Sow" added: "We do not believe it is in the company's interest to insulate itself from the interested public."

The group has proposed a shareholder resolution to require the company to report on the public health impacts of its use of coal.

Avenue for individual investors

New York City Comptroller Scott Stringer, who oversees investments under the city's \$170 billion public pension system, has declared war on virtual meetings, sending a letter to almost 20 companies demanding they go the traditional way. "It's one of the great markers of American enterprise - whether you own one share or a one million, you can speak at a company's annual meeting," Stringer said.

"Except now, in this interconnected world, companies are using technological tools to whittle away at investors'

rights and hide from accountability." But the companies rebut this point, with Ford saying "any pertinent questions that cannot be answered during the meeting, due to time constraints, will be answered and posted online." Virtual meetings became possible following changes in law in a number of US states, including Delaware, where many companies are based. The annual events are not usually a major occasion for the biggest shareholders, who are typically in an ongoing dialogue with corporations.

But the annual meeting has traditionally offered a unique forum to the individual investor who lack the clout of large institutional investors. By going virtual, big companies can avoid sometimes pointed criticism over shareholder pay, their environmental perform-

ance or any number of controversial matters. Calpers, which oversees pension and health benefits for some 1.6 billion people in the state of California, joined smaller shareholders in decrying the trend.

Calpers backs physical meeting that are accessible remote investors via technology. Some companies, like Microsoft, have employed this hybrid style. "Companies should hold shareowner meetings by remote communication (so-called 'virtual' meetings) only as a supplement to traditional in-person shareowner meetings, not as a substitute," Calpers said, adding that the technology "should facilitate the opportunity for remote attendees to participate in the meeting to the same degree as in-person attendees." —AFP



JAKARTA: A woman takes a selfie as she rides a rented bicycle on the main square of Jakarta yesterday. —AFP

TARIQ QAQISH JOINS MENACORP AS MD ASSET MANAGEMENT

DUBAI: Menacorp, one of the leading financial services firm in UAE, has announced yesterday that Tariq Qaqish joined the firm as Managing Director Asset Management.

Menacorp is well known for being a securities brokerage leader as it has, for the past 4 consecutive years, ranked first among 49 competitors, by market share and trade value on the Dubai Financial Market, the main exchange of the United Arab Emirates. Menacorp has also established a strong position on the fast-growing Nasdaq Dubai Equity Futures market where the firm is also ranked first with a market share constantly exceeding 60 percent of the total trade value.

With Tariq Qaqish joining the company to run its asset management business, Menacorp plans to accelerate its growth and offer a more diverse range of services and products to its wide base of clients comprised of financial institutions, corporations, government entities, sovereign investors, family offices, high net worth individuals and private clients.

"Thanks to the loyalty of our clients, the backing of our shareholders of the Bin Hamoodah Group and the dedication of our employees, Menacorp is today a well-regarded financial institution in the Middle East and North Africa region. The establishment of a wholly-owned asset management division is a natural development for our firm. As our strategy has always been to hire the best talents in the region, we are excited to have a professional of the caliber of Tariq joining us. With his 25 years of experience, world-class expertise and deep understanding of the local and

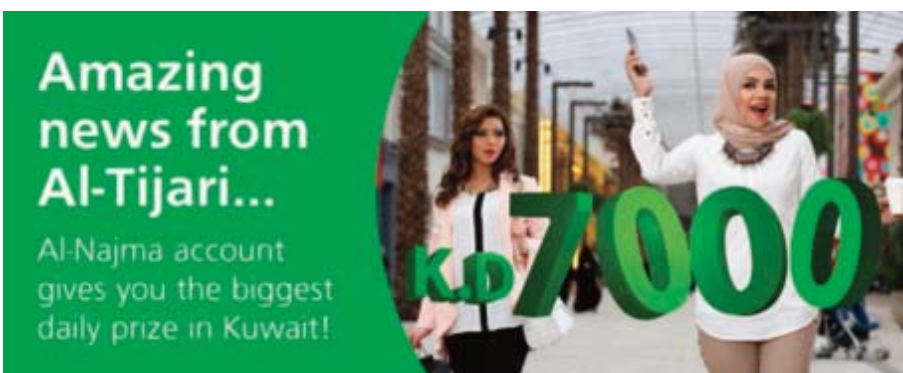


Tariq Qaqish

regional economies, Tariq is the right person to lead our firm on this new segment. Throughout the years, Tariq Qaqish built an impressive track-record, outperforming market benchmarks and peers thanks to his result-driven approach. In his prior roles, he has proved himself as a key executive responsible for leading his investment team in becoming top tier fund managers. That is our promise to our clients: they will always have only the best in class to serve them" said Fathi Ben Grira, CEO of Menacorp.

"I am really excited to join Menacorp, a well-respected financial institution not only in UAE but also in the rest of the Middle East and North Africa region. As the company's Managing Director Asset Management, my goal is to deliver the best performances to investors who put their trust in us. With Menacorp, I am confident that I will have the right support to deliver these results thanks to the firm's solid platform in terms of compliance, back-office, IT and customers service. I know that I am integrating a company with high ethical standards and with a culture that is entirely focused towards preserving clients' best interests. I look forward to work with the rest of the team and start serving our clients under my new functions".

During recent years, Tariq Qaqish received numerous awards and accolades including the prestigious "Best Fund Manager of the Year" by Zawya Thomson Reuters and was recognized three times as one of MENA Power 50 Fund Managers of the Year.



AL-TIJARI ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF AL-NAJMA ACCOUNT DRAW

KUWAIT: Commercial Bank of Kuwait held the Al-Najma Account daily draw yesterday. The draw was held under the supervision of the Ministry of Commerce & Industry represented by Abdulaziz Ashkanani.

The winners of the Al-Najma daily draw are:

Mohammad Abduljaber Ibraheem Abduljaber — KD 7000, Shabaan Jad Alrab Ali Abdulazez — KD 7000, Raed Faisal Al-Khalaf — KD 7000, Khalil Abdulateef Mandani Mohammed — KD 7000, Samera Hussain Ahmad Kankuni — KD 7000.

Al-Najma awards are now brighter and bigger than ever.

With the revamped Al-Najma account, all your dreams will be turned to reality. On top of offering the highest daily prize in Kuwait for KD 7,000, now our Mega prize draws got bigger to reach KD 250,000.

The new prizes scheme for Al-Najma account

Daily draw to win KD 7,000
Quarterly draws to win great prizes that would start from KD 100,000 to KD 250,000
1st quarter — KD 100 000, 2nd quarter — KD 150 000, 3rd quarter — KD 200 000, 4th quarter — KD 250 000.

With Al-Najma you have more chances to win greater prizes

* Each KD 25 kept in your account gives you one chance to win

* Each KD 25 kept in your account for one week will give you a chance to enter the daily draw.

* Each KD 25 kept in your account for 3 months will give you chance to enter the quarterly draw.

Additional features
* ATM card
* Issue a credit card against your account
* Obtain all CBK banking services

You deserve to win! Open an account now with just KD 500 and you will enter all draws.

CHINA ANTI-CORRUPTION BODY PROBES INSURANCE REGULATOR

PREMIER LI VOWS TO PUNISH FINANCIAL SECTOR CORRUPTION

BEIJING: The head of China's insurance regulator is being investigated for suspected disciplinary violations, the country's top anti-graft body said yesterday, bringing the most senior financial regulator to date into the government's fight against corruption. China's top leaders have pledged this year to address financial risks and asset bubbles. In a brief statement, the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection said Xiang Junbo, head of the China Insurance Regulatory Commission (CIRC) and a member of the central bank's monetary policy committee, was suspected of "serious disciplinary violations" - a phrase that usually refers to graft.

It gave no further details. Xiang's name and position has been removed from the CIRC's website, www.circ.gov.cn, although news about him remains.

As head of the insurance regulator, Xiang oversaw rapid growth of the insurance industry, along with liberalization of investment rules that provided insurers greater latitude to invest more of their assets at home and overseas.

China's insurance assets nearly doubled over the last three years, reaching 15.1 trillion yuan (\$2.19 trillion) at the end of 2016. In February,

Xiang appeared at a press conference where he vowed the insurance regulator would take more punitive action to punish short-term speculators and reduce long-term risk. Xiang said CIRC wouldn't allow the insurance industry to become "a rich man's club" or hideout for "financial crocodiles".

The regulator has intensified a crackdown on risky activity by some aggressive players in the insurance sector, particularly those seen to be engaging in financial market speculation using expensive short-term funds. Xiang, 60, took control of the insurance regulator in 2011 after serving as chairman of Agricultural Bank of China Ltd., one of the four biggest state banks. Xiang was previously a deputy central bank governor and vice chief at the National Audit Office.

Anti-graft drive

Xiang would be the most senior regulator hauled in during the anti-graft campaign since Yao Gang, a former deputy head of the China Securities Regulatory Commission, was put under investigation in late 2015 following a stock market crash.

President Xi Jinping has embarked upon a

sweeping campaign against deep-rooted graft since assuming power in late 2012. His drive is tearing down once-untouchable party, military and business leaders as well as their powerful networks of relatives and allies.

Authorities will combat corruption in the financial sector that is prone to risks from bad loans, bond defaults, shadow banking and Internet finance, Premier Li Keqiang said in remarks published yesterday. "Corruption in the financial sector should be resolutely investigated and punished," Li said in a recent speech posted on the central government's website.

"Individual regulators and senior company executives who have embezzled money entrusted to them or illegally colluded with financial crocodiles must be severely punished," Li said. Wang Yincheng, vice chairman of state-owned People's Insurance Group of China, was brought in for suspected corruption in February. Earlier this year, the chief risk officer of Bank Of Communications Co Ltd was expelled from his post for serious discipline violations, and a former Communist Party boss at Bank of Jiangsu Co Ltd was investigated for suspected corruption. —Reuters

US JOBS REPORT: A TALE OF 2 SURVEYS

WASHINGTON: The US unemployment rate fell to 4.5 percent in March, the lowest level in nearly a decade, from 4.7 percent, and an encouraging sign for the job market. Yet employers added just a meager 98,000 jobs - barely half the pace of January and February.

How did the unemployment rate manage to drop so much when the job gain was so weak?

The reason relates to a little-known fact about the government's monthly jobs report: The government conducts one survey to learn how many jobs were created and another to determine the unemployment rate. And the two surveys sometimes produce conflicting results.

One is called the payroll survey. It asks mostly large companies, nonprofits and government agencies how many people they employed during the month. This survey produces the number of jobs gained or lost. For March, the payroll survey showed that employers added 98,000 jobs.

The other is the household survey. Government workers ask whether the adults in a household have done any work for pay that week. Those who have not are asked whether they're looking for a job. If they are, they're considered unemployed. If they have not looked in the previous four weeks, they're not considered part of the workforce and aren't

counted as unemployed. The household survey produces each month's unemployment rate.

In March, the household survey showed that 472,000 more people found jobs. That lowered the number of unemployed and cut the unemployment rate.

The household survey, unlike the payroll survey, captures farm workers, the self-employed and people who work for new companies. It also does a better job than the payroll survey of capturing hiring by small businesses. But the household survey is more volatile from month to month. The Labor Department surveys just 60,000 households, out of more than 100 million US households.

By contrast, the payroll survey seeks information from 147,000 companies, nonprofits and government agencies. They employ roughly one-third of non-farm employees. The employers send forms to the Labor Department or fill out online surveys, noting how many people they employ. They also provide pay, hours worked and other details.

Most Americans focus more on the unemployment rate, which comes from the household survey. But economists generally prefer the jobs figure from the payroll survey. While they can diverge each month, the two surveys tend to even out over time. —AP



WASHINGTON: Construction workers assemble scaffolding during renovations on an office building in downtown Washington, Friday, April 7, 2017. —AP

US NUKE PLANT OWNERS EXPAND SEARCH FOR RESCUE TO MORE STATES

HARRISBURG, Pa: The natural gas boom that has hammered coal mines and driven down utility bills is hitting nuclear power plants, sending multi-billion-dollar energy companies in search of a financial rescue in states where competitive electricity markets have compounded the effect.

Fresh off victories in Illinois and New York, the nuclear power industry is now pressing lawmakers in Connecticut, New Jersey, Ohio and Pennsylvania for action. Lobbying efforts are bubbling up into proposals, even as court battles in Illinois and New York crank up over the billions of dollars that ratepayers will otherwise foot in the coming decade to keep nuclear plants open longer.

Perhaps nuclear power's biggest nemesis is the cheap natural gas flooding the market from the northeast's Marcellus Shale reservoir, the nation's most prolific gas field. Meanwhile, electricity consumption hit a wall after the recession, while states have emphasized renewable energies and efficiency. "You put all of this together and it's a perfect storm," said John Keeley, a spokesman

for the Nuclear Energy Institute, an industry group.

Opposition to a so-called nuclear bailout is uniting rivals and the natural gas exploration industry. The potential for a hit to utility bills is drawing pushback from the AARP and manufacturers.

Subsidizing nuclear power could chill investment in lower-cost energy sources and erode competitive markets, critics say, and, with natural gas prices expected to stay low for some time, shutting down nuclear plants may have no impact on electricity bills.

For steel companies, paper companies, food processors and pharmaceutical makers whose electric bill might be their biggest expense, "a mil of an increase in a kilowatt hour turns into a lot of money," said David Kleppinger of the Industrial Energy Consumers of Pennsylvania.

In Pennsylvania, the nation's No. 2 nuclear power state after Illinois, it could mean propping up five nuclear plants to help feed the sprawling mid-Atlantic power grid that stretches from New Jersey to Illinois.

The owners of the 11 nuclear plants in Connecticut, New Jersey, Ohio and Pennsylvania are no small potatoes: Exelon, PSEG, FirstEnergy and Dominion, among them.

The plant owners' strategy is similar to that in Illinois and New York: give nuclear power megawatts the kind of preferential treatment and premium payments that are given to renewable energies, such as wind and solar. The industry's pitch is part economic, part environmental. A plant shutting down would devastate a local economy, they say. And, nuclear waste and water consumption issues aside, zero-carbon nuclear plants are better suited than natural gas or coal to fight climate change, they say.

The claim to environmental credentials has drawn jeers from nuclear power's traditional critics. "When did highly carcinogenic toxic waste become green?" said Eric Epstein, a longtime nuclear power watchdog in Pennsylvania. The most vulnerable nuclear plants are those with just one unit - such as Exelon's Three Mile Island in Pennsylvania, where a second unit was destroyed in a partial melt-

down in 1979 - or those in need of expensive upgrades, analysts say.

Make competitive

FirstEnergy says it could decide next year to sell or close its three nuclear plants - Davis-Besse and Perry in Ohio and Beaver Valley in Pennsylvania - unless states make them more competitive. Exelon is warning that it could close Three Mile Island and PSEG says it won't operate nuclear plants - it owns all or parts of all three in New Jersey and part of Peach Bottom station in Pennsylvania - that are long-term money losers.

Should nuclear power disappear, it can be replaced. "The question is, at what cost and whether or not you can find other resources that have the same emission characteristics," said Joe Dominguez, an Exelon executive vice president. In the mid-Atlantic grid, it likely would be natural gas. Some 190 natural gas power projects comprising roughly 59,000 megawatts are being studied or built, according to PJM Interconnection, the grid operator. That dwarfs the grid's nuclear capacity. —AP

US STRIKES ON SYRIA KEEP A LID ON GLOBAL STOCKS

GLOBAL MARKETS WEEKLY REPORT

LONDON: Soft US jobs data and the decision by President Donald Trump to authorize the firing of US missiles into Syria weighed on global stock markets Friday. The strikes though pushed gold prices higher as investors sought out the sanctuary of supposedly safe haven assets in a time of geopolitical uncertainty.

KEEPING SCORE: In Europe, Germany's DAX was down 0.5 percent at 12,169 while the CAC 40 in France fell 0.3 percent to 5,106. The FTSE 100 index of leading British shares was 0.1 percent higher at 7,309. Wall Street was poised for a lower opening, with both Dow futures and the broader S&P 500 futures down 0.2 percent.

AIRSTRIKES: Overnight, the US launched a missile

attack in Syria, directly targeting President Bashar Assad's forces. Though the move was condemned by his allies in Russia and Iran, it was welcomed by the Syrian opposition and its supporters, who expressed hope it signaled a turning point in the devastating six-year-old civil war. For markets, the move has stoked geopolitical uncertainty and that's rarely positive for riskier assets, such as stocks.

ANALYST TAKE: "A strong sense of unease infiltrated the financial markets during trading on Friday with investors staying clear of riskier assets," said FXTM Research Analyst Lukman Otunuga. "The possible threat of geopolitical tensions heightening from the airstrikes has created a risk-off trading atmosphere."

SAFE HAVENS: That risk-off trading atmosphere was evident in the performance of gold, which is trading 1 percent higher at \$1,265 an ounce.

ENERGY: Oil prices jumped on concerns the airstrikes would re-ignite Middle East turmoil, the world's major oil-producing region. US benchmark crude added 37 cents to trade near one-month highs of \$52.07 a barrel, while Brent crude, the international standard, rose 27 cents to \$55.16 a barrel in London.

OVERSHADOWING JOBS DATA: The overnight developments have overshadowed the monthly US nonfarm payrolls data, which often set the market tone a week or two after their release. The news that the U.S. economy only generated 98,000 jobs last

month stoked some concerns about the state of the world's largest economy following some recent bumper gains.

US-CHINA SUMMIT: The strikes came as Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping opened a high-stakes summit in Florida. Tensions over trade and North Korea's nuclear ambitions are among big topics on the agenda for the first meeting between the leaders of the world's two biggest economies. Trump appeared lighthearted as he greeted Xi ahead of a dinner on Thursday evening before the two were to tackle specifics the next day.

GREECE PROGRESS: Greece and its international creditors took a big step toward an agreement that will ensure the cash-strapped country gets the money it needs in time to avoid a potential bankruptcy this summer. For months, the bailout discussions have stalled amid dis-

agreements over what reforms, including to pensions, tax and the labor market that Greece should take in order to get the rescue money due from its most recent international rescue. Without the money, Greece would once again be facing the prospect of having to exit the eurozone.

ASIA'S DAY: Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 index rose 0.4 percent to end at 18,664.63 after dipping earlier in the day. The Shanghai Composite index added 0.2 percent to 3,286.62. South Korea's Kospi lost 0.1 percent to 2,151.73. Hong Kong's Hang Seng was almost flat at 24,267.30 and Australia's S&P/ASX 200 recouped earlier losses to end 0.1 percent higher at 5,862.50. Southeast Asian indexes were mixed.

CURRENCIES: The euro was flat at \$1.0640 while the dollar fell 0.4 percent to 110.35 yen. —AP

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report

Sunday 09 April 2017

Index	Change	Closing	Last Closing	High	Low
Price index	▼ -14.50	7,015.30	7,029.80	7,050.95	7,006.27
Weighted Index	▲ 1.60	421.74	420.14	421.74	418.96
KSX 15	▲ 1.90	959.88	957.98	963.06	952.98

Security	Trades						
	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
MARIN	60	60	60	2	2,500	60	▲ 61.0
IPG	400	400	400	1	40	400	▲ 405.0
NAPESCO	1,200	1,200	1,200	1	900	1,200	▲ 1,220.0
ENERGYH	40.0	43.0	40	69	1,246,839	43.0	▲ 43.0
GPI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0.0	— 0.0
ABAR	94	95	93	14	278,120	94	▲ 95.0
Oil & Gas			1,793	87	1,528,399	969.63	▼ -5.60

KFOUC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0.0	▲ 329.0
BPCC	570	570	570	2	8,180	570	▲ 580.0
ALKOUT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0.0	▲ 700.0
ALQURAIN	340	345	340	21	769,569	340	▲ 340.0
Basic Materials			910	23	777,749	1328.59	▼ -18.30

KCEM	485	520	485	2	1,125	520	▲ 520.0
CABLE	465	485	460	22	141,391	480	▲ 485.0
SHIP	222	226	214	25	465,432	226	— 0.0
PCEM	980	990	970	3	49,990	990	▲ 990.0
PAPER	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0.0	▲ 415.0
MRC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0.0	▲ 78.0
ACICO	295	295	285	13	338,205	285	▲ 290.0
HCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0.0	▲ 216.0
KBMMC	126	126	126	1	260	126	▲ 126.0
NICBM	206	216	206	2	662	216	▲ 216.0
EQUIPMENT	62	62	60	35	512,304	62	▲ 62.0
NCCI	97	104	97	6	4,408	97	▲ 97.0
GYPSUM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0.0	— 0.0
SALBOOKH	72	74	72	39	555,000	73	▲ 74.0
AGLTY	650	650	640	10	335,463	640	▲ 650.0
EDU	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0.0	▲ 285.0
CLEANING	54	54	52	35	874,000	54	▲ 54.0
KGL	67	68	66	33	619,020	68	▲ 68.0
KCPG	170	170	170	1	5,000	170	▲ 174.0
HUMANSOFT	3,120	3,120	3,120	6	83,462	3,120	▲ 3,180.0
NAFAIS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0.0	▲ 170.0
GFC	66	66	62	7	21,574	63	▲ 63.0
MAYADEEN	31.5	33.0	31	104	9,800,196	32.0	▲ 32.0
CGC	500	510	500	6	5,161	510	▲ 510.0
MTCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0.0	— 0.0
UPAC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0.0	▲ 760.0
ALAFCO	250	250	248	6	118,500	250	▲ 250.0
MUBARRAD	83	84	83	27	1,549,500	84	▲ 84.0
LOGISTICS	72	73	72	37	1,283,322	72	▲ 73.0
SCEM	90	95	90	13	77,200	94	▲ 95.0
GCEM	90	90	89	17	583,000	90	▲ 90.0
QIC	80	80	80	3	5,518	80	▲ 87.0
FCEM	91	91	91	2	43,300	91	▲ 92.0
RKWC	91	94	91	4	10,816	94	▲ 94.0
SPEC	90	91	88	24	625,286	91	▲ 91.0
Industrials			8,548	483	17,909,085	1717.53	▲ 6.50

KSH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0.0	▲ 178.0
NSH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0.0	▲ 45.0
PAPCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0.0	▲ 110.0
CATTL	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0.0	▲ 214.0
DANAH	91	92	89	76	2,775,403	90	▲ 91.0
FOOD	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0.0	▲ 2,480.0
Consumer Goods			89	76	2,775,403	1142.88	▼ -1.70
MHC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0.0	▲ 380
ATC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0.0	▲ 1,140
YIACO	240	240	240	1	50	240	▲ 240
Health Care			240	1	50	1518.30	▲ 10.10

KCIN	1,420	1,500	1,400	9	12,507	1,460	▲ 1,460
KHOT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0.0	▲ 248
SULTAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0.0	— 0
CABLETV	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0.0	— 0
EYAS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0.0	▲ 400
IFAHR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0.0	▲ 162
OULAFUEL	128	128	126	15	358,652	126	▲ 128
MUNTAAZHAT	85	86	85	3	50,580	85	▲ 85
JAZEERA	570	570	560	3	62,000	560	▲ 570
SOOR	126	126	126	6	10,138	126	▲ 130
FUTUREKID	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0.0	▲ 124
ALRAI	174	176	174	2	842	176	▲ 176
ALMAH	58	59	58	66	5,914,313	58	▲ 59
Mezzan	1,020	1,020	1,020	3	32,362	1,020	▲ 1,020
Consumer Services			3,549	107	8,441,394	934.53	▼ -6.70

ZAIN	455	465	455	93	2,995,781	465	▲ 465
OOREDOO	1,120	1,160	1,120	8	4,488	1,160	▲ 1,180
HITSTELEC	49.5	50	49	48	1,715,632	49.5	▲ 50
VIVA	920	930	900	48	148,012	920	▲ 920
Telecommunications			2,524	197	4,863,913	664.18	▲ 4.70
NBK	700	700	690	43	1,150,818	700	▲ 700
GBK	255	255	250	11	271,600	250	▲ 255
CBK	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0.0	▲ 435
ABK	300	310	300	12	166,366	310	▲ 310
ALMUTAHED	455	455	455	2	4,552	455	▲ 460
KIB	250	255	250	13	255,969	255	▲ 255
BURG	350	350	345	14	337,488	350	▲ 350
KFIN	550	550	540	99	2,716,650	550	▲ 550
BOUBAYAN	420	425	415	45	891,146	415	▲ 420
AUB	222	232	222	110	7,049,169	230	▲ 232
ITHMR	54	56	54	262	14,329,502	54	▲ 55
WARBABANK	265	265	260	73	202,892	265	▲ 265
Banks			3,781	684	27,376,152	981.25	▲ 6.50

KINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0.0	▲ 265
GIN5	550	550	550	1	242	550	— 0.0
AINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0.0	▲ 510.0
WINS	98	98	97	3	11,130	97	▲ 98.0
KUWAITRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0.0	▲ 194.0
FTI	60	60	58	13	42,059	58	▲ 60.0
WETHAQ	55	55	55	1	1,500	55	▲ 55.0
BKIKWT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0.0	— 0.0
Insurance			760	18	54,931	1081.56	▲ 3.10

NBK	700	700	690	43	1,150,818	700	▲ 700
GBK	255	255	250	11	271,600	250	▲ 255
CBK	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0.0	▲ 435
ABK	300	310	300	12	166,366	310	▲ 310
ALMUTAHED	455	455	455	2	4,552	455	▲ 460
KIB	250	255	250	13	255,969	255	▲ 255
BURG	350	350	345	14	337,488	350	▲ 350
KFIN	550	550	540	99	2,716,650	550	▲ 550
BOUBAYAN	420	425	415	45	891,146	415	▲ 420
AUB	222	232	222	110	7,049,169	230	▲ 232
ITHMR	54	56	54	262	14,329,502	54	▲ 55
WARBABANK	265	265	260	73	202,892	265	▲ 265
Banks			3,781	684	27,376,152	981.25	▲ 6.50

KINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0.0	▲ 265
GIN5	550	550	550	1	242	550	— 0.0
AINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0.0	▲ 510.0
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WETHAQ	55	55	55	1	1,500	55	▲ 55.0
BKIKWT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0.0	— 0.0
Insurance			760	18	54,931	1081.56	▲ 3.10

Trades							
SOKOUK	47.0	49.5	47	185	14,071,047	49.5	— 0.0
KRE	67	67	65	37	4,331,890	67	▲ 67.0
URC	104	104	100	5	7,324	104	▲ 104.0
NRE	104	106	102	40	1,909,718	106	▲ 108.0
SRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0.0	▲ 380.0
TAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0.0	▲ 450.0
AREEC	162	170	162	2	600	170	▲ 170.0
MASSALEH	50	50	50	1	50	50	▲ 48.0
ARABREC	39.5	41.5	40	200	9,325,908	41.5	▲ 41.5
ERESCO	44.5	47.0	45	136	6,885,211	46.5	▲ 47.0
MABANEE	830	830	830	5	87,600	830	▲ 830.0
INJAZZAT	87	87	83	10	203,145	84	▲ 84.0
INVESTORS	29.0	30.0	29	202	27,840,870	28.5	▲ 29.0
IRC	37.5	37.5	37	15	598,500	37.5	▲ 38.0
ALTUARIA	78	79	78	23	609,766	79	▲ 79.0
SANAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0.0	▲ 56.0
AAYANRE	86	86	85	13	367,000	86	▲ 87.0
AQAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0.0	▲ 450.0

FLIGHT TO SAFETY ON RISING POLITICAL TENSIONS

NBK MONEY MARKET REPORT

KUWAIT: US President Trump's failure to gather sufficient support in Congress to pass changes to the Obamacare program has raised concerns over his ability to deliver other fiscal stimulus promises that he had made during the presidential campaign, such as cutting taxes and increasing spending on infrastructure projects.

The latest FOMC minutes statement echoed those concerns as some members have "continued to underscore the considerable uncertainty about the timing and nature of potential changes to fiscal policies as well as the size of the effects of such changes on economic activity". Accordingly, several members expected that fiscal stimulus will not commence this year and, accordingly, did not alter their economic projections.

The minutes statement also showed that equity prices remain high relative to standard valuations measures, and that prices of other risky assets, such as emerging market stocks, high yield corporate bonds, and commercial real estate, have increased considerably recently.

The FOMC minutes statement also showed that there seems to be a disagreement amongst the policy members as to the direction of inflation in 2017. Some members "cautioned that the progress on inflation should not be overstated given that it had run persistently below 2% during the expansion and that core inflation was little changed in recent months."

On the currencies front, the Dollar index gained positive momentum at the start of the week, supported by expectations of higher interest rates. The index reached a 20-day high of 100.95 ahead of the U.S. nonfarm payroll report, boosted by robust private sector job gains. The DXY opened the week at 100.39 and closed the weekly session at 101.130.

It was a tough week for the Sterling Pound as the majority of reports released last week came in negative and missed market expectations. The GBP/USD started the week at 1.2550 and descended to a low of 1.2380. The pair ended Friday's session at 1.2372.

The USD/JPY began on a negative tone last week after the bearish reaction towards the ISM Manufacturing PMI data. However, the pair reversed some of its losses after the release of the US private sector job growth figure. The USD/JPY opened the week at 111.32 and ended the weekly session at 111.05.

In the commodities space, the price of oil was on a five-day gaining streak last week as speculators continue to bet on the prospect of market tightening. Brent hit its highest level in one month after the US airstrike on Syria, despite of the US Energy Information

Administration report which showed that crude oil inventories have increased by 7.4 percent year on year to a record high of 535.5 million barrels last week.

On Friday morning, demand for safe haven assets increased after political tensions between the U.S. and Russia escalated following the U.S. airstrike on Syria. The yield on the 10-year U.S. Treasury fell below 2.29 percent for the first time since November 30th while the yield on Germany's 10-year government bonds declined by 2.5 basis points to a one-month low.

The discussion shifts

The minutes of the latest FOMC meeting showed that the committee discussed the size of the Fed's balance sheet and how to reduce it. Most participants saw changes in the reinvestment policy happening later in the year, but views were mixed on how and when the changes would occur.

On monetary policy, nearly all Fed officials thought the US was at full employment, but there were no clear indications that policymakers were ready to pull the tightening trigger again as soon as next month. Overall economic risks were generally portrayed as balanced, although the risks were biased as to what to expect from the potential fiscal policies from the new administration.

Philadelphia Fed President Harker also spoke this week mentioning that the Fed could begin to reduce its bond portfolio as early as this year. "Possibly by the end of this year or the beginning of next year would be an appropriate time to stop reinvesting maturing assets, but that's all dependent on how the economy evolves between now and then".

US Labor supports

The latest ADP figures showed that US businesses added the most jobs in more than two years in March. The private sector added 263,000 jobs up by 18,000 from the previous month, versus a forecast of 184,000. The data continues to provide further evidence that the U.S. labor market finished the first quarter on a strong note and supports the Federal Reserve decision to tighten its loose monetary policy. Looking at the non-farm payroll, employers hired fewer workers than expected in March as 29,750 employees left the retail sector and winter storms weighed on economic activity. The economy added only 98,000 jobs versus expectations of 180,000. On the other hand, the unemployment rate fell sharply to a 10-year low at 4.5 percent. Moreover, average hourly earnings rose by 5 cents or 0.2 percent, after a 0.3 percent increase in the previous month. Year on year, average hourly earnings eased to 2.7 percent.

The soft payrolls data could raise concerns about the economy's health especially given signs that gross domestic product may have slowed to around 1.0 percent in the first quarter of 2017. With rising inflation, moderate job growth and gradual wage gains, the Federal Reserve may stay on course to raise interest rates again in June.

On the manufacturing front, the sector still remains in expansionary mode with the PMI slightly falling by 0.5 percent to 57.2 in March. New orders fell by 0.6 percent and the production index declined by 5.3 percent, while the employment and price index increased by 4.7 percent and 2.5 percent respectively. Overall, the continuous increase in consumer demand and the turnaround in energy production accompanied by a weaker US dollar continue to support the index.

Europe & UK

The ECB president said last week that a pick-up in inflation across the euro area isn't yet strong enough and that "a reassessment of the current

Germany enjoying the weak euro

German factory orders rebounded sharply in February from January's 6.8 percent contraction. The increase was mainly due to an 8.1 percent jump in domestic demand, while demand for producer goods surged 8.5 percent. Foreign orders were mainly flat and new orders to the Eurozone fell by 2.4 percent. The data suggests that the private sector is likely to continue to accelerate due to a stronger domestic demand in a period of high optimism in business confidence.

Despite the positive figures, European political risks continue to overshadow the optimism towards Germany as uncertainty over US trade policies, Brexit negotiations and September's federal election continue to pressure future prospects and investments.

Toll on UK data

According to the UK Prime Minister, Britain may not finalize a new trade deal with the EU until after Brexit is complete in 2019. These comments have brought the UK more closely in line with the EU's Brexit negotiating

Other economic data were also under pressure with UK's manufacturing PMI declining for a third consecutive month in March. High inflationary pressures in Britain caused export orders to expand at a slower rate and demand for consumer goods to lose momentum. Looking at the data, manufacturing PMI slipped for the month of March by 0.3 points to 54.2. However, the index is above the long run average of 51.6.

The service sector on the other hand held up and reversed two months of declining PMI readings in March and reached three months high. The index climbed by 1.7 points settling at 55 against a consensus of 53.5. If the combination of resilient economic data and higher inflationary pressures continue, interest rate expectations could change, with the market currently only pricing in a 50 percent probability of rate hike by December 2018.

Japan speculations

According to a survey released by the Bank of Japan, business confidence improved in the first quarter of

and don't distort the price mechanism for stocks.

Chinese PMI

On the economic side, operating conditions in most private service companies expanded at a slower pace for a third consecutive month in March. The survey indicated costs incurred by service companies inflated at the fastest pace since February 2013. Hence, businesses transferred the higher costs on to their clients causing business activities and new orders to grow at a slower rate.

The Chinese Composite PMI released earlier came at 52.2 in March, falling from February's 52.6 recording the slowest increase in Chinese business activity in six months. Weaker increases in new business have clouded the economic outlook as the service industry has become an increasingly important part of the Chinese economy, reflecting its shift away from traditional heavy-industry manufacturing and exports.

Trump's meeting with Xi

The first meeting between President Trump and Chinese President Xi kicked off last week, with the main issues likely to be centered on North Korea and trade agreements. The outcome of the meeting will set the political agenda for the two largest economies for at least the next four years. Trump may try to convince Xi to tighten economic sanctions on North Korea. China is by far North Korea's largest trading partner. However, the two countries have very different views of their preferred outcome.

The Reserve Bank of Australia held rates at 1.5 percent this week. The accompanying statement was slightly dovish, with the central bank noting the softening of labor market indicators and the modest pace of employment growth. The RBA also mentioned the desire of the board to reinforce strong lending standards in the country. These measures are likely to slow the housing sector and potentially delay the date of the first rate hike.

On the economic front, Australia's trade surplus came larger than expected in February, rebounding to a near record AUD 3.6 billion offsetting the surprising drop to AUD1.5bn in January. Total export values surged by a 30 percent on a yearly basis, driven by higher commodity prices. It is important to note that the large percentage in commodities prices from a year ago were the main driver of such an increase.

Kuwait

Kuwaiti dinar at 0.30525
The USDKWD opened at 0.30525 yesterday morning.

Rates – 27th November, 2016

Previous Week Levels					This Week's Expected Range		3-Month
Currencies	Open	Low	High	Close	Minimum	Maximum	Forward
EUR	1.0658	1.0578	1.0689	1.0588	1.0360	1.0660	1.0650
GBP	1.2539	1.2361	1.2555	1.2372	1.2195	1.2450	1.2410
JPY	111.38	110.11	111.58	111.05	109.10	112.60	110.65
CHF	1.0021	1.0005	1.0096	1.0088	0.9960	1.0300	1.0035

monetary policy stance is not warranted at this stage."

Complacency sets in France

Less than a month to the French election, it seems that investors don't seem to allocate much risk premium to the election result any more. Although currency markets are still favoring the USD over the lower yielders, investors are pricing in a much smoother path through the two rounds than they did few weeks ago.

With the underperformance of populists in Europe, especially during the latest French presidential debate alongside the market focusing on potential ECB rate hikes, markets seem to have priced out the possibility of a Le Pen win. Although our base case scenario remains that the French elections result will not yield a Le pen victory, volatility could easily return, at least for the first round of the election.

draft, which says that the two-year talks between the UK and EU might include only a "framework for the future relationship". The European Council has insisted that a final trade deal would have to be concluded with the UK as a third country; i.e. after it has left the EU.

On the economic front, the UK economic data continues to falter with the construction sector expanding at a slower pace once again in the month of March. The construction PMI declined by 0.3 points to 52.2, below expectations of 52.5. The slower growth is attributed to a weaker trend for residential work as rising inflation has started eating into consumer's demand and businesses.

Since the "Brexit" vote, Britain's economy outperformed all European Group of Seven in 2016; however, growth is expected to slow down this year as rising inflation starts to take its toll on the economy.

2017. The Tankan Manufacturing Index rose to 12 points, up from 10 in Q4 and non-manufacturing sector improved by 2 points to 20. Across all industries, conditions also improved by 2 points to 16.

As mentioned last week, the latest Japanese economic data continue to show an expansion in the first quarter of 2017, mainly led by solid exports and firmer capital expenditure. Moreover, the latest Japanese trade data showed a surplus rebounding in February as Japanese exports rose for the third straight month by 11.3 percent.

Replying to speculation that the BoJ might be looking at options for reducing its extraordinary monetary stimulus program, Bank of Japan Governor Kuroda mentioned it was too early to discuss an exit strategy from the central bank's current monetary policy. Kuroda also said the BoJ's equities purchases were aimed at meeting the 2 percent inflation target



CANNON BALL: An aerial file photo shows the site where the final phase of the Dakota Access pipeline will take place with boring equipment routing the pipeline underground and across Lake Oahe to connect with the existing pipeline in Emmons County near Cannon Ball, ND. —AP

\$1.2BN GAS PIPELINE EFFECT SEEN 'LIMITED'

TRENTON, NJ: The environmental impacts of a proposed \$1.2 billion natural gas pipeline from northeastern Pennsylvania to New Jersey would be "effectively limited," federal regulators said Friday.

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission issued its final environmental impact study for the 120-mile (193-kilometer) PennEast pipeline and outlined several areas of concern, including trace amounts of arsenic in some rocks the pipeline would cross and potential threats to endangered and threatened species, including the bog turtle and Indiana bat. But the report says PennEast is proposing mitigation efforts such as well monitoring and avoiding endangered animal habitats.

"We conclude that the cumulative impacts associated with the project, when combined with other known or reasonably foreseeable projects, would be effectively limited," the report said.

The report comes after Republican President Donald Trump advanced the Keystone XL and Dakota Access oil pipeline projects, which had become battles in a bigger political fight over environmental concerns. The PennEast

project is fiercely opposed by environmental groups who say it would irreversibly damage the landscape. New Jersey Sierra Club director Jeff Tittel called the report a "sham."

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission "has shown they are nothing but a front for the gas industry that they're supposed to regulate," Tittel said. A commission spokeswoman declined to respond because the matter is pending before the panel.

PennEast spokeswoman Pat Kornick praised the report and says it's the final major federal regulatory hurdle. The next step for the project would be for the commission to determine whether there's a need for the project, which would amount to a federal green light for the pipeline. That step could be delayed because the commission lacks the quorum required to vote on such approvals.

Permits are also still pending with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. PennEast hopes for the pipeline to be operational in the second half of 2018, according to Kornick. The pipeline would originate in Dallas, Pennsylvania, and end at near Pennington, New Jersey. —AP

IS IOWA'S ACA INSURANCE MARKET A SIGN OF WHAT'S TO COME NATIONALLY?

WASHINGTON: Iowa's insurance market could be the canary in the nation's coal mine if Congress or President Donald Trump doesn't offer clarity soon on the future of the Affordable Care Act, with millions of people losing coverage, one industry expert said Friday.

Two insurers announced this week that they would stop selling individual health plans both on and off the Iowa exchange - Des Moines-based Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield on Monday and Aetna on Thursday. The decisions affect some 57,600 Iowans - 21,400 Wellmark policy holders and 36,200 policy holders with Aetna.

It also leaves the vast majority of the 50,000 Iowans purchasing subsidy-eligible insurance on the exchange with only one option - Minnesota-based Medica. But that insurer is tight-lipped on what it plans to do in 2018, saying Thursday that it is "evaluating the situation and (its) options."

"Iowa is a bit different in that it's happening so early," said Cynthia Cox, associate director for the program for the study of health reform and private insurance at not-for-profit Kaiser Family Foundation. "But it might be the start of many more exits to come."

Iowa has never shown up in any of the health care policy organization's lists of states with fragile markets. States such as Tennessee, Arizona and Oklahoma have had steep premium increases and seen insurers drop out. "This goes to show that political uncertainty can make an otherwise stable market unstable overnight," she said.

The problem Wellmark, Aetna and other insurers face is that not enough young and healthy people are choosing to enroll in plans to help spread out costs. Instead, older, sicker individuals with multiple chronic illnesses - who need insurance and coverage - are purchasing the health plans, putting a high concentration of expenses in the indi-

vidual market. Wellmark said on Monday it lost \$90 million through the individual market in Iowa.

There's also quite a bit of uncertainty still looming over the future of the ACA. Trump and Congressional Republicans have promised to repeal and replace President Barack Obama's signature health care legislation, but have been stalled by disagreement over the changes they will make.

Insurers have said the unpredictability over which rules will be in place in 2018 - and over the billions of dollars in government subsidies that make the plans more affordable to millions of people - make it difficult to commit to offering such insurance.

Many have asked the government to extend the subsidies for 2018. This comes as health insurers are preparing 2018 premium rate proposals to submit to federal and state insurance regulators over the next few months.

Whether Medica will stay in Iowa is hard to say, Kaiser's Cox added. Several states have only one insurance option on the exchange - but that insurer typically is the Blue Cross and Blue Shield plan, which are more established.

Medica is a significant player in Minnesota, Cox noted, and it has expanded into additional markets including Iowa and Kansas. "But it's not clear if they have capacity to absorb all the enrollees in Iowa," she said. "It puts them in tough spot."

If Medica were to drop out, there isn't much in terms of a Plan B. Iowans could purchase plans off the exchange without subsidies, but Iowa insurers are pulling out of that market, too. Trump has indicated he will not enforce the mandate or penalize those without insurance. But that is hardly a relief if you are sick and in need of medical care, Cox said. "This is warning sign," Cox said. If Congress "doesn't act soon, ... we can see this happen around the country." —AP

Rasameel report

FED WATCHING BOTH INFLATION, EQUITIES

By Hayder Tawfik

Does the Federal Reserve is concerned about inflation or equity valuations? This is a subject the Federal Reserve has discussed and reported their concern back in its March meeting. The Federal Reserve from time to time does talk about the level of the equity market and how high is the valuations. For the Federal Reserve to get involved in how high US equity valuation is not something new. They do raise their concern from time to time but at the same time they keep an eye on inflation level and economic activity.

At their March meeting, they have got themselves into the debate on stock valuations, pointing out lofty US equity markets in the minutes of their March gathering. Some of their members viewed equity prices as quite high relative to standard valuation measures, but for them their focus is just that i.e. equity US equity valuations. They don't usually consider relative equity valuations against bonds or against real interest rates. At present equity valuations is still attractive relative to US Treasury yields and interest rates if stripped out of inflation.

The debate about stock market valuation goes on forever. We know that it has been a rough few years for equity investors. Equity markets have returned around a real return of 6% over the past 10 years. This level of return has outperformed all other asset classes. I believe that global economic activity has picked up over the past year and the chance of US economic growth accelerating further can only be good for equity investors. In fact, based on the forward equity valuations and current earnings momentum, stocks should be very rewarding for long term investors.

I don't see any reason for the Federal Reserve chairwomen to talk about equity market valuations when her top priority is inflation and economic growth. Even if equity market valuations are high this is a matter for investors and market participants. Most likely these people are looking forward and anticipating faster economic growth and higher earnings for the next few years. The Federal Reserve chairwomen Janet Yellen did talk about high equity valuation back in May 2015 but market rallied further by at least 13 percent since she spoke. However, using different measures to determine stock market valuation such as historical valuation and stock/ bond dividends yields and by comparing price-to-earnings multiples on both the S&P 500 and the Morgan Stanley Capital Index (MSCI World Index of global stocks) both shows equity gauges remain broadly in line with past trends.

These prove that further appreciations in equity prices is most likely. Most equity markets never stop at average or a little bit above average on valuation. They tend to get very expensive before they pull back sharply in terms of a major recession or bear market. Si I done think we reached the level where it becomes alarming yet.

In my opinion it is all about economic growth and corporate earnings the higher the expectations the higher the equity valuations. Once earnings come through most likely equity prices stop getting higher and valuation tends to find the right levels.

By comparing price-to-earnings multiples on both the S&P 500 and the MSCI World Index of global stocks, both equity gauges remain broadly in line with past trends. It's worth noting, given the above, that US equities have outperformed most indices in the global index since the start of this bull market in 2009. @Rasameel

LUXURY MEETS ATHLETIC PERFORMANCE

THE NEW E-CLASS COUPE AND TRANSFORMATIVE TECHNOLOGY

KUWAIT: Mohammed Albisher, Director of Abdul Rahman Albisher & Zaid Alkazemi Co announced the arrival of new E-Class Coupe to Kuwait and its availability at its Shuwaikh Showroom. The new E-Class CoupE with its expressive coupE-esque proportions, clear and sensual design and long-distance comfort for four people, combines the beauty and classic virtues of a grand tourer with state-of-the-art technology. It offers the groundbreaking intelligence of the E-Class family with Apple CarPlay smartphone integration, Widescreen Cockpit and the latest driver assistance systems & powerful engines guaranteeing a sporty and agile driving experience.

"Larger than its predecessor in every dimension and packed with a full array of high-tech features, the new E-Class Coupe is an exciting addition to the successful E-Class family, and proof the coupe variety is alive and well at Mercedes-Benz. With clean body sides, unbridled power and a beautifully sporty yet smooth package, we are sure this is a model that will prove popular in Kuwait", said Michael Ruehle, General Manager, A R Albisher & Z. Alkazemi Company, the authorized general distributor of Mercedes-Benz in Kuwait.

The E-Class Coupe marks a new step in the evolution of the Mercedes-Benz design philosophy by fusing the charm and technological superiority of the sedan with a sportier



and sleeker profile. With its flawless proportions, the new Coupe exhibits a puristic, surface-accentuated design with reduced lines and sensual forms.

The vehicle's coupe design is characterized by a distinctive front end with low-positioned sports grille and central star, a long bonnet with powerdome, a rearward-shifted, squat greenhouse and a muscular rear end.

World premiere: Welcome feature of tail lamp

Equally typical of a Mercedes coupE are the two-part, extremely flat LED tail lamps, which, in combination with LED MULTIBEAM headlamps, celebrate the world premiere of a welcome feature. When the vehicle is opened, the taillight LEDs illuminate successively from the centre of the vehicle outwards. Upon locking the vehicle, the light sequence runs in the opposite direction. Both are additionally combined with an up and down dimming feature.

Sporty, luxurious interior with refined details

The interior of the new E-Class Coupe embodies the synthesis of sporty emotion and luxurious intelligence. Positioned in the dri-

ver's direct field of vision, the instrument cluster shows virtual instruments, which can be selected by the driver in three different styles, "Classic", "Sport" and "Progressive", depending on which information and views the driver considers relevant. Touch Control buttons in the steering wheel enable the driver to control the instrument cluster and multimedia system using finger swipes without having to take their hands off the steering wheel.

The avant-garde yet highly luxurious seats in the Coupe take their cue from the sedan. The sporty individual-seat characteristics find their distinctive impression in all four seats. A wealth of extremely high-grade design details bear witness to the superlative standard of a sporty luxury coupe.

High-grade materials and contemporary colour landscapes come together to create a sporty, modern luxury. The attractive appointments in yacht blue in combination with macchiato beige lend the vehicle a cool, sophisticated yachting look. The new E-Class Coupe will also offer a choice of two new innovative, lightwood trim packages in open-pore and high-gloss finishes.

The AMG Line, with its unique features, such as front and rear bumpers and side skirts

and larger AMG Styling wheels, will come as standard. The dots in the diamond radiator grille are chrome-plated, while the brake discs on the front axle are perforated. The interior boasts a vast range of features such as seats in high-grade ARTICO/DINAMICA in black with grey contrasting topstitching, the Seat Comfort package and an AMG leather sports steering wheel. Additional personalization options come courtesy of the Night package with a host of design details in high-gloss black and tinted side windows.

Larger and more luxurious

With a length of 4826 mm, a width of 1860 mm and a height of 1430 mm, the new E-Class Coupe clearly outstrips its predecessor in terms of length, width and height. The principal beneficiary of the wider track, with 1605 mm at the front (+67 mm) and 1609 mm at the rear (+68 mm), is the driving dynamics.

The significantly larger footprint compared with the previous model benefits passengers with extra spaciousness and comfort.

Suspension - sporty comfort

The suspension on the new E-Class Coupe offers agile driving pleasure on winding

roads together with exceptional ride comfort. The Coupe comes as standard with DIRECT CONTROL suspension. In the interests of a sporty look, the suspension is 15 millimetres lower than on the sedan and is tuned for comfort with an amplitude-dependent damping system.

Alternatively, the new E-Class Coupe can be equipped with multi-chamber air suspension, including all-round roll/pitch/heave stabilisation. The three chambers of different size in the spring struts of the rear axle and two in the spring struts of the front axle make it possible to control the hardness of the suspension in three stages. In this way, occupants enjoy soft basic suspension, along with the secure feeling of good handling stability at higher speeds.

DYNAMIC SELECT - choose your own driving characteristics

The DYNAMIC SELECT system not only makes it possible to select the suspension characteristics in combination with DYNAMIC BODY CONTROL and AIR BODY CONTROL, but it also enables the driver to influence other vehicle settings - such as the throttle response, ECO start/stop function, shift points of the automatic transmission and more. Depending on the equipment level, DYNAMIC SELECT provides the following transmission modes: Comfort, ECO, Sport, Sport + and Individual. "Individual" allows the driver to configure their own preferred transmission modes.

E-Class innovations on board

As a member of the current E-Class family, the new Coupe pushes technological boundaries and is significantly more intelligent than its predecessor. It comes with all the features of the E-Class, the most intelligent executive sedan. Active Brake Assist comes as standard. It is able to warn the driver of an imminent collision, provide optimum support with emergency braking and, if necessary, also autonomously apply the brakes. In addition to slower-moving, stopping or stationary vehicles, it can also detect pedestrians crossing in the danger zone ahead of the vehicle.

The new E-Class Coupe is available in Kuwait at Albisher & Alkazemi Co's Mercedes-Benz Showroom from April onwards.

WARBA BANK BOOSTS ITS REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO

BANK ACQUIRES A FACILITY OF KIA MOTORS IN UK

KUWAIT: In-line with its development strategy to position the bank as the Islamic Corporate & Investment Banking champion in Kuwait while providing top-notch Islamic banking and investment's services, Warba Bank is proud to announce that it has recently purchased a newly constructed sole UK vehicle imports / exports facility strategically located on Kiln Lane Industrial Estate, just one and a half miles from the docks at nearby Immingham, which receives imported vehicles from Korea to UK, and also from other manufacturing plants in Europe. The Ports of Immingham and Grimsby combined are the UK's largest ports by tonnage, handling up to 60 million tons, including nearly 20 million tons of oil and 10 million tons of coal per annum.

Commenting on the new acquisition, Shaheen Hamed Al-Ghanem, Warba Bank's CEO said: "we see in this acquisition the start of the bank's vigorous international real estate investment program in order to ensure steady and secured returns for the investors and depositors. The Investment Banking Group is fully committed to make risk mitigated investments strictly following the investment policy and procedures

with a target to generate secured long term returns for the bank and its investors".

The property is leased to KIA Motors UK Limited for unbreakable lease term of 20 years, expiring in 2037 on full repairing and insuring terms. The site is the sole import /export facility for KIA Motors UK Ltd's business operations. This includes the import of C.100, 000 new vehicles into the port of Immingham each year as well as the refurbishment and administration of return vehicles for KIA Lease fleet. It comprises a substantial new sole UK vehicle import / export facility with a capacity of over 15,550 cars and totalling 86.68 acres (35.08 hectares) of land. In addition, on site also includes a warehouse space of 63,515 ft.± (5,901 ms), facilitating distribution, refurbishment, valet, inspection, refuelling, offices and gatehouses. The site receives on average c.1,200 vehicles a week. KIA anticipate 100,000 UK car



Shaheen Hamed Al-Ghanem

sales target by 2020. However, its largest operation lies in Bristol, where around 400,000 vehicles are processed each year.

Al-Ghanem further added: "This acquisition is one of the best risks mitigated real estate investment of the bank generating a steady and secured return benefiting from unbreakable long lease to one of the largest car manufacturer of Asia that would set standards for our future investment program"

He elaborated that for 2017, the investment plan is very robust and highly ambitious and we are seriously looking for more international real estate investment opportunities in USA, UK and other continental European countries, but without compromising quality and security on fully compliant basis with bank's policy and risk standards

Recently, Warba bank has recorded a tremendous success in the underwriting of its \$250 million Sukuk, which have attracted investors from Kuwait, MENA region and beyond. Warba Sukuk achieved 5 more times the issuance value with approx \$1.3 billion; they have been recently listed in Nasdaq Dubai and are scheduled for listing in the Irish stock exchange soon.

MALABAR GOLD & DIAMONDS OPENS TWO OUTLETS IN OMAN

MUSCAT: Malabar Gold & Diamonds' one among the BIG 5 jewellery retailers globally has extended its presence in Oman by opening their first MGD - Lifestyle Jewellery outlet in Oman at Oman Avenues Mall on 06th April, 2017. Malabar Gold & Diamonds has also opened its relocated & renovated showroom at Lulu Hypermarket, Darsait on the same day. MGD - Lifestyle Jewellery's first outlet in Oman was jointly inaugurated by Ben Watson, General Manager - Oman Avenues Mall along with Khamis Al-Mandhari, Director - Malabar Gold & Diamonds, Oman in the presence of Shamal Ahamed, Managing Director - International Operations, Malabar Gold & Diamonds, KP Abdul Salam - Group Executive Director, Malabar Group, management team members, other dignitaries & guests.

The relocated & renovated showroom of Malabar Gold & Diamonds' Lulu Hypermarket, Darsait, Oman was also opened on the same day. Tawfeeq bin Abdulhusain Allawati - MP of Majlis Alshura of Wilayat Matrah inaugurated the relocated showroom in the presence Shamal Ahamed, Managing Director - International Operations, Malabar Gold & Diamonds, KP Abdul Salam - Group Executive Director, Malabar Group, management team members, other dignitaries, media & guests.

The relocated showroom at Lulu Hypermarket, unveils a significantly large collection of traditional as well as contemporary designer jewellery. The exquisite range of collections in the new outlet can hold you spell-bound with their awe-inspiring beauty and classic designs. Like all their other outlets, this outlet also will exhibit a wide range of diverse and trendy designs in gold (18K & 22K), IGI certified diamonds and precious gem jewelry from Italy, Singapore, Bahrain and India.

MGD - Lifestyle Jewellery is a new retail concept developed by Malabar Gold & Diamonds to cater to a segment of audience currently not being focused by the traditional jewellery retail-



ers. The new concept will be a one-stop destination for jewellery offering never before seen unique designs and styles to the discerning customers. It will establish itself as a fashionable jewellery and accessories destination for the young and trendy. It offers a wide range of

trendy and lightweight jewellery that includes 18K gold jewellery, diamond jewellery, uncut diamond jewellery, precious gem jewellery and pearl jewellery. The newly opened MGD - Lifestyle Jewellery's outlet at Oman Avenues Mall is its 5th outlet globally.



Manal Barakat, representative of Gulf Bank, handing the prize to one of the Red account draw winners.

GULF BANK WELCOMES NEW RED ACCOUNT WINNERS INTO HEAD OFFICE

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank was pleased to welcome the new winners of the third monthly red account draw on Thursday, 6 April 2017, and present them with their Apple prizes. The red account draw was held live on Al-Dewaniya program at Marina FM 90.4, on Thursday, 30 March 2017, under the supervision of Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Abdullah Ali Habeeb Redha, winner of the iPhone 7 Plus, Ahmed Khaled Salem Hashem Salem, winner of the iPad Pro, and Jawaher Dawoud Ghoulum Awadh, winner of the Apple Watch, all visited Gulf Bank Head Office where Manal Barakat - Manager of red and Nassour Consumer greeted them and handed them the prizes.

Before making the official announcement, Gulf Bank invited its customers to tune in to Marina FM 90.4, Al-Dewaniya program to find out who the lucky winners of the redTM account prizes were.

Gulf Bank's red is an account for high school students, college and university students aged between 15 and 25. Eligible customers will get the chance to enter the draw automatically and on a monthly basis, upon transfer-

ring their student allowances. Each month, an iPhone 7 plus, an iPad Pro, and an Apple Watch will be gifted to three lucky winners monthly and until January 2018. The next draw dates are announced as follows:

- April 24, 2017
- May 22, 2017
- June 29, 2017
- July 24, 2017
- August 21, 2017
- September 28, 2017
- October 23, 2017
- November 20, 2017
- January 11, 2018

In addition to the Apple prizes, students will have the opportunity to win a Fiat 500C -Model 2017 at the annual car draw, upon transferring their allowance! Also, movie tickets at all Cinescape theatres will be available for only KD 2 seven days a week by simply being a red account holder; not to mention the exclusive offers from Edfa3ly, which is an international internet shopping services company. Gulf Bank invites all students to take part in its red account draws, as they might be the lucky winners for year 2017!

AUB ANNOUNCES KD 250,000 HASSAD ISLAMIC ACCOUNT GRAND PRIZE WINNER

KUWAIT: On 29th March Ahli United Bank held its Lifetime Salary annual grand prize draw as part of the Al-Hassad Islamic Savings Account program. It was a momentous occasion for Ibrahim Al-Mansoury who won KD 250,000 as a lifetime salary for 250 months.

Ahli United Bank congratulates Ibrahim Al-Mansoury who is now able to achieve his dream of acquiring a house or his favorite car, to travel abroad, establish a new business or any dream he might have along with his aspirations. The Al-Hassad Islamic Savings Account program is the largest in Kuwait with a total annual prize draw of KD 3,400,000 aimed at realizing the dreams and ambitions of customers since inception in [INSERT YEAR]. The program also provides 26 weekly prizes, which represents the biggest number of weekly winners.



To qualify for the Al-Hassad Islamic Savings Account prizes, customers only need to open a saving account with a minimum of KD 100. For every KD 50 of quarterly balance in the account, customers earn one chance to enter the quarterly draw. Moreover, customers earn one chance to enter the weekly draws for every KD 50 of balance. This means the more deposits made, the higher the chances of winning. The Al-Hassad Islamic Savings Account's customers in Kuwait and Bahrain are eligible to participate in the draw in line with the account's terms and conditions.



(Left to right) Yousef Farah, Mohammed Al-Haj, Sara Tulaimat, Sabah Al-Sultan and Sanjay Cherian

GULFSAT PARTICIPATES IN CABSAT FOR THE 12TH TIME

KUWAIT: Gulfsat Communications Company (Gulfsat), the leading company specialized in providing communications and TV broadcasting and re-broadcasting through satellites, has announced its active participation at the 23rd CABSAT - the foremost exhibition for the broadcast content delivery, digital media and satellite industries, which was held at the Dubai World Trade Center in Dubai, United Arab Emirates during the period March 21 to 23, 2017. This was Gulfsat's participation for the 12th year running, building on the success of its participation in the past years.

The company has been keen to keep pace with the latest developments in the satellite broadcasting industry and its technologies. It also seeks to offer its own highly developed technologies that cater for the requirements of customers in the Middle East and North Africa region, in all fields related to TV broadcasting in line with its policy to remain in

touch with its wide customer base in the region and its efforts to identify future trends.

Gulfsat was represented at this prestigious event by its Chairman and CEO, Mohammed Al-Haj, Chief TV Broadcasting Manager, Sabah Al-Sultan and Dr Reyad Douglas, Director of Commercial and Sales, in addition to the technical support, marketing and business development team. On this occasion, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Gulfsat, Mohammed Al-Haj, stated: "Gulfsat's participation in CABSAT, the prestigious international exhibition of digital media and satellite communications is a vital element of our strategy of being present and visible, and an essential part of our annual business plan to participate in a selected number of global events and forums directly concerned with broadcasting the media content and satellite TV broadcasting."

He explained that CABSAT is of a prime importance to satellite communications com-

panies, as it hosts more than 900 companies and brands specialized in satellite broadcast-



Mohammed Al-Haj

content producers and distributors from the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia."

Uniqueness of the Event

Al-Haj added that, given these facts, CABSAT is of a momentous uniqueness for Gulfsat.

This is underlined by the fact that this was the company's participation for the 12th successive year, prompted by the desire to keep pace with the latest developments in media and TV content broadcasting and keeping abreast with this industry. At the same time, the importance of keeping in touch with the company's wide customer base cannot be exaggerated, for this base includes customers from all countries within the MENA region.

Al-Haj went on to say that Gulfsat signed agreements with a number of new and existing customers from the region, which include TV stations that wish to benefit from the company's services in promoting and strengthening their footprint in this region and maximize their outreach to TV audience. The company will announce these during the coming phase.

Al-Haj added that Gulfsat's participation in this year's version of CABSAT was hugely suc-

cessful, building on the company's remarkable success during the past few years and the expansion of its data base. The company's booth at the exhibition was a focal point for visitors and customers from several countries, particularly the Middle East and North Africa. "This year", he said, "we were keen to display the latest technologies of space broadcasting and media content. In doing so, we were supported by our strong and highly developed infrastructure."

CABSAT provided Gulfsat with an excellent opportunity to present up-to-date services and state-of-the-art High Definition technologies in the field of satellite TV broadcasting and media content. We were careful to adopt the highest standards and technologies in overcoming jamming and piracy in order to safeguard intellectual property rights. Our services included Cloud Bro which particularly targets information cities and TV channels.

HACKERS RELEASE PASSWORD TO UNLOCK ALLEGED NSA FILES

NEW YORK: A secretive group that published a trove of hacking tools allegedly used by US spies has released a password that it says can unlock related files. In a Medium post, the "Shadow Brokers" group revealed a password to files associated with the leaked toolkit, purportedly from the US National Security Agency. Some security experts tweeted that the password works, but that couldn't be independently verified.

An October leak by the group included information that experts said might identify computers used to obscure US electronic eavesdropping. The group's post also included a discursive rant against President Donald Trump, including criticism of the recent US airstrike on a Syrian air base, Trump's attacks on some congressional Republicans and his decision to remove adviser Stephen Bannon from the National Security Council.—AP

COMMSCOPE AND KATHREIN SIGN EXTENSIVE CROSS-LICENSE AGREEMENT

DUBAI: CommScope and Kathrein, industry leaders in network infrastructure solutions, have entered into a long-term global agreement to cross-license portions of their patent portfolios, increasing each company's ability to develop new solutions, serve customers and compete in the global market. Under the agreement, both companies can access and imple-



Ben Cardwell

ment the other company's patents and technologies globally. The cross-license agreement relates to passive base station antennas, distributed antenna systems (DAS) and filters.

"This is a win-win for both parties, demonstrating our mutual commitment to innovation and wireless industry development," said Ben Cardwell, senior vice president, CommScope Mobility Solutions. "CommScope engineers will enjoy greater freedom of design, accelerating our research and development in antennas and filters, while Kathrein gains access to our valuable digital DAS patents."

Kathrein is the first and only company that CommScope has licensed to its digital DAS patent portfolio. As part of the agreement, Kathrein agreed to an undisclosed upfront payment and ongoing royalties specific to the digital DAS portfolio. CommScope gains access to Kathrein's robust passive base station antenna and filter portfolios. Further details of the agreement are not being disclosed.

"We are pleased with the global cross license agreement with CommScope," said Jurgen Walter, executive vice president, Solutions Division, Kathrein. "This agreement reflects the two leading companies' joint view that innovation sharing and standardization of technology is critical to driving and accelerating industry evolution as we head into 5G customer requirements and future deployments."

CommScope and Kathrein have invested substantial resources in bringing their wireless solutions to market and have built substantial patent portfolios to protect their respective investments. Both companies are committed to protecting their intellectual property rights.

SLOVENIAN FIRM BRINGS TOMBSTONES TO LIFE WITH PICTURES, DIGITAL CONTENT

POBREZJE CEMETERY SETS UP WEATHER, VANDAL-PROOF DIGITAL TOMBSTONE

SLOVENIA: A firm in Slovenia is giving tombstones a 21st-century makeover, with 48-inch interactive screens that can show pictures, video and other digital content. The Pobrezje cemetery on the outskirts of Maribor, Slovenia's second largest city recently set up a prototype of a weather-proof and vandal-proof digital tombstone that can interact with visitors.

At first glance, it looks like any other but standing in front of it for a few seconds

activates its sensors and brings it to life, turning it into an interactive screen capable of playing just about any kind of digital content. "This tombstone makes it possible to put anything next to the deceased person's name and surname, you can write an entire novel if you like. You can put pictures, or a film there," Saso Radovanovic, head of the company Bioenergija which sells the tombstones, said.

"The tombstone has a sensor so that

when nobody is around it only shows the person's name and the years of their birth and death... This saves energy and the screen itself, and helps extend the tombstone's lifetime," he added. The tombstone was developed with the help of Milan Zorman, a professor of computing at the University of Maribor who said that they are working on a special smartphone application, which will further increase the tombstone's interactivity.

"We intend to bring the sound to ear-phones connected to a mobile phone running the app. That way visitors would be able to listen to videos displayed on the screen," said Zorman, adding that speakers would be too loud for the cemetery. The cemetery claims the 48-inch-screen version they put up is the first digital tombstone in the world. Radovanovic said they have already received a few orders for the product which costs 3,000 euros (\$3,189).—Reuters



PARIS: A visitor touches a screen during the "Terra Data, our lives in the era of digital" exhibition at the "Cite des sciences et de l'industrie" science museum in Paris.—AFP photos





LONDON: This file photo shows traffic queuing in central London.—AFP

POLLUTED LONDON SETS ITS SIGHT ON CARS

BRITISH CAPITAL ONCE AGAIN CHOKED BY POLLUTION

LONDON: Gone are the days of London's "pea souper" smogs, but like many European cities, the British capital is once again being choked by pollution-and has road traffic firmly in its sights. In 1952, the Great Smog suffocated London for five days, bringing the city to a standstill as soot-filled clouds descended onto the streets and into people's lungs, leaving more than 12,000 dead. The crisis prompted a clampdown on the use of coal in the city — but decades on, pollution is still causing more than 9,000 premature deaths per year.

This time, the key culprit is nitrogen dioxide (NO2), produced by cars and trucks—and particularly diesel engines, which emit three times more NO2 than petrol vehicles. "Industry... is part of the problem, but the focus, the problem areas are next to roads," Gary Fuller, a senior lecturer in air quality measurement at King's College London, said. London Mayor Sadiq Khan is on a personal mission to deal with the "lethal" air in the city, after blaming pollution for his adult-onset asthma.

This week he announced plans for new charges for diesel cars and older petrol vehicles, which could see drivers pay £24 (28 euros, \$30) a day to enter central London by 2019. But the issue is not just confined to the city centre, or indeed to the capital itself. "The NO2 limit value

is exceeded in many major cities up and down the country," Fuller said.

Schools, nurseries affected

More than 40,000 British deaths a year are attributable to exposure to outdoor air pollution, according to a survey last year by the Royal College of Physicians and the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health. It warned that air pollution plays a role in many of the major health challenges of our day, linked to everything from asthma to cancer, obesity and even dementia. It can have a particularly damaging effect on children-and many of London's youngest residents are exposed, day after day, according to a new study by environmental NGO Greenpeace.

The data suggests that more than 1,000 nurseries in England are located next to roads where pollution exceeds legal limits-and another 1,000 schools and colleges. "Children are extremely vulnerable to its effects, and it can cause long-lasting health impacts and reduced lung function," said activist Anna Jones. Prime Minister Theresa May's Conservative government is already under pressure over its response to deteriorating air quality.

Last year, ministers lost a legal challenge at the High Court against their air quality action

plan. New proposals are due by April 24. In February, Britain was also among five EU member countries warned by the European Commission to address repeated breaches of air pollution limits for nitrogen dioxide.

London gets tough

Labor mayor Khan refuses to wait for the government to draw up its new action plan. "The air in London is lethal and I will not stand by and do nothing," he said this week. Khan has already promised to ease out of circulation diesel buses and taxis, and will in October introduce a new £10 daily "toxicity charge", or T-charge, for the worst polluting vehicles in central London. He has now announced plans for a new £12.50 charge by 2019 for diesel cars more than four years old and for petrol cars more than 13 years old.

This is in addition to the £11.50 existing "congestion charge". Other major European cities are taking similar measures-and Fuller, of King's College London, said that aside from cutting pollution, there could be other beneficial side effects. "This can tackle things like climate change, noise and importantly if we can get people walking, cycling... then you can tackle the problem have in lack of exercise," he said.—AFP

DESPITE EU FINES, GREECE STRUGGLES TO PROMOTE RECYCLING

ATHENS: A steady stream of EU fines and two decades of trying have failed to get recycling off the ground in Greece, where eco-awareness is only half-heartedly promoted by authorities. According to the European environment agency, only 16 percent of household waste is recycled across the country, compared to a 50-percent target by 2020 under EU directives.

In contrast, the European recycling average is 28 percent, with Slovenia leading at 49 percent and Latvia bringing up the rear at 3 percent. In Athens, with nearly four million inhabitants out of the country's 11 million, only 13 percent of eligible waste is recycled, town hall figures show.

"We don't have a clear strategy and then we don't have a political will to materialize this strategy," notes Dimitris Ibrahim, a spokesman for the Greek branch of Greenpeace. Around many parts of the country, and especially in the countryside, garbage is still scattered piecemeal in makeshift dumps-one of them on a hillside on Andros island actually collapsed under the strain in 2011, burying a beach below in the process.

In 2014, Greece still had some 70 dumps, most of them tolerated if not actively run by municipal authorities. In June 2014, nearly a decade after a prior conviction, Greece was ordered to pay a fine of nearly 15 million euros every six months over the continued operation of illegal landfills. This despite the country's prized tourism industry that requires a clean environment.

The European Court of Justice has repeatedly condemned Greece on this score, leveling fines amounting to millions of euros (dollars), with the latest ruling in September. "The mentality needs to change, and urgently," says Antigone Dalamaga, head of the Ecological Recycling Society association. It takes "incentives and

counter incentives... you need to convince your citizens of the necessity and of the positive affect of recycling," she notes.

It's all voluntary

But even today, Greeks are only encouraged to sort out their household waste on a voluntary basis. No fines are involved. And Mary Krimnanioti, who runs the EU-funded "Zero Waste" program in Greece, says the logic behind the municipal waste collection-which charges residents depending on property size-is flawed. "It is not (calculated) according to the waste you throw away, it's according to the (surface area in) square meters of your house," she said.

Therefore, a small house with 10 people, which every day throws out 10 garbage bags, pays the same as one person living in an equivalent home. If people had to pay for their garbage bags, as is the case in northern Europe, they would be more motivated to throw out less, Krimnanioti argues. Instead, most Greeks just put their trash in plastic supermarket bags, which are freely available at the till. The economic crisis gripping the country since 2010 has helped a little, with people buying less and throwing away less too.

In Athens alone, waste generation fell by around 35 percent between 2011 and 2016 according to municipal figures. And another recent phenomenon-mass immigration-has also found itself linked to waste management, albeit of an irregular sort beyond the scope of official statistics.

To make a living, many economic migrants now hunt the streets of Athens and other major cities for metal, paper and plastic, hoping to sell it to scrap yards. Roma groups ply a similar trade, and have in the past been chased down by authorities for burning plastic cables to get at the copper within, polluting the environment in the process.—AFP



ATHENS: Traffic and a tourist bus pass behind an empty recycling bin in central Athens.—AFP

RARE ONE-HORNED RHINO KILLED BY POACHERS IN NEPAL

KATHMANDU: Poachers have shot dead a one-horned rhinoceros at a national wildlife park in Nepal, officials said yesterday, spotlighting the threat faced by the rare animals. Officials on Saturday found the male rhino with its horn gouged out in Chitwan National Park, the country's biggest rhino conservation area. "We performed a post-mortem and found that it had been hit by a bullet on its head," the park's spokesman Nurendra Aryal said.

Aryal said a team had been set up to investigate the incident and security had been tightened at the district borders. In September last year a rhino died weeks after poachers shot it in the same park, the first of the rare animals to be killed in the country in over two years. Thousands of one-horned rhinos once roamed the plains of Nepal, but their numbers have plunged over the past century due to poaching and human encroachment on their habitat.

The population decline was particularly dramatic during Nepal's 1996-2006

civil war, when soldiers on anti-poaching duties were redeployed to fight the Maoist guerrilla insurgency. But the country has since made rapid progress in combating the poachers who kill the animals for their prized horns, drawing praise from conservation groups and activists. The horns fetch huge prices in some Asian countries where they are used for medicines and jewelry. Nepal is home to about 645 rhinos, out of which about 600 live in Chitwan National Park.

The park is in the process of relocating five rhinos to another conservation area in far-west Nepal to boost their population. Shant Raj Jnawali, a rhino expert at WWF, said the latest death highlighted the vulnerability of the animals despite anti-poaching efforts from the community, park wardens and army. "We hope that the investigation will help us devise new strategies to strengthen protection for these animals," Jnawali said. Rhino poaching carries a maximum penalty of 15 years in jail and a 100,000-rupees (\$1,000) fine.—AFP



NEPAL: A Nepalese vet and technical team prepare to dart a rhino in Chitwan National Park some of 250 Kilometer South of Kathmandu.—AFP

BLACK BEAR, TWO CUBS BECOME FODDER FOR ALASKA SHUTTERBUGS

ANCHORAGE, Alaska: A sure rite of spring for residents of Alaska's largest city is the return of bears, some with cubs. One black bear sow has become a celebrity of sorts, making a snow den just a few yards off a busy street near the Anchorage airport. She has two newborn cubs who can be seen on some days frolicking in the snow.

Residents have been stopping by the

bear's den this week, snapping photos from the road and posting them to social media. Amateur photographer Eleanor Batchelder snapped photos of the mother bear nursing a cub. Wildlife of all sorts is common in the municipality of Anchorage, where about 300,000 residents share 1,958 square miles of land with up to 350 black bears and up to 65 grizzly bears.—AP

HOUSING OPTIONS HELP AUTISTIC ADULTS FIND INDEPENDENCE

DALLAS: Masha Gregory was nervous to move out of her parents' home and into her own place, where the 26-year-old Pennsylvania woman worried about making friends and being away from her parents. But after living in her own apartment at a complex that focuses on adults with autism, she's made new friends and found she loves her independence. "It was great to move out because I have my own life now," said Gregory, who lives in a Pittsburgh-area development where half of the 42 units are for those diagnosed with autism. "I want to be able to come and go as I please," said Gregory, who likes to draw and take photographs.

The complex, called the Dave Wright Apartments, opened in December and is among innovative housing developments popping up across the US to serve those who were diagnosed with autism as children amid increased awareness about the disorder and changes in how it's defined. The developments are often spearheaded by parents who see their adult children's desire for independence and wonder who will care for them in the future.

According to the A J Drexel Autism Institute, 87 percent of adults with autism live with their parents at some point between high school and their early 20s - a far higher percentage than the

general population. "They want to live independently and they want to work. They want to be involved. Right now there are just not enough opportunities for them to do those things," said Debra Caudy, who is working with her husband on a housing development near Dallas inspired by their 19-year-old autistic son, Jon. Gregory's mother, Connie, said her daughter is "thriving" in her new home.

"I think she realizes that she fits in," Gregory said. "I don't know that she would feel as secure anywhere else." Masha Gregory describes herself as having a "little bit of autism," along with auditory processing disorder, meaning her ears and brain don't function well together. Autism impairs one's ability to communicate and interact with others, but there can be a wide range to the symptoms and severity of the disorder. Symptoms could include not speaking, repeating certain behaviors and not wanting change in daily activities.

Disability housing

Some people with autism have signs of lower than normal intelligence, but others have normal to high intelligence. The new crop of developments to accommodate autistic adults is varied. Some are in big cities, others in small towns.

Some are like the complex where Gregory has an apartment to herself. Others have homes with shared living areas and private bedrooms and bathrooms. Some just have a person on staff who can offer guidance to residents, while others offer an array of supportive services.

"What works for one person doesn't necessarily work for the other," said Carolyn Klebanoff, a co-founder of Sweetwater Spectrum, a development featuring four shared homes in Sonoma, California. "Having a whole variety of options out there is critical."

Sweetwater, which opened in 2013, is within walking distance of the town square. It has a community center, farm, greenhouse and pool. The homes have noise-dampening ceilings and quiet heating and air conditioning systems for residents who are hypersensitive to loud sounds. Residents include those like Klebanoff's 23-year-old daughter who aren't conversational, as well people with high-functioning autism. "It's more like just a place to live," said 24-year-old Sweetwater resident Gwen Fisher, while adding that she appreciates its focus on people with autism.

Fisher said she participates in activities offered at Sweetwater but also gets out into the community, including working as a dog walker and volunteering at a food bank and animal shelter. Desiree Kameka, director of community engagement and the housing network at Madison House Autism Foundation in Maryland, said such developments can provide more freedom than group homes, where housing is typically tied to a specific provider of support services.

"It gives the people that live there the most flexibility and control," she said, adding that sometimes group home residents end up being required to all do the same outside activities. Many people with autism don't qualify for government services once they leave school, she noted, and these developments may help bridge the gap, providing enough support that they can live on their own. "Some of these communities could give people opportunities that they otherwise wouldn't have: They'd be forced to live with family," she said.

Elliot Frank, president of the nonprofit Autism Housing Development Corporation of Pittsburgh, which was behind the Dave Wright Apartments where Masha Gregory lives, has watched as a community has formed there. Frank said he came up with the concept after hearing a businessman talk about employing autistic adults and wondering where they would live. "The whole concept of what we call disability housing, it's not what we used to think about," Frank said.



PENNSYLVANIA: Ann Rohrich, left, and husband Richard Rohrich, right, who are not autistic, visit with Elliot Frank, second from left, the president of Autism Housing Development Corporation of Pittsburgh, and fellow residents, Elise Mote, center, and Masha Gregory, second from right, in the recreation room at their apartment in Heidelberg, Pennsylvania.—AP

DRY FIELDS, LOST LAWN: A LOOK BACK AT CALIFORNIA'S DROUGHT

LOS ANGELES: California Gov. Jerry Brown has declared an end to the state's water emergency following a five-year drought that reduced rivers to trickles, farmland to dust and forests to graveyards of dead trees. Four of the driest years in state history marked the period, which cost California's economy billions of dollars. Here's how the drought played out across the state:

Brown fields

Water is life for California's \$47 billion farming industry, which grows nearly half the nation's fruits, nuts and vegetables. Government-supplied irrigation supplies were slashed. Fields were left fallow or reduced to cracked mud. Farmers also dug thousands of new wells, sucking up groundwater in the Central Valley and causing the ground to sink.

Lost lawns

At the peak of the drought, the state called for a mandatory 25 percent cut in urban water use compared with 2013 levels. Water districts issued strict conservation rules and paid property owners to rip out water-slurping lawns and replace them with less thirsty plants. Californians responded, saving tens of billions of gallons of water. Some even kept a sharp eye on water wasters. "Drought shaming" snoops outed homes and businesses in places such as Beverly Hills that let their sprinklers run too long.

Shrinking waterways

The drought stressed forests, leaving trees more susceptible to pests such as the bark beetle. More than 100 million trees in the Sierra Nevada died. Threatened native species suffered as creeks and lakes shriveled. The shores of Folsom Lake retreated more than 100 yards.

Last year, toxic algae showed up in more than 40 state lakes and waterways from Los Angeles to the northern reaches of California, the highest count in state history. Experts said the naturally occurring cyanobacterium blossomed because nutrients that built up during the drought were washed off hills when rains finally arrived.

The past is the future

And then, finally, the rains returned. Storms hit in 2015 and returned with a vengeance last year, filling reservoirs, overflowing dams, swelling creeks and pumping up the snowpack.

Flood warnings went up and drought restrictions began to ease. But those who look back at the drought see something else: California's future. Water conservation will become a way of life in the state, said Felicia Marcus, chairwoman of the State Water Resources Control Board. "This drought has been one for the record books, but it won't be our last or longest," said Marcus. "It's a wakeup call and we can't hit the snooze button." —AP



PORTSMOUTH: In this photo, a horse chestnut tree that dates back to 1776 towers over the historic Moffatt-Ladd house in Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

FORGET ROSES AND BIRDS, THESE FOLKS LIKE BIG TREES

PORTSMOUTH: A horse chestnut tree towers over a busy street in New Hampshire's main port city. It's known for its history more than its height; legend has it that William Whipple planted it after returning in 1776 from signing the Declaration of Independence. But at nearly 70 feet tall, it is also big for a chestnut, and that is what brought Keven Martin out one rainy morning. Armed with tape to measure its circumference and a laser finder to calculate its height, Martin was here to find out whether the tree remained the state's biggest horse chestnut, a title it has held for decades.

"It is not only the biggest, but it's been around a long time," said Martin, who coordinates New Hampshire's Big Tree Program when he is not building boats. More than 700 champions in the state have been crowned. And while there may not be any redwoods out here, the state is home to 10 national champions, including the country's biggest black spruce and American mountain ash. "People appreciate a big tree more, and they have a lot of history to them. People have a connection with them, more so," said Martin, who has written a book on the big trees found on public lands. "They are just a lot more impressive when you see them in the woods or driving by." Started in 1950, the state's Big Tree Program has been part of a nationwide network run by the conservation group American Forests that has logged some 721 champions across the country — 200 species still don't have a title holder.

Created to raise awareness about protecting forest from threats like development and forest pests, as well as a way to better understand why some species grow so large, the effort today is driven by tree lovers like Martin. They spend their free time scanning highways, historic sites and the state's hiking trails for the next big one. To find a champion, an owner starts by measuring its circumference and submitting that data to the tree program. Then, Martin or another volunteer goes out to measure its circumference, height and crown, as well as its overall conditions, and come up with a point total.

Big tree program

Winners earn a place in the big tree list, and



PORTSMOUTH: In this photo, Kevin Martin, state coordinator for New Hampshire's Big Tree Program, measures the circumference of a European Beech tree in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. —AP photos

the owner gets a certificate. Some even have their photos taken alongside the tree. "It's like finding a rare tiger. There is a segment of the population that really connects with trees," said Ian Leahy, director of urban forest programs for American Forests who coordinates its American Biggest Trees program. "There is a just a deep, deep passion. In some ways, it's just out being in nature. It's like hunting, but without killing anything."

But it's not just the thrill of finding a big tree. These forest giants serve as role models of sorts, helping the public understand the outsized role trees play in nature by feeding and sheltering animals, protecting watersheds and providing a sink for carbon that helps to offset greenhouse gas emissions. They are especially important in a state like New Hampshire, which is 83 percent forested. "By starting to look at one tree and appreciate it, people start to understand their connection with the outdoors and nature," said Mary Tebo Davis, a natural resources field specialist at the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension, which

runs the big tree program. The big trees, like the horse chestnut in Portsmouth, are also popular because they are tied to a historical event or have proven so resilient — surviving sometimes for centuries. "You can't imagine the number of people who had their picture taken under that tree, groups of kids who encircle the tree," Barbara Ward, the director and curator of the historic Moffatt-Ladd House, outside which the tree stands. "It's such a nice thing for children in particular. But even adults are just awed by the idea that a living thing has been here that long."

Martin was done measuring, and Ward looked on anxiously, wondering whether the horse chestnut had done enough to keep its title. More precise measuring techniques meant the tree had lost some height, but it appeared to have made up the difference by increasing its circumference. "It's still a champion, yep," Martin said later, after he was able to tally up all the numbers. "It still beat out all the horse chestnuts in the state." —AP



CALIFORNIA: This file photo shows flooded vineyards in the Russian River Valley in Forestville, California. —AP photos



CALIFORNIA: This file photo shows irrigation pipes along a dry irrigation canal on a field near Stockton, California.

THOUSANDS OFFERED IN CASE OF CAT DOUSED WITH GASOLINE

READING: Several organizations are offering thousands of dollars in reward money for information that leads to a conviction of the person responsible for dousing a cat with gasoline in Pennsylvania. Humane Society officials say the animal was tied up, doused in gasoline and placed into a plastic trash bag that was nearly crushed in a Pennsylvania garbage truck Tuesday in Reading.

Two workers heard the cat making

sounds inside the bag, and it's being treated at the Humane Veterinary Hospital. People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals is offering a reward of up to \$5,000 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the person responsible. The Humane Society of Berks County earlier posted a \$1,000 reward. WFMZ-TV reports that Crime Alert Berks County also is offering reward money. —AP

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248 33 199

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—Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



KHALID AL-RAWDAN OPENS SAVECO AL-QURAIN BRANCH

Minister of Commerce and Industry and Acting Minister of State for Youth Affairs Khalid Al-Rawdan and SAVECO Chief Executive Officer Noor Faisal Al Qatami have opened SAVECO Al-Qurain Branch with newspapers, magazines and TV channels representatives. SAVECO Al-Qurain is located at west Abu Fatira / Al-Qurain Markets. It

extends over an area of 3000 meter. During the opening ceremony, the official opening ribbon and a large cake were cut. The Minister of Commerce and Industry and Acting Minister of State for Youth Affairs Khaled Al-Rawdan has received an excellence award from SAVECO Chief Executive Officer Noor Faisal Al Qatami for his support to the private sector.

The Minister of Commerce and Industry and Acting Minister of State for Youth Affairs Khalid Al-Rawdan had a tour in the store, where he got introduced to all store departments: Dairy, Frozen Foods, Health and Beauty, Grocery, Fresh Fruits & Vegetables, Meat Department, Fish Department, Deli Department, Hot Food (Saveco Kitchen), the

juicer, Kids Clothing and Toys, Electronics and Home Center, hala cafe, La Patisserie, food academy and Hamad and Shahada.

After that, a children's program was held, which included many interesting events and competitions that amazed all the attendees and children. "Opening the new branch of SAVECO in Al-Qurain Markets is in the line with

our company policy to be close to our customers as much as possible. SAVECO is looking forward to open more major stores starting from Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Dubai to reach all GCC regions. By the end of 2017, SAVECO will have five branches in Kuwait," SAVECO Chief Executive Officer Mrs Noor Faisal Al Qatami said.



BAKE, DESIGN AND ORDER YOUR CAKE WITH CAKENBAKE WEBSITE

CakenBake, Kuwait's trendy confectionery, pastry and cake cafe has announced the launch of its new ground-breaking website. The new website has been redesigned to reflect CakenBake's commitment in empowering their customers to design their own cakes with just a few clicks in the comfort of their homes or offices. The website provides ultimate user experience on both mobile and desktop platforms, with improved navigation and functionality.

This easy-to-use revolutionary website lets customers customize their cakes - choose flavor, size, icing style, shape and, yes, even the writing on the top of it and finally they will be able to complete the order. Customers and cake enthusiasts are free to order what they exactly need in the best possible way and to add icing to the

cake, this process of customizing their own cake saves time and efforts and also bring out the artistic side in them. Savor the occasion from a wide assortment of cakes, Arabic sweets, freshly prepared chocolates, savories, ice-cream cakes and French pastries.

"The launch of our redesigned website is a reflection of our commitment in delivering only the best in terms of design, functionality and user-experience. This website fulfils our customer's expectations in their ability to design, customize and order their own cakes. The experience of designing your own cake and then receiving the same is not only exciting but it is also a delicious experience. Choose your own design at www.cakenbake.com" said Fatima Al Mansoori, Director of Public Relations at CakenBake.

GUST LAUNCHES STUDENT LIFE RECORDS TRANSCRIPTS

Gulf University for Science and Technology's (GUST) Office of Student Life (OSL) announced today the launch of its Student Life Records Transcript. Originally piloted in the 2015/2016 fall semester, this transcript officially recognizes the student's accomplishments and involvements in the university's out-of-class activities. This initiative aims to expand learning beyond the academic setting, all the while supporting their future career options through the recognition of these activities.

GUST seeks to foster a dynamic environment and is committed to improving the student's social intelligence while steering them towards a promising future and a successful career. It also provides student-centered services, programs, and experiences through exposing the students to out of the classroom learning opportunities, engaging them in different events and activities internally and externally, locally and internationally. This includes collaborating with students through OSL to engender a diverse and energetic campus life in.

The transcript will validate students' non-class related achievements, activity history, and social activities. These records will enlist and verify all participations in arts and music, athletics, student clubs, community services, honors and awards, student bodies and entities, and training and workshop seminars. Student participations in the university's student employment program are also recognized and documented in the transcript. Each semester, more than 70 students are hired by various university departments as tutors, note-takers, photographers, and administrative assistants.

Notable previous community service participations include the Guinness World Record Clothes Charity Drive, New York City Homeless Aid Initiative, and Flower Giveaway on Mother's Day.



Anwar S. Al-Sabah

Head of OSL, Anwar S. Al-Sabah said, "Life experience gained at the university is as crucial as the academic journey. We believe that students' involvements and their professional performance outside the classroom should be recognized and documented officially. This co-curricular transcript is an initiative that will attest to the student's participation in these activities."

Known for its lively campus and active student life, GUST's 16 student clubs hold more than 80 events a year. These events include expos, seminars, discussions, competitions and tournaments, exhibitions, performances, charity drives, and trips. Students are also presented with various volunteering opportunities within the university where they learn event organization, teamwork, creativity, time management, and leadership. As for sports, students partaking in

any of the Athletic Department's teams participate in local and international tournaments and championships.

All of these aforementioned activities are officially recognized by the university and are recorded in the new Student Life Records Transcripts. GUST seeks to foster a dynamic environment and is committed to improving the student's social intelligence while steering them towards a promising future and a successful career. It also provides student-centered services, programs, and experiences through exposing the students to out of the classroom learning opportunities, engaging them in different events and activities internally and externally, locally and internationally. This includes collaborating with students through OSL to engender a diverse and energetic campus life in.



—Photos by Joseph Shagra

IWG CELEBRATES SPANISH HISTORY AND CULTURE

Members of the International Women Group (IWG) recently met with the Spanish ambassador's spouse who made an outstanding presentation about Spain's history including the Islamic aspects in it. The Spanish ambassador's spouse also talked about the Spanish heritage, arts, music, dances, folklore, fashion and crafts in addition to enjoying the Spanish Paella dish. Notably, IWG's meeting also witnessed the first ever elections to select the new committee board in the presence of all ambassadors' wives.

RECRUITMENT OF INDIAN NURSES FOR KUWAIT

Some private hospitals in Kuwait have made enquiries about recruitment of Indian nurses. It is reiterated that to streamline the recruitment of Indian nurses for work in Kuwait, the Government of India has restricted since May 2015 the recruitment of nurses through a few designated State-run recruiting agencies and placed nurses under the "ECR" regime so that emigration clearance through E-Migrate becomes mandatory for them for any employment in any of the 18 ECR countries (including Kuwait).

Presently, there are six State Manpower Corporations in India which are authorized for recruitment of Indian nurses abroad: Non-Resident Keralites Affairs Department (NORKA-ROOTS), Norka centre, Thycaud Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, E-mail: mail@norkaroots.net, Tel. 0091-471-2330530

Overseas Development and Employment Promotion Consultants Ltd. (ODEPC), T.C. 27/741(3), Ambalathumukku, Vanchiyoar, PO, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, E-mail: odepcc@sify.com, Tel. 0091-471-2576314

Overseas Manpower Corporation Limited (OMCL), No.42, Alandur Road, Thiru-vi-ka Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, E-mail: overmcl@gmail.com, Tel. 0091-44-22505886, 22502267, 22500417.

Uttar Pradesh Financial Corporation, Government of Uttar Pradesh (UPFC), 14/88, Civil Lines, Kanpur-208001, Phone: EPABX: +91-512-2530041-44 Fax: +91-512-2530073, +91-512-2533743 E-mail: headoffice@upfcindia.com, upfcnp@dataone.in

Telangana Overseas Manpower Company (TOMCOM) Govt. of Telangana, Govt. IT Campus, Vijaya Nagar Colony, Masabtank, Hyderabad-500057. Tel. 009140-23221705, E-mail: tomcommd@gmail.com

The Overseas Manpower Company of Andhra Pradesh (OMCAP), ITI Campus, Vijayawada (OMCAP), Krishna (Dist), Andhra Pradesh - 520008, Tel/Fax: 91 0866 2484948, Email: omcapl@gmail.com

The process of recruitment of Indian nurses under E-Migrate system is easy, transparent and user-friendly. Recruiting Agencies in Kuwait which are keen to recruit Indian nurses for Kuwait should register themselves with the E-Migrate system. The Embassy has an E-Migrate Helpdesk in its premises - for those wishing to register in E-Migrate system. For any query, please contact: Second Secretary (Labor) at Tel. No. 22531716, Mobile: 97229914 and Attache (Labor) at Tel. No. 22530409 or send e-mail to: attachelabour@indembkwt.org or labour@indembkwt.org



LAPA ORGANIZES MUSIC CONCERT

Iconic Iraqi musician, Nasseer Shamma presented his Global Peace Concert last Saturday at the Jaber Al-Ahmed Cultural Center. The concert, presented by Shamma and a group of international musicians, was organized by LOYAC's Academy for Performance Arts (LAPA) conveying a message of peace and tolerance to the entire world through a mixture of oriental and western music. Speaking on the occasion, Shamma expressed gratitude for LAPA's superb organization and also expressed hopes that LOYAC would have a branch in Iraq because the Iraqi youth needed a platform for expression that would keep them away from violence and extremism.

ANIMAL
PLANET HD

00:45 Pandamonium
01:40 Pandamonium
02:35 Pandamonium
03:25 Pandamonium
04:15 Pandamonium
05:02 Pandamonium
05:49 Gator Boys
06:36 Swamp Brothers
07:00 Swamp Brothers
07:25 Dogs/Cats/Pets 101
08:15 Wildest India
09:10 Pandamonium
10:05 Tanked
11:00 Dogs/Cats/Pets 101
11:55 Bonzi Vet
12:50 Wildest India
13:45 Gator Boys
14:40 Pandamonium
15:35 Tanked
16:30 Swamp Brothers
16:55 Swamp Brothers
17:25 Village Vets
17:50 Village Vets
18:20 Lone Star Law
19:15 Tanked
20:10 Mekong: Soul Of A River
21:05 Village Vets
21:30 Village Vets
22:00 Lone Star Law
22:55 Gator Boys
23:50 Swamp Brothers

crime
& investigation
network

00:00 The Haunting Of...
01:00 My Ghost Story: Caught On Camera
02:00 Crimes That Shook Australia
03:00 Evil Up Close
04:00 The Haunting Of...
05:00 My Ghost Story: Caught On Camera
06:00 The First 48
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
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
19:00 Evil Up Close
20:00 Holloway: Women Behind Bars
21:00 Crimes That Shook Australia
22:00 Homicide Hunter
23:00 Crimes That Shook Australia

Discovery
Family

00:05 Destroyed In Seconds
00:30 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
01:20 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
02:10 Dirty Jobs
03:50 Ultimate Survival
06:20 How It's Made
07:00 Doki
07:25 Bear Grylls Survival School
07:50 Must Love Cats
08:40 How It's Made
09:30 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
10:20 Mythbusters
11:10 Must Love Cats
12:00 Ultimate Survival
12:50 How It's Made
13:40 Dirty Jobs
14:30 Doki
14:55 Bear Grylls Survival School

21:00 Gold Rush: Remembering John Schnabel
21:50 Idris Elba: No Limits
22:40 Killing Fields B-Story

EHD

00:00 Rob & Chyna
00:55 Famously Single
01:50 E! News
02:50 Celebrity Style Story
03:50 Botched By Nature
05:30 Celebrity Style Story
06:00 Botched By Nature
06:55 E! News
07:25 Botched By Nature
10:10 E! News
10:40 Celebrity Style Story
11:10 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
12:10 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
15:00 E! News
15:30 Celebrity Style Story
16:00 WAGs
17:00 WAGs
18:00 WAGs
19:00 Botched
20:00 Botched
21:00 Botched
23:00 E! News
23:15 Keeping Up With The Kardashians

HISTORY

00:20 Hoard Hunters
01:10 Pawn Stars
01:35 Pawn Stars Best Of
02:00 Storage Wars: Barry's Best Buys
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 Ice Road Truckers
07:40 Counting Cars
08:05 Counting Cars
09:20 Pawn Stars
08:55 Pawn Stars
09:20 Storage Wars
09:45 Storage Wars
10:10 American Pickers
11:00 Pirate Treasure Of The Knights Templar
11:50 Battle 360
12:40 Swamp People
13:30 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 Storage Wars: Barry's Best Buys
18:30 Pawn Stars
18:55 Pawn Stars Best Of
19:20 Mountain Men
20:10 American Pickers
21:00 The Curse Of Oak Island
21:50 Hunting Hitler
22:40 American Restoration
23:30 American Pickers

food

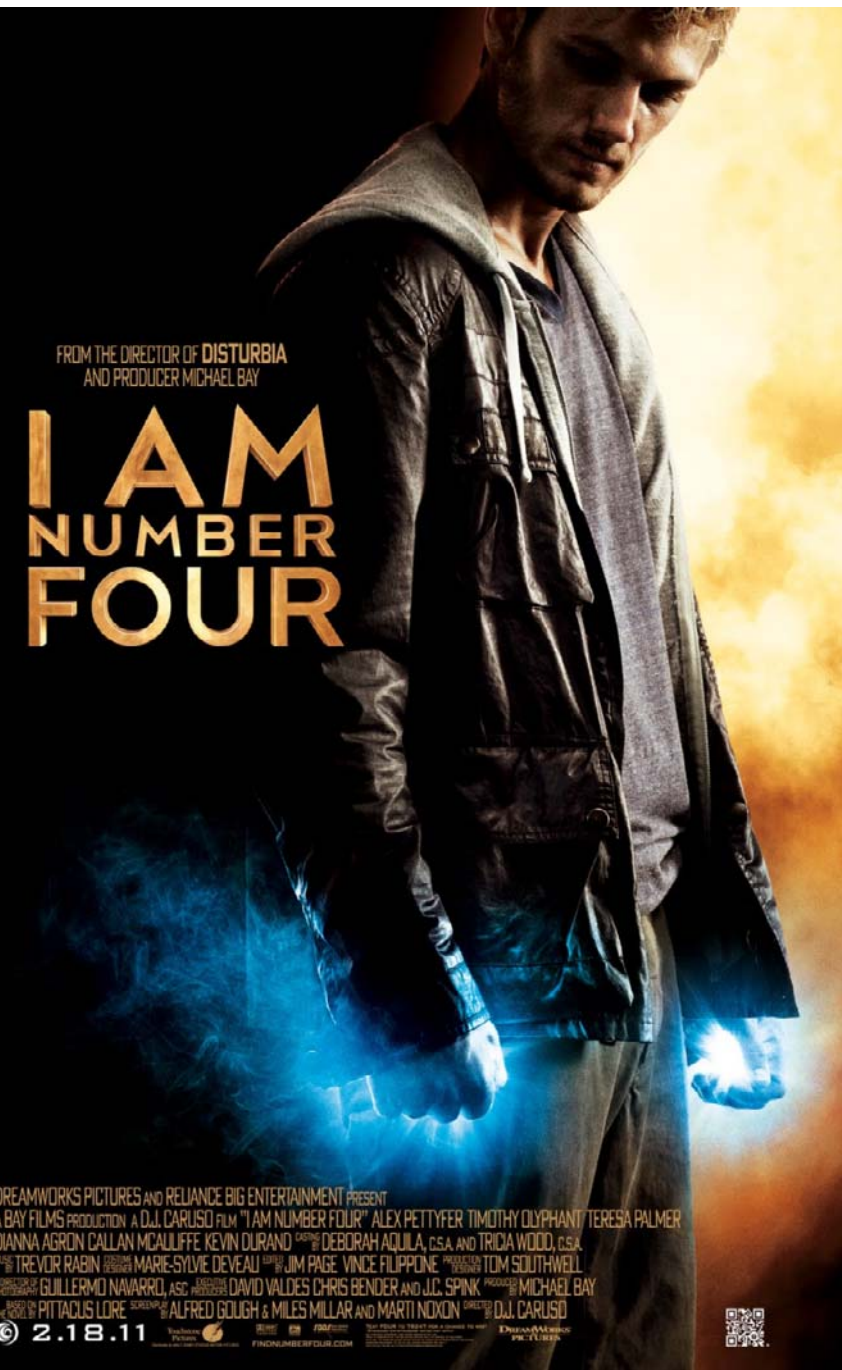
00:00 Mystery Dinners
01:00 Dinners, Drive-Ins And Dives
02:00 Man Fire Food
03:00 Chopped

Disney
CHANNEL HD

00:00 Binny And The Ghost
00:25 Hank Zipzer
00:45 The Hive
00:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
01:40 Hank Zipzer
01:45 Binny And The Ghost
02:55 Hank Zipzer
03:15 The Hive
03:20 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
04:10 Hank Zipzer
04:35 Binny And The Ghost
05:25 Hank Zipzer
05:45 The Hive
05:50 The 7D
06:00 Jessie
06:25 Jessie
06:50 Tsum Tsum Shorts
06:55 The Zhuzhus
07:20 Elena Of Avalor
07:45 Bizaardvark
08:35 Stuck In The Middle
09:25 Disney The Lodge
09:50 Bunk'd
10:40 The Little Mermaid
12:15 Disney Mickey Mouse
12:20 Jessie
12:45 Jessie
13:10 Austin & Ally
13:35 Austin & Ally
14:00 Liv And Maddie
14:25 Liv And Maddie
14:50 Sunny Bunnies
14:55 The Zhuzhus
15:20 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
15:45 Elena Of Avalor
16:10 Liv And Maddie
16:35 Descendants Wicked World
16:40 Girl Meets World
17:05 Stuck In The Middle
17:30 Bunk'd
17:55 Bizaardvark
18:20 Disney Mickey Mouse
18:25 Alex & Co.
18:50 Jessie
19:15 Tsum Tsum Shorts
19:20 Backstage
19:45 Austin & Ally
20:10 The Next Step
20:35 Cracked
20:40 Best Friends Whenever
21:05 Girl Meets World
21:30 That's So Raven
21:55 Star Darlings
22:00 Good Luck Charlie
22:25 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
23:10 Hank Zipzer
23:35 Binny And The Ghost

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



I AM NUMBER FOUR ON OSN MOVIES ACTION HD

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 Phineas And Ferb The Movie

07:50 I Almost Got Away With It
08:40 California Investigator
09:05 California Investigator
09:30 Beauty Queen Murders
10:20 I Almost Got Away With It
11:10 I Am Homicide
12:00 I'd Kill For You
12:50 I Almost Got Away With It
13:40 California Investigator
14:05 California Investigator
14:30 Beauty Queen Murders
15:20 I Almost Got Away With It
16:10 Nightmare Next Door
17:00 I'd Kill For You
17:50 I Almost Got Away With It
18:40 California Investigator
19:05 California Investigator
19:30 Beauty Queen Murders
20:20 I Almost Got Away With It
21:10 Tabloid
22:00 Deadline: Crime With Tamron Hall
22:50 Hollywood Horror Story: People Magazine...
23:40 Pandora's Box: Unleashing Evil

NAT GEO
WILD HD

00:20 Jobs That Bite!
01:10 Africa's Creative Killers
02:00 Man V. Lion
02:50 Hunter Hunted
03:45 Built For The Kill
04:40 Extreme Animal Babies
05:35 Man V. Lion
06:30 Hunter Hunted
07:25 Built For The Kill
08:20 Extreme Animal Babies
09:15 Amazing Animal Selfies
10:10 Snakes In The City
11:05 Predator Patrol
12:00 Dinofish
12:55 Viper Queens
13:50 Hunter Hunted
14:45 Expedition Wild
15:40 Extreme Animal Babies
16:35 Strangest Bird Alive
17:30 Snakes In The City
18:25 Predator Patrol
19:20 Expedition Wild
20:10 Extreme Animal Babies
21:00 Strangest Bird Alive
21:50 Snakes In The City
22:40 Predator Patrol
23:30 Dinofish

itv
CHOICE HD

00:10 The Chase
01:00 Emmerdale
02:00 Coronation Street
03:30 Guess This House
04:20 It's Not Rocket Science
05:15 Come Date With Me
06:10 The Chase
07:05 Guess This House
08:00 It's Not Rocket Science
09:00 Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway
10:10 Come Date With Me
11:00 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 Vera
17:50 Come Date With Me
18:20 Come Date With Me
18:45 Emmerdale
19:15 Coronation Street
19:45 Coronation Street
20:10 Guess This House
21:00 Vera
22:50 Emmerdale
23:15 Coronation Street
23:40 Coronation Street

NAT GEO
people HD

00:15 Hotel India
01:05 Lucky Chow
01:30 Dog Whisperer
02:20 Food Lover's Guide To The Planet
02:45 A Model Adventure
03:35 Fusion Forager
04:25 The Game Chef
04:50 Street Food Around The World
05:20 World's Best Beaches
06:15 Fearless Chef
07:10 Lucky Chow
07:35 Dog Whisperer
08:30 Food Lover's Guide To The Planet
09:00 A Model Adventure
09:55 Fusion Forager
10:50 The Game Chef
11:15 Street Food Around The World
11:45 World's Best Beaches
12:40 Lucky Chow
13:05 Dog Whisperer
14:00 Food Lover's Guide To The Planet
14:30 A Model Adventure
15:25 The Game Chef
15:50 Living Free With Kimi Werner
16:45 Street Food Around The World
17:15 World's Best Beaches
18:10 Fearless Chef
19:05 Raw Travel
19:30 The Game Chef
20:00 Living Free With Kimi Werner
20:55 Street Food Around The World
21:20 World's Best Beaches
22:10 Fearless Chef
23:00 Lucky Chow
23:25 Dog Whisperer

10:00 Scam City
11:00 Lawless Island
12:00 Mine Kings
13:00 Cosmos: A Spacetime Odyssey
14:00 Origins: The Journey Of Humankind
15:00 Secret Service Files: Protecting The President
16:00 Scam City
17:00 Lawless Island
18:00 Mine Kings
19:00 Mega Factories
20:00 Scam City
20:50 Lawless Island
21:40 Mine Kings
22:30 Mega Factories

OSN FIRST HD

00:00 Berlin Station
01:00 Scandal
02:00 Feud
03:00 Mistresses
04:00 This Is Us
05:00 How To Get Away With Murder
06:00 Good Morning America - Weekend
07:00 The Chew
08:00 The View
09:00 How To Get Away With Murder
10:00 This Is Us
11:00 Bones
12:00 The Chew
13:00 The View
14:00 Live Good Morning America
16:00 How To Get Away With Murder
17:00 This Is Us
18:00 Bones
19:00 Rosewood
20:00 Criminal Minds
21:00 Homeland
22:00 Code Black
23:00 Mistresses

OSN FIRST HD
COMEDY

00:00 Son Of Zorn
00:30 New Girl
01:00 New Girl
01:30 Saturday Night Live
03:00 Scrubs
03:30 Scrubs
04:00 Mad Love
04:30 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
05:30 Superstore
06:00 George Lopez
06:30 Late Night With Seth Meyers
07:30 The Last Man On Earth
08:00 Mad Love
08:30 Scrubs
09:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
10:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
11:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
12:00 George Lopez
12:30 Mad Love
13:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
14:00 Scrubs
14:30 The Last Man On Earth
15:00 Superstore
15:30 New Girl
16:00 New Girl
16:30 George Lopez
17:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
18:00 Scrubs
18:30 Scrubs
19:00 Dr. Ken
19:30 The Mindy Project
20:00 The Goldbergs
20:30 The Goldbergs
21:00 New Girl
21:30 New Girl
22:00 Baskets
22:30 Difficult People
23:00 Ballers
23:30 The Goldbergs

OSN MOVIES HD
FAMILY

01:00 Max Keeble's Big Move
03:00 I'll Be Home For Christmas
05:00 Atlantis: Milo's Return
07:00 Meet The Robinsons
09:00 Atlantis: The Lost Empire
11:00 Atlantis: Milo's Return
13:00 Chicken Little
15:00 Tarzan
17:00 It Takes Two
19:00 Hocus Pocus
21:00 Black Beauty
23:00 Tarzan

OSN MOVIES HD
ACTION

00:00 Bloodrayne: The Third Reich
02:00 Sharknado 2: The Second One
03:45 Real Steel
06:00 Taken 3
08:00 Tekken: Kazuya's Revenge
10:00 Age Of Tomorrow
12:00 Real Steel
14:15 Taken 3
16:15 Black Rose
18:00 I Am Number Four
20:00 Fury
22:15 Zero Tolerance

OSN MOVIES HD
COMEDY

00:00 Freaks Of Nature
02:00 A Madea Christmas
04:00 After The Ball
06:00 Bill & Ted's Bogus Journey
08:00 A Madea Christmas
10:00 After The Ball
12:00 Bill & Ted's Bogus Journey
14:00 The Golden Child
16:00 Hanging Up
18:00 Shanghai Noon
20:00 Absolutely Anything
22:00 Dance Flick

OSN MOVIES
FESTIVAL

00:00 On My Way
02:00 Memories
03:45 Ordinary People
06:00 The Man Who Wasn't There
08:00 The Yellow Handkerchief
10:00 Fast Girls
12:00 Words And Pictures
14:00 Batkid Begins
16:00 Young Ones
18:00 The End Of The Tour
20:00 Cake
22:00 Two Mothers

OSN MOVIES HD

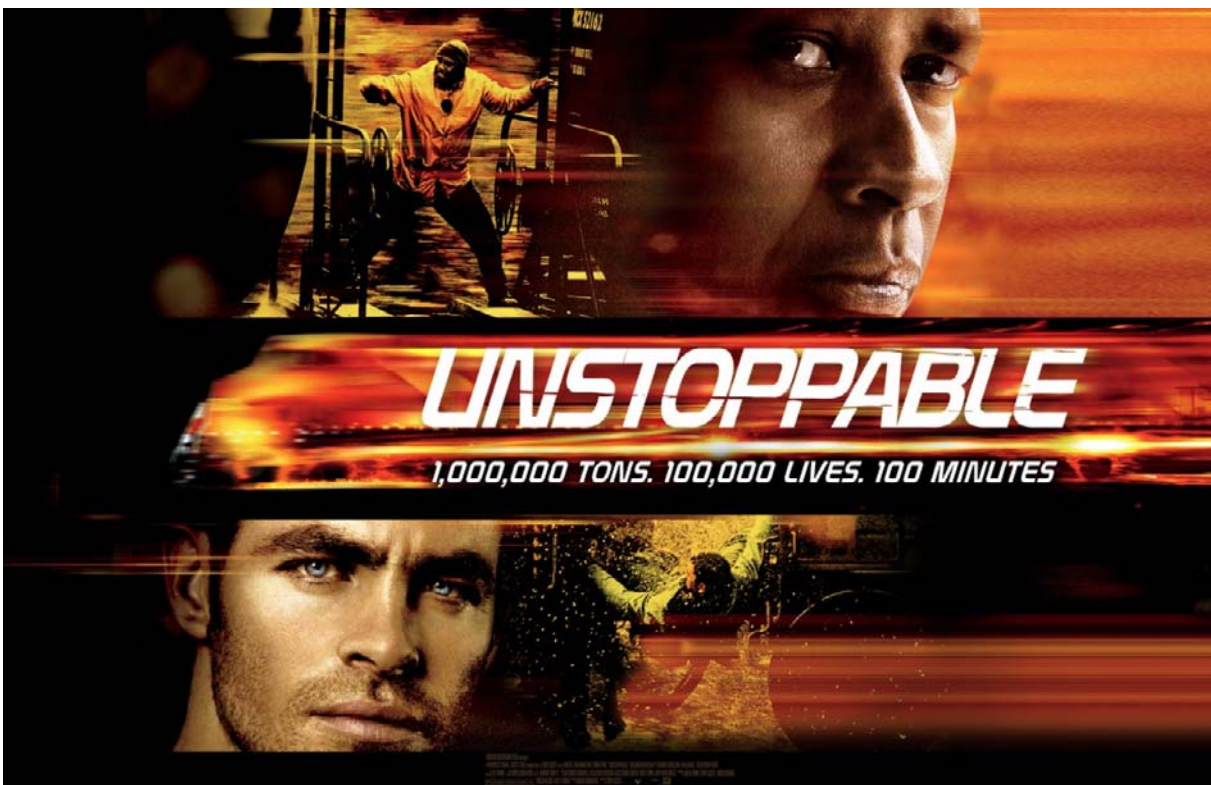
00:00 High Fidelity
02:15 Unstoppable
04:15 The Horse Whisperer
07:15 Coraline
09:15 Air Force One
11:45 Unstoppable
13:45 Man Of The House
15:45 Goosebumps
18:00 Con Air
20:00 Enemy Of The State
22:15 Public Enemies v

OSN MOVIES HD
KIDS

01:00 Daddy I'm A Zombie
02:45 Big Baby
04:30 The Heart Of The Oak
06:00 The Nutcracker Sweet
07:30 The Adventures Of Don Quixote
09:00 Robosapien: Rebooted
10:45 Daddy I'm A Zombie
12:30 Big Baby
14:00 Mamma Moo And Crow
16:00 Robosapien: Rebooted
18:00 Dixie And The Zombie Rebellion
20:00 Doctor Proctor's Fart Powder
21:45 Mamma Moo And Crow
23:15 The Adventures Of Don Quixote

TLC
HD

00:20 Little Miss Atlanta
01:10 The Undateables
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 Save My Style
04:00 Save My Style
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 Little Miss Atlanta
07:40 Outdaughtered: Busby Quints
08:30 Little People, Big World
08:55 Little People, Big World
09:20 Little People, Big World
10:10 Love At First Swipe
10:35 Cake Boss
11:00 My Big Fat Fabulous Life
11:25 Say Yes To The Dress: Bridesmaids



UNSTOPPABLE ON OSN MOVIES HD

15:20 Mythbusters
16:10 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
17:00 Kids Do The Craziest Things
17:50 Pick A Puppy
18:40 Destroyed In Seconds
19:30 How It's Made
20:20 Mythbusters
21:10 Kids Do The Craziest Things
22:00 Pick A Puppy
22:50 Destroyed In Seconds

Discovery
CHANNEL HD

00:20 Street Outlaws
01:10 Supertrucks
02:00 The Island With Bear Grylls
02:50 Running Wild With Bear Grylls
03:40 Fast N' Loud
04:30 Storage Hunters
05:00 How Do They Do It?
05:30 How Do They Do It?
06:00 Outback Truckers
06:50 Street Outlaws
07:40 Fast N' Loud
08:30 The Island With Bear Grylls
09:20 Storage Hunters
09:45 How Do They Do It?
10:10 How Do They Do It?
10:35 Wheeler Dealers
11:25 Diesel Brothers
12:15 Harley And The Davidsons
13:05 How Do They Do It?
13:30 Storage Hunters
13:55 Storage Hunters
14:20 Gold Rush
15:10 The Island With Bear Grylls
16:00 Outback Truckers
16:50 Fast N' Loud
17:40 Street Outlaws
18:30 How Do They Do It?
18:55 How Do They Do It?
19:20 The Island With Bear Grylls
20:10 Storage Hunters
20:35 Storage Hunters

04:00 Guy's Grocery Games
05:00 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics
06:00 The Kitchen
07:00 The Pioneer Woman
08:00 Siba's Table
09:00 Anna Olson: Bake
10:00 The Kitchen
11:00 The Pioneer Woman
12:00 Siba's Table
13:00 Dinners, Drive-Ins And Dives
14:00 Chopped
15:00 The Kitchen
16:00 Anna Olson: Bake
17:00 Chopped
18:00 Guy's Grocery Games
19:00 Dinners, Drive-Ins And Dives
20:00 Man Fire Food
21:00 Roadtrip With G. Garvin
22:00 Iron Chef America
23:00 Dinners, Drive-Ins And Dives

Discovery
SCIENCE

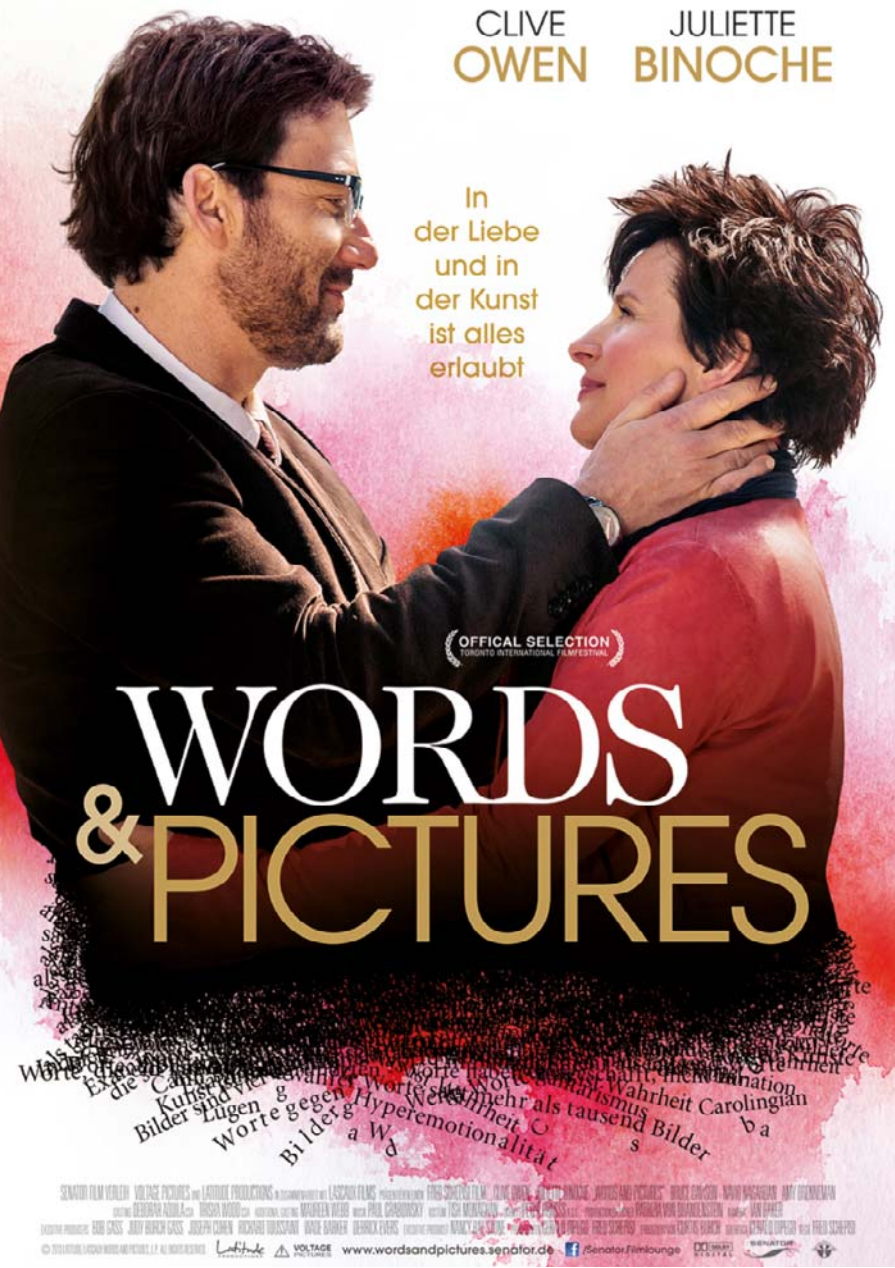
00:30 Eco-Tech
02:10 Mythbusters
07:00 How Do They Do It?
07:26 Prototype This
08:14 Mythbusters
09:02 Ways To Save The Planet
09:50 How Do They Do It?
10:14 Food Factory
10:38 Food Factory USA
11:03 Food Factory USA
11:26 Prototype This
12:14 Mythbusters
13:02 How Do They Do It?
13:26 Food Factory
13:50 Eco-Tech
14:38 Prototype This
15:26 Mythbusters
16:14 Mythbusters
17:02 Eco-Tech
17:50 Prototype This
18:40 Mythbusters
19:30 How The Universe Works

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
10:00 Sofia The First
10:55 Miles From Tomorrow
11:20 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
11:50 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
12:15 Gummi Bears
12:40 Miles From Tomorrow
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 Miles From Tomorrow
19:25 Miles From Tomorrow
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 Goldie & Bear
22:25 Goldie & Bear
22:55 PJ Masks
23:20 Henry Hugglemonster
23:35 The Hive
23:45 Loopdidoo

13:20 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

ID
X

00:30 Kindred Spirits
01:20 A Haunting
02:10 Dead Silent
03:00 How (Not) To Kill Your Husband
03:48 Hate In America
04:36 Pandora's Box: Unleashing Evil
05:24 Six Degrees Of Murder
06:12 Grave Secrets
07:00 I'd Kill For You



WORDS AND PICTURES ON OSN MOVIES HD FESTIVAL

For labor-related inquiries
and complaints:
Call MSAL hotline 128

Hospitals

Sabah Hospital	24812000
Amiri Hospital	22450005
Maternity Hospital	24843100
Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital	25312700
Chest Hospital	24849400
Farwaniya Hospital	24892010
Adan Hospital	23940620
Ibn Sina Hospital	24840300
Al-Razi Hospital	24846000
Physiotherapy Hospital	24874330/9

Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khaldiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401
Jabriya	25316254
Maidan Hawally	25623444
Bayan	25388462
Mishref	25381200
W Hawally	22630786
Sabah	24810221
Jahra	24770319
New Jahra	24575755
West Jahra	24772608
South Jahra	24775066
North Jahra	24775992
North Jleeb	24311795
Ardhiya	24884079
Firdous	24892674
Omariya	24719048
N Khaitan	24710044
Fintas	23900322



PHARMACIES ON 24 HRS DUTY

GOVERNORATE	PHARMACY	ADDRESS	PHONE
Ahmadi	Sama Safwan 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 Ikhlās 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



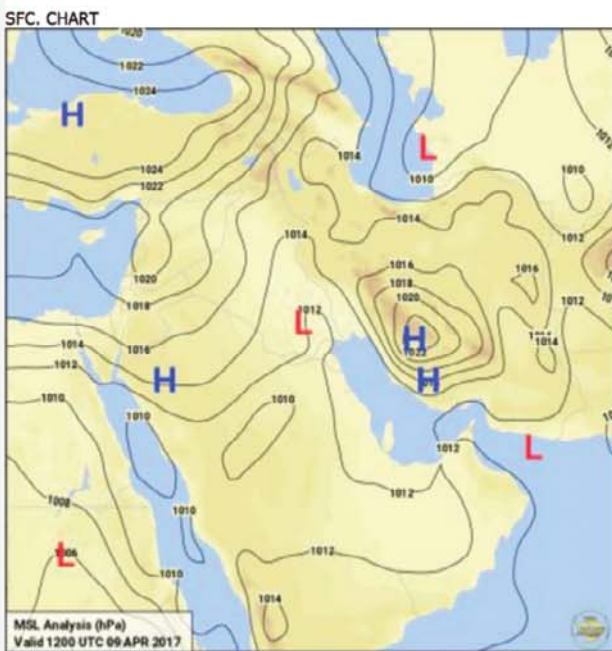
Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

Issued 09/04/2017-19:00 LT UTC +3hr

MIN Temperature 20 °C

By Night :Clouds will increase gradually with light to moderate south easterly to southerly wind, with speed of 12 - 35 km/h with a chance for scattered light rain later on

By Day : Partly cloudy with light variable wind changing to light to moderate south easterly wind, with speed of 08 - 30 km/h with a chance for scattered rain



Four-Day Forecast

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
Expected Weather	partly cloudy + scattered rain	partly cloudy + scattered rain	partly cloudy	partly cloudy + raising dust
Min Temp °C	20	21	22	23
Max Temp °C	34	33	37	41
Wind Direction	variable wind changing to light to moderate south easterly	south easterly to easterly	south easterly	south westerly changing to south easterly
Wind Speed km/h	08 - 30	15 - 38	15 - 40	25 - 50

Warnings & Weather Watches

no warnings or weather watches

Kuwait Forecast

Station	MIN °C EXP	Max °C REC
KUWAIT CITY	20	35
KUWAIT AIRPORT	20	35
ABDALY	16	37
BUBYAN	18	29
JAHLA	18	37
FAILAKA ISLAND	18	31
SALMIYAH	21	26
AHMADI	21	28
JAL ALIYAH	18	35
QAROH ISLAND	20	28
UMM AL-MARADEM	20	26
NUWAISIB	17	34
WAFRA	15	36
SALMY	18	36
MUTRIBA	18	36

Recorded Yesterday at Kuwait Airport

Max Temp (°C)	30
Min Temp (°C)	19
Max Rel Hum (%)	76
Min Rel Hum (%)	35
Max Wind Speed (km/h) and Direction	28 NE
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR	0 mm

	Sunrise	05:28
	Sunset	18:11

Tomorrow Prayer Times

Fajr	04:07
Sunrise	05:28
Zuhr	11:49
Asr	15:23
Sunset	18:11
Isha	19:30

INTERNATIONAL CALLS



Afghanistan	0093	Lithuania	00370
Albania	00355	Luxembourg	00352
Algeria	00213	Macau	00853
Andorra	00376	Macedonia	00389
Angola	00244	Madagascar	00261
Anguilla	001264	Majorca	0034
Antiga	001268	Malawi	00265
Argentina	0054	Malaysia	0060
Armenia	00374	Maldives	00960
Australia	0061	Mali	00223
Austria	0043	Malta	00356
Azerbaijan	00994	Marshall Islands	00692
Bahamas	001242	Martinique	00596
Bahrain	00973	Mauritania	00222
Bangladesh	00880	Mauritius	00230
Barbados	001246	Mayotte	00269
Belarus	00375	Mexico	0052
Belgium	0032	Micronesia	00691
Belize	00501	Moldova	00373
Benin	00229	Monaco	00377
Bermuda	001441	Mongolia	00976
Bhutan	00975	Montserrat	001664
Bolivia	00591	Morocco	00212
Bosnia	00387	Mozambique	00258
Botswana	00267	Myanmar (Burma)	0095
Brazil	0055	Namibia	00264
Brunei	00673	Nepal	00977
Bulgaria	00359	Netherlands	0031
Burkina	00226	Netherlands Antilles	00599
Burundi	00257	New Caledonia	00687
Cambodia	00855	New Zealand	0064
Cameroon	00237	Nicaragua	00505
Canada	001	Niger	00227
Cape Verde	00238	Nigeria	00234
Cayman Islands	001345	Niue	00683
Central African	00236	Norfolk Island	00672
Chad	00235	N. Ireland (UK)	0044
Chile	0056	North Korea	00850
China	0086	Norway	0047
Colombia	0057	Oman	00968
Comoros	00269	Pakistan	0092
Congo	00242	Palau	00680
Cook Islands	00682	Panama	00507
Costa Rica	00506	Papua New Guinea	00675
Croatia	00385	Paraguay	00595
Cuba	0053	Peru	0051
Cyprus	00357	Philippines	0063
Cyprus (Northern)	0090392	Poland	0048
Czech Republic	00420	Portugal	00351
Denmark	0045	Puerto Rico	001787
Diego Garcia	00246	Qatar	00974
Djibouti	00253	Romania	0040
Dominica	001767	Russian Federation	007
Dominican Republic	001809	Rwanda	00250
Ecuador	00593	Saint Helena	00290
Egypt	0020	Saint Kitts	001869
El Salvador	00503	Saint Lucia	001758
England (UK)	0044	Saint Pierre	00508
Equatorial Guinea	00240	Saint Vincent	001784
Eritrea	00291	Samoa US	00684
Estonia	00372	Samoa West	00685
Ethiopia	00251	San Marino	00378
Falkland Islands	00500	Sao Tome	00239
Faroe Islands	00298	Saudi Arabia	00966
Fiji	00679	Scotland (UK)	0044
Finland	00358	Senegal	00221
France	0033	Seychelles	00284
French Guiana	00594	Sierra Leone	00232
French Polynesia	00689	Singapore	0065
Gabon	00241	Slovakia	00421
Gambia	00220	Slovenia	00386
Georgia	00995	Solomon Islands	00677
Germany	0049	Somalia	00252
Ghana	00233	South Africa	0027
Gibraltar	00350	South Korea	0082
Greece	0030	Spain	0034
Greenland	00299	Sri Lanka	0094
Grenada	001473	Sudan	00249
Guadeloupe	00590	Suriname	00597
Guam	001671	Swaziland	00268
Guatemala	00502	Sweden	0046
Guinea	00224	Switzerland	0041
Guyana	00592	Syria	00963
Haiti	00509	Serbia	00381
Holland (Netherlands)	0031	Taiwan	00886
Honduras	00504	Tanzania	00255
Hong Kong	00852	Thailand	0066
Hungary	0036	Togo	00228
Ibiza (Spain)	0034	Tonga	00676
Iceland	00354	Tokelau	00690
India	0091	Trinidad	001868
Indian Ocean	00873	Tunisia	00216
Indonesia	0062	Turkey	0090
Iran	0098	Tuvalu	00688
Iraq	00964	Uganda	00256
Ireland	00353	Ukraine	00380
Italy	0039	United Arab Emirates	00976
Ivory Coast	00225	United Kingdom	0044
Jamaica	001876	Uruguay	00598
Japan	0081	USA	001
Jordan	00962	Uzbekistan	00998
Kazakhstan	007	Vanuatu	00678
Kenya	00254	Venezuela	00582
Kiribati	00686	Vietnam	0084
Kuwait	00965	Virgin Islands UK	001284
Kyrgyzstan	00996	Virgin Islands US	001340
Laos	00856	Wales (UK)	0044
Latvia	00371	Yemen	00967
Lebanon	00961	Yugoslavia	00381
Liberia	00231	Zambia	00260
Libya	00218	Zimbabwe	00263
Lesotho	00266		



PRIVATE CLINICS

Ophthalmologists	
Dr. Abidallah Al-Mansoor	25622444
Dr. Samy Al-Rabeea	25752222
Dr. Masoma Habeeb	25321171
Dr. Mubarak Al-Ajmy	25739999
Dr. Mohsen Abel	25757700
Dr. Adnan Hasan Alwayl	25732223
Dr. Abdallah Al-Baghly	25732223
Ear, Nose & Throat (ENT)	
Dr. Ahmed Fouad Mouner	24555050 Ext 510
Dr. Abdallah Al-Ali	25644660
Dr. Abd Al-Hameed Al-Taweel	25646478
Dr. Sanad Al-Fathalah	25311996
Dr. Mohammad Al-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-Mikhaeem	22636920
Dr. Kathem Maarafi	25730465
Dr. Abdallah Ahmad Eyadad	25655528
Dr. Nabeel Al-Ayoubi	24577781
Dr. Dina Abidallah Al-Refae	25333501
Urologists	
Dr. Ali Naser Al-Serfy	22641534
Dr. Fawzi Taher Abul	22639955
Dr. Khaleel Abidallah Al-Awadi	22616660
Dr. Adel Al-Hunayan FRCS (C)	25313120
Dr. Leons Joseph	66703427

Plastic Surgeons	
Dr. Mohammad Al-Khalaf	22547272
Dr. Abdal-Redha Lari	22617700
Dr. Abdel Quttainah	25625030/60
Family Doctor	
Dr Divya Damodar	23729596/23729581
Psychiatrists	
Dr. Esam Al-Ansari	22635047
Dr. Eisa M. Al-Balhan	22613623/0
Gynaecologists & Obstetricians	
DrAdrian arbe	23729596/23729581
Dr. Verginia s.Marin	2572-6666 ext 8321
Dr. Fozeya Ali Al-Qatan	22655539
Dr. Majeda Khalefa Aliytami	25343406
Dr. Ahmad Al-Khooly	25739272
Dr. Salem soso	22618787
General Surgeons	
Dr. Amer Zawaz Al-Amer	22610044
Dr. Mohammad Yousef Basher	25327148
Internists, Chest & Heart	
Dr. Adnan Ebil	22639939
Dr. Mousa Khadada	22666300
Dr. Latefa Al-Duweisan	25728004
Dr. Nadem Al-Ghabra	25355515
Dr. Mobarak Aldoub	24726446
Dr Nasser Behbehani	25654300/3

Paediatricians	
Dr. Khaled Hamadi	25665898
Dr. Abd Al-Aziz Al-Rashed	25340300
Dr. Zahra Qabazard	25710444
Dr. Sohail Qamar	22621099
Dr. Snaa Maarroof	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. Abidallah Al-Amer	22561444
Dr. Faysal Al-Fozan	22619557
Dr. Abdallateef Al-Katrah	22525888
Dr. Abidallah Al-Duweisan	25653755
Dr. Bader Al-Ansari	25620111
Neurologists	
Dr. Sohal Najem Al-Shemeri	25633324
Dr. Jasem Mola Hassan	25345875
Gastrologists	
Dr. Sami Aman	22636464
Dr. Mohammad Al-Shamaly	25322030
Dr. Foad Abidallah Al-Ali	22633135

Endocrinologist	
Dr. Abd Al-Naser Al-Othman	25339330
Dr. Ahmad Al-Ansari	25658888
Dr. Kamal Al-Shomr	25329924
Physiotherapists & VD	
Dr. Deyaa Shehab	25722291
Dr. 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 1574

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ACROSS

1. The vessel that contains the seeds of a plant (not the seeds themselves).
4. With superficial adornments added.
11. A legal document issued by a court or judicial officer.
15. 100 avos equal 1 pataca.
16. An amoeba-like protozoan with a chitinous shell resembling an umbrella.
17. Being here now.
18. Pig-sized tailless South American amphibious rodent with partly webbed feet.
20. A flat wing-shaped process or wing-like part of an organism.
21. Leaf or strip from a leaf of the talipot palm used in India for writing paper.
25. Beaten eggs or an egg mixture cooked until just set.
26. Pertaining to one of the small sacs (as in a compound gland).
29. Having open interstices or resembling a web.
31. A genus of bee.
32. An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the sale of petroleum.
36. Devoid of brightness or appeal.
39. (Babylonian) Father of the gods.
42. A fencing sword similar to a foil but with a heavier blade.
43. One of a set of small pieces of stiff paper marked in various ways and used for playing games or for telling fortunes.
45. Of or relating to or attended by putrefaction.
46. Having any of numerous bright or strong colors reminiscent of the color of blood or cherries or tomatoes or rubies.
48. A radioactive element of the actinide series.
49. Put out, as of a candle or a light.
53. Make less active or intense.
56. (Babylonian) God of wisdom and agriculture and patron of scribes and schools.
58. A tricycle (usually propelled by pedalling).
60. (psychology) An urge to withdraw or avoid a situation or an object.
65. Situated in a particular spot or position.
68. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
69. Belonging to or on behalf of a specified person (especially yourself).
70. Small family of usually tropical butterflies.
72. Being one more than six.
73. A unit of length of thread or yarn.
74. Order of mammals having few or no teeth including.
75. The compass point midway between northeast and east.

DOWN

1. Large burrowing rodent of South and Central America.
2. Rounded like an egg.
3. Amino acid that is formed in the liver and converted into dopamine in the brain.

4. French writer considered by some to be a founder of the detective novel (1832-1873).
5. A family of Ural-Altaic languages.
6. Lean end of the neck.
7. Relating to or characteristic of or occurring on the sea or ships.
8. Being nine more than forty.
9. Other than what is under consideration or implied.
10. An official prosecutor for a judicial district.
11. Habitually complaining.
12. Belonging to or befitting a supreme ruler.
13. Feeling or showing extreme anger.
14. A religious doctrine that is proclaimed as true without proof.
19. One of the jointed appendages of an animal used for locomotion or grasping.
22. Look with amazement.
23. Large high frilly cap with a full crown.
24. Edge tool used as a cutting instrument.
27. A car with two doors and front seats and a luggage compartment.
28. To fix or set securely or deeply.
30. The branch of engineering science that studies the uses of electricity and the equipment for power generation and distribution and the control of machines and communication.
33. A low woody perennial plant usually having several major branches.
34. A fractional monetary unit in Bangladesh and India and Nepal and Pakistan.
35. A unit of dry measure used in Egypt.
37. Any of a number of fishes of the family Carangidae.
38. A white metallic element that burns with a brilliant light.
40. Ctenophores lacking tentacles.
41. A person of unquestioning obedience.
44. (British) An open river valley (in a hilly area).
47. Be earlier in time.
50. Of or relating to near the ear.
51. An associate degree in nursing.
52. Small lynx of North America.
54. Be in contradiction with.
55. A city in southern Turkey on the Seyhan River.
57. English monk and scholar (672-735).
59. (Babylonian) God of storms and wind.
61. The United Nations agency concerned with atomic energy.
62. The central area of a church.
63. (Old Testament) Cain and Abel were the first children of Adam and Eve born after the Fall of Man.
64. A member of an Iroquoian people formerly living on the south shore of Lake Erie in northern Ohio and northwest Pennsylvania and western New York.
66. Of a light yellowish-brown color n 1.
67. A successful stroke in an athletic contest (especially in baseball).
71. A colorless odorless gaseous element that give a red glow in a vacuum tube.

Yesterday's Solution

T	S	S		B	U	C	K	B	E	A	N		A	L	A
S	A	C		O	M	P	H	A	L	U	S		D	A	K
A	B	A		A	B	R	A	D	E		C	L	A	C	K
R	A	B	A	T	O		M	A	G	H		I	D	E	A
			D	E			M	A	G	I		I	N		
B	A	B	A	R		E		A	A	R		A	L	U	M
A	D	E	N			I	W	W		C	U	L	C	I	T
H	E	R	A			B	L	E	B		B	E		L	A
A	L	I		C	I		B	E	E		A	V	A	H	I
S	I	N	B	A	D		B	A	T	H		I	C	A	O
A	E	G	A	T	E	S		R	H	O	M	B		N	C
			D	A	M	E		D	I	S	A	R	M		
C	H	I	E	F		A	K		C	A	R	I	A	M	A
A	A	S		L	A	N	O	L	I	N		S	L	A	B
M	I	L		A	R	A	B	I	A	N		S	T	A	B
O	R	E		M	A	D	O	N	N	A		A	A	R	E

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You guide others in gentle ways and you leave positive impressions every place you go. You also never seem to be too busy to shake hands and ask people how they are. You may find yourself involved with spiritual matters at this time. This afternoon you may be the designated person to see for families to learn about a class or a guidance program you help teach. You may be happy to find that many creative arts used alongside the basic lessons makes learning fun and positive. An inner vision coupled with the ability to see the big picture often finds you working as a go-between with others. You are very giving, accommodating and even flattering in relationships. Perhaps it is a good time to order a horoscope reading.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You are right on target with your thoughts and ideas where a young person is concerned. You can help direct this child through some sort of tutelage. This child may be a neighbor, friend or relative's child-whatever the case you have the means to guide the little one into most positive directions. Your intuitive side is strong and you understand many more things than people give you credit for. Understanding life trends and people's spiritual process, you are a benefit to your own development. You have a clear vision into your own inner sense of values, how you appreciate and love. This may be a good time to examine and think about what is important and of lasting value in your life. Enjoy your music and hum or sing along, perhaps with a friend.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You have been thinking serious thoughts this morning and soon it will be time to see those thoughts turned into a reality. A neighborhood beautification project is in the works. You create incentives so others will become involved; planting of flowers along an entranceway or perhaps a protective cover near a bus stop could be the appeal for now. Whatever the case, you may be involved in interesting others in this quest for beauty. Some resentment between family members comes to your attention this afternoon. With your ability to understand people, you may be able to put an end to a cold emotional atmosphere. There is a real opportunity now to work out difficulties and complete projects that require discipline.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You will easily adapt to any environment or social group today. You are naturally attracted to agreeable people who can satisfy your craving for continuous mental stimulation. You will need to choose your activities so that you are not scattering your energies in too many different directions. You could spread yourself too thin and find yourself spent of energy by this evening. You may find yourself feeling blocked and unable to express yourself, particularly in a group situation. Listening and learning instead of teaching and action may be the mode of this day-going with the flow, so to speak. Dreams and illusions, forgiveness and understanding human frailties-these things arouse deep feelings. This is a good day.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

You love to move about and exercise your mental abilities as well as your physical abilities. You rarely study one subject intensely, but have a vast array of knowledge at your ready and can communicate to many different levels of intellect. You could find yourself in many different activities this afternoon, particularly with young people. There is a strong tie to relatives just now. This may be a good day for a picnic in the park or for making future plans to play competitive games together-perhaps, sports. This is a vital day with much energy and lots of action. You may feel focused and even a bit radiant. You could find you are quite popular and able to really converse and get your message across to others.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You tend to enjoy making a difference for people with a common cause or a universal ideal instead of seeking power. However, today you may find others could give you much encouragement along the lines of obtaining a power position, perhaps in your community. If you desire this, support is available. You may perceive how to proceed with your plans regarding your current life situation. This positive result is in part because of your responsibilities and additional life experiences that come with having such a wide scope of friends. This afternoon you may find yourself helping one of your friends move, or paint. Your unique and unusual qualities stand out and you are able to help others. Keep a little time for yourself.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

In your religious group, there may be an opportunity to develop new fields of interest for the young teenagers around you today. You are happy to be included in some groundbreaking territory. A teacher or religious person could have a profound effect on your thinking, creating a whole new attitude for you, along with sensitivity to the world around you. You may enjoy participating in a leadership position. Problems are valued for the lessons they represent, rather than perceived as obstacles. Keep a notebook or a diary and make it a habit to make notes about the progress of this endeavor. A short trip today, by yourself or with someone, can be a great deal of fun. An adventure awaits you. This evening there is a great new restaurant to enjoy.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Your friends and family will notice that your vagueness and discontent have been replaced with a happy countenance and a satisfaction that comes from discovering new parts of you. You may be moved to appreciate and discover the beauty in your life and in those around you. Recognition as well as monetary rewards will be coming your way. Passion is rampant and may take focus in creative writing or art of some sort. There are many answers you have received but have not yet heard. Focus your energy on discovery. In-depth discussions and probing conversations find you at your mental best. Purchase fresh fruit and vegetables while grocery shopping today. A romantic dinner can be planned and enjoyed. Romance is quite possible this evening.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Today is a great time to be with others. You may be asked to help with family matters. Your willingness to help or find help for others does not go unnoticed. People come into your life for a reason, a season or a lifetime. You may be thinking about those many friends you have in your life. You may lay out a plan to show those friends and loved ones your appreciation. Keep tabs on the funny stories and prophetic or funny anecdotes you have been witness to-you could write a book or publish short stories for magazines-without the secrets. This is a very congenial time. Dinner with friends charges your social battery. Reading, seeing a film, even walking through a natural setting can go a long way toward completing this perfect day.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Your moods can fluctuate as much as the weather. This may not be the best of times to make any concrete decisions. You are energetic and your focus on exercise is great. Romantic feelings toward a special loved one are felt today and you may glean profound insights. Lady luck may increase your finances through speculation or contest. If you find you have obtained a good amount of money, you might seek the help of a financial counselor. Later today you may find some heated conversations between you and a family member but all ends well when both sides listen. There are times that it is perfectly appropriate to agree to disagree. Relations with a spouse are on solid ground. There is much positive energy now.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

You may find that you enjoy some responsibility you have taken on today, more than you thought you would. You may be especially dynamic and assertive at this time. There is a lot of energy and drive available to you that will encourage you to push forward with some special plan or goal. You will find that your communication skills are high as well. Teaching or guiding someone younger than you in matters of importance takes priority this afternoon. Teaching is important but it would be good to remember that sometimes-young people also have their way at teaching. There is a chance to understand those around you and to have a special time with someone you love. A sense of support and harmony makes this a happy time.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You have certainly earned a vacation and if you are not taking one now you might consider making the plans. Through the end of the month you will find the days are a little easier to maneuver through and people seem most happy. You are attentive to those who need your help but should show restraint in your exuberance to volunteer. As you relax in your quiet time you express talents that you may have only suspected you have. Do not hesitate to take a course in any subject you might want to develop for self-enjoyment. This could encompass anything from a french cooking class to an auto-mechanics course. All sorts of discoveries about you can be realized and there is plenty of time to enjoy the quest. Tonight is good for family time.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Tools

Find and circle all of the Tools that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell a secret message - a Henry David Thoreau quotation

M	C	R	O	W	B	A	R	E	M	K	T	A	B	L	E	S	A	W
R	I	W	A	S	L	L	O	R	C	S	L	W	A	S	D	N	A	H
T	E	H	S	U	R	B	U	S	Q	U	A	R	E	U	E	T	R	
W	E	H	E	X	K	E	Y	S	P	N	B	L	H	G	H	I	A	R
R	A	H	S	R	F	O	D	A	E	R	A	A	Y	C	N	S	E	T
P	E	S	C	I	B	I	A	E	C	T	O	A	N	S	P	D	A	V
L	R	D	G	T	L	O	L	M	H	E	R	T	N	D	N	P	B	H
I	E	R	N	N	A	O	X	E	I	P	E	I	R	I	S	R	C	A
E	T	I	E	I	R	P	P	S	O	P	S	F	A	E	A	M	M	
R	U	L	E	V	R	P	T	A	E	S	T	D	N	P	C	H	W	M
E	O	L	R	E	I	G	O	T	L	A	U	D	I	T	O	T	O	E
F	R	P	O	E	L	R	C	P	T	D	L	S	H	E	R	O	R	
F	S	R	C	O	D	E	D	L	S	I	A	K	O	C	S	E	D	R
U	T	E	F	L	D	I	E	W	E	C	P	N	C	N	R	T	R	
B	E	S	T	N	A	G	V	S	E	H	U	I	K	E	O	N	U	A
E	L	S	A	I	U	M	R	I	N	F	E	R	H	I	L	B		
T	L	S	E	A	L	P	O	D	V	C	E	T	W	W	O	E	Y	
R	A	B	G	N	I	K	C	E	R	W	H	S	S	O	A	J	L	R
S	M	B	O	L	T	C	U	T	T	E	R	J	I	G	S	A	W	P

BAND SAW	FILE	POLISHER	SPRAY GUN
BOLT CUTTER	GRINDER	PROTRACTOR	SQUARE
BRUSH	HAMMER	PRY BAR	STAPLE GUN
BUFFER	HAND SAW	PUNCH	STUD FINDER
CALIPER	HEX KEY	RASP	TABLE SAW
CHALK	JIG SAW	RATCHET	TAPE MEASURE
CHISEL	JOINTER	ROUTER	TAPS AND DIES
CLAMP	KNIFE	SANDER	TINSNIPS
COPING SAW	LATHE	SAWHORSE	VICE
CROWBAR	MALLET	SCREWDRIVER	WOOD RULE
DADO	MITER BOX	SCROLL SAW	WRECKING BAR
DIVIDER	PLANE	SOCKETS	WRENCH
DRILL PRESS	PLIER		

Yesterday's Solution

The Raven

D	T	W	R	M	Y	S	T	E	R	Y	G	I	P	R	O	P	H	E	T
R	N	E	B	O	N	Y	L	T	H	N	B	U	R	N	I	N	G	G	P
E	A	I	R	Y	S	O	U	L	A	G	N	I	P	P	A	T	R	M	L
A	I	O	R	H	U	D	E	L	T	P	L	U	T	O	N	I	A	N	A
A	R	D	M	A	U	P	O	I	D	W	T	M	R	E	B	M	A	H	C
Y	A	R	E	T	O	U	N	E	A	O	I	B	T	D	R	S	B	I	
I	R	E	W	T	G	H	A	I	G	R	F	C	D	L	N	S	F	U	D
S	N	V	L	E	N	O	R	E	M	N	K	E	E	N	E	L	O	S	E
K	A	E	B	R	O	R	R	O	H	O	I	N	A	L	I	A	T	T	C
Y	B	N	E	E	C	N	A	R	T	N	E	L	E	T	F	G	K	L	E
E	L	O	E	H	C	R	E	P	B	F	N	M	T	S	H	A	H	A	M
E	R	O	L	G	H	A	S	T	I	L	A	I	G	S	S	E	P	T	B
U	V	I	G	H	E	A	R	T	U	A	N	D	N	N	U	R	R	E	
A	I	N	E	C	P	O	T	S	C	G	F	S	I	B	T	R	O	R	
A	N	S	I	M	Y	N	T	H	E	K	B	U	F	K	L	T	P	D	M
G	I	P	U	A	E	A	S	A	L	L	A	P	A	P	L	N	P	E	A
E	T	P	L	R	D	S	L	Q	U	O	T	H	O	U	I	A	V	A	S
L	O	A	P	O	N	E	P	E	N	T	H	E	R	W	O	A	P	S	R
S	R	N	W	N	E	D	I	A	M	I	O	N	C	D	R	E	A	M	S

ANGELS	DOOR	GRIM	NAPPING	QUOTH
BEAK	DREAMS	HEART	NEPENTHE	RADIANT
BEGUILING	DREARY	HORROR	NEVERMORE	RAPPING
BIRD	EBONY	LATTICE	OMINOUS	RAVEN
BLACK	ENTRANCE	LENORE	PALLAS	RUSTLING
BLEAK	EYES	LORE	PALLID	SHADOW
BURNING	FEATHER	MAIDEN	PERCHED	SHUTTER
BUST	FIEND	MELANCHOLY	PLACID	SOUL
CACKLE	FLIGHT	MIDNIGHT	PLUMAGE	TAPPING
CROAKING	FLUTTER	MORTAL	PLUTONIUM	VISITOR
DARKNESS	FOWL	MYSTERY	PROPHET	WEARY
DECEMBER	GHASTLY	NAMELESS	QUAFF	WIND

FOLLOWING THE ICE AGE TRAIL IN A NEW BOOK, ‘Thousand-Miler’



Photo shows a view of the Ice Age Trail in Columbia County, Wis, as seen from Gibraltar Rock.



Photo shows Melanie McManus at the eastern terminus of the Ice Age Trail in Potawatomi State Park in Sturgeon Bay, Wis. — AP photos

Chances are you’ve heard of the Appalachian Trail, the hiking path that runs 2,179 miles (3,507 kilometers) from Georgia to Maine. You may also be familiar with the Pacific Crest Trail, a 2,650-mile (4,265-kilometer) route from California to Canada. But unless you live in Wisconsin, you may not know about the 1,100-mile (1,770-kilometer) Ice Age Trail. Melanie Radzicki McManus hopes to bring more attention to that route with a new book, “Thousand-Miler.” McManus, 55, set women’s records for fastest-known times on the Ice Age Trail, completing it in 36 days in 2013 and 34 days in 2015.

Her book, just out from the Wisconsin Society Historical Press, documents the challenges that she and others faced hiking the Ice Age Trail - from getting lost to blisters, injuries, ticks, bears and dogs - as well as the rewards. “Whether you’re from Wisconsin or somewhere else, when you hike a trail like that, you get such a deep connection with the land and with the outdoors,” McManus said in an interview.

One memorable moment was a downhill stretch into a field edged with grasses, creating a “stunning effect, like a carpet being unrolled for royalty,” she recalled. “I made my way down this thing like I was a bride going down the aisle.” When she encountered a cairn, a mound of stones left by previous visitors about halfway through her trek, “I felt like the trail was saying, ‘Way to go, you’re halfway there. We salute you.’ It was a magical feeling.” The Ice Age Trail follows a landscape of woods, hills and wetlands sculpted by the retreat of glacial ice 12,000 years ago. The trail runs from St. Croix Falls across the northern half of Wisconsin in a squiggly east-west line before dipping into a giant U, with its eastern terminus in Potawatomi State Park in Sturgeon Bay.

McManus chose to run the trail on what’s known as a supported hike, meaning that she was picked up and dropped off each day at predesignated spots by car. That also lightened her load: She didn’t have to carry a tent or more than a day’s worth of supplies. But simply finding her way proved to be a big part of the adventure. Only a little more than half of the Ice Age Trail is completed and some sections are in poor condition. Hikers use roads to connect the trail segments. GPS reception is unreliable,



Photo shows a sign in a park in Delafield, Wis, describing how retreating glaciers sculpted the landscape.

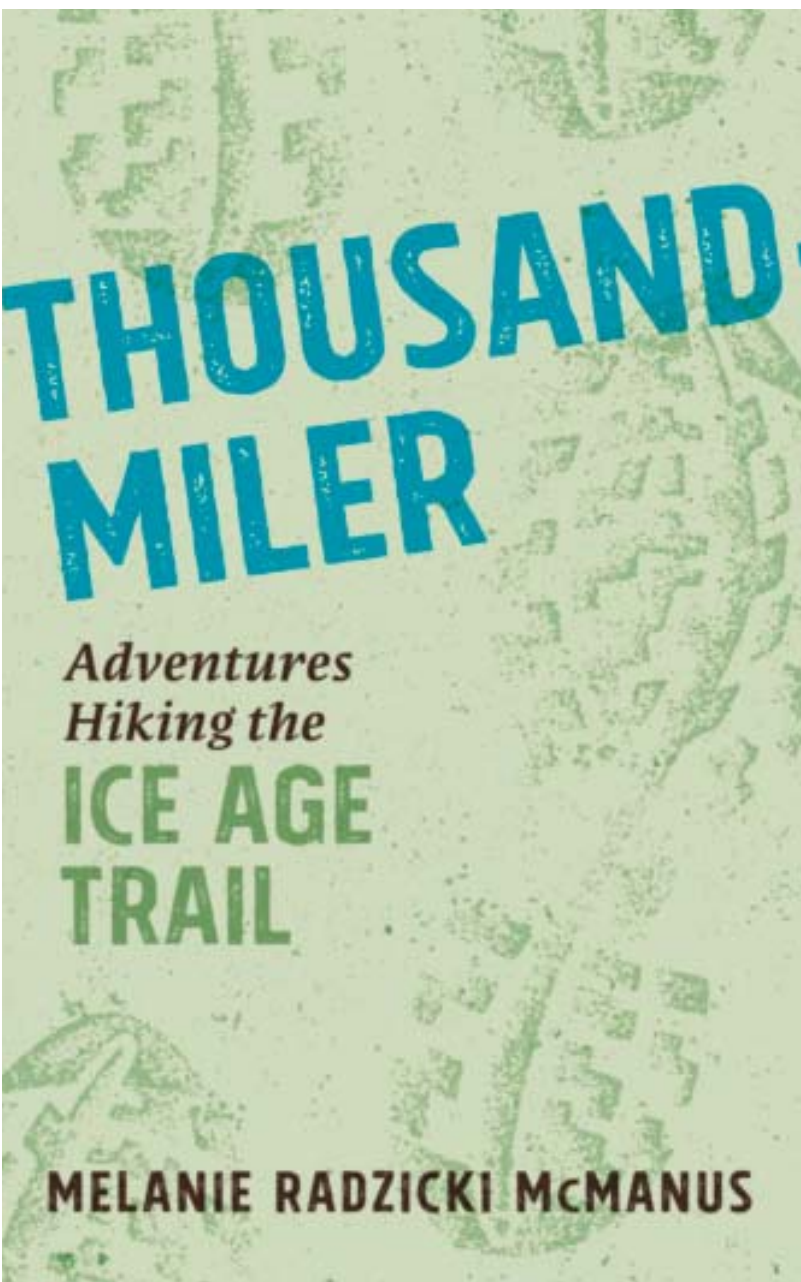
so detailed maps and a compass are essential. McManus writes of being disoriented, backtracking and hunting for trail markers that were sometimes missing or hard to see.

Another challenge was persevering despite a bacterial skin infection called cellulitis that developed in her feet. “One day a time, one hour at a time, one step at a time” became her mantra. “Every time the pain was superbad, I would just keep walking, just thinking about taking the next step,” she said. Long-distance hiking has boomed in popularity since the 1970s. There were just 10 through-hikers on the Appalachian Trail in 1970, but more than 1,000 completed the trail last year. Some 17,500 hikers in all are believed to have completed the Appalachian Trail.

In contrast, the number of Ice Age Trail through-

hikers to date is still under 150 and the trail’s first known through-hike wasn’t reported until 1979, the year before it was designated a National Scenic Trail. Of course, through-hikers on any trail represent a tiny fraction of those who use it. A study by the University of Wisconsin concluded that 1.25 million people used the Ice Age Trail in 2012.

McManus said that while the Appalachian and Pacific Crest trails are the best-known of America’s long-distance trails, “don’t overlook these smaller ones.” She recommends the Point Beach, Chippewa Moraine and Kettle Moraine areas for beginning hikers to experience the Ice Age Trail. “I would just hope people - whether it’s the Ice Age Trail or a trail in their own backyard - just get out and explore,” she said. “You don’t have to hike 1,100 miles. You can hike a mile or 5 miles.” — AP



KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (06/04/2017 TO 12/04/2017)

SHARQIA-1	AFTERMATH	12:00 PM	GOING IN STYLE	7:00 PM	FANAR-4	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	12:15 PM	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE- Arabic	5:45 PM
	AFTERMATH	2:00 PM	GOING IN STYLE	9:00 PM		SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	2:15 PM	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	7:45 PM
	EAT LOCAL	4:00 PM	KONG: SKULL ISLAND	11:00 PM		SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	4:15 PM	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	9:45 PM
	AFTERMATH	6:00 PM	MUHALAB-3	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE		SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	6:15 PM	AVENUES-1	COLLIDE
	EAT LOCAL	8:00 PM				SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	8:15 PM		
	AFTERMATH	10:00 PM				AFTERMATH	10:15 PM		
SHARQIA-2	EAT LOCAL	12:05 AM				AFTERMATH	12:15 AM		
	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	11:30 AM			FANAR-5	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE- Arabic	1:00 PM		
	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	1:30 PM				SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE- Arabic	3:00 PM		
	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	3:30 PM				SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE- Arabic	5:00 PM		
	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	5:30 PM				SAFRA 5 NJOOM	7:00 PM		
	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	7:30 PM				SAFRA 5 NJOOM	9:00 PM		
SHARQIA-3	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	9:30 PM				SAFRA 5 NJOOM	11:00 PM		
	KONG: SKULL ISLAND	11:30 PM				EAT LOCAL	1:00 AM		
	GOING IN STYLE	12:45 PM	FANAR-1	KONG: SKULL ISLAND		MARINA-1	AFTERMATH		
	GOING IN STYLE	2:45 PM							
	GOING IN STYLE	4:45 PM							
	GOING IN STYLE	6:45 PM							
	GOING IN STYLE	8:45 PM							
	GOING IN STYLE	10:45 PM							
MUHALAB-1	AFTERMATH	12:45 AM						AVENUES-3	SAFRA 5 NUOOM
	AFTERMATH	1:45 PM							
	KONG: SKULL ISLAND	3:45 PM							
	AFTERMATH	6:30 PM							
	AFTERMATH	8:30 PM							
	AFTERMATH	10:30 PM							
MUHALAB-2	AFTERMATH	12:30 AM							
	GOING IN STYLE	1:00 PM	FANAR-2	GOING IN STYLE		MARINA-2	GOING IN STYLE		
	GOING IN STYLE	3:00 PM							
	GOING IN STYLE	5:00 PM							
MUHALAB-3	AFTERMATH	11:45 AM							
	AFTERMATH	1:45 PM							
	KONG: SKULL ISLAND	3:45 PM							
	AFTERMATH	6:30 PM							
	AFTERMATH	8:30 PM							
	AFTERMATH	10:30 PM							
MUHALAB-4	AFTERMATH	12:30 AM							
	GOING IN STYLE	1:00 PM							
	GOING IN STYLE	3:00 PM							
	GOING IN STYLE	5:00 PM							
MUHALAB-5	AFTERMATH	11:45 AM							
	AFTERMATH	1:45 PM							
	KONG: SKULL ISLAND	3:45 PM							
	AFTERMATH	6:30 PM							
	AFTERMATH	8:30 PM							
	AFTERMATH	10:30 PM							
MUHALAB-6	AFTERMATH	12:30 AM							
	GOING IN STYLE	1:00 PM							
	GOING IN STYLE	3:00 PM							
	GOING IN STYLE	5:00 PM							
MUHALAB-7	AFTERMATH	11:45 AM							
	AFTERMATH	1:45 PM							
	KONG: SKULL ISLAND	3:45 PM							
	AFTERMATH	6:30 PM							
	AFTERMATH	8:30 PM							
	AFTERMATH	10:30 PM							
MUHALAB-8	AFTERMATH	12:30 AM							
	GOING IN STYLE	1:00 PM							
	GOING IN STYLE	3:00 PM							
	GOING IN STYLE	5:00 PM							
MUHALAB-9	AFTERMATH	11:45 AM							
	AFTERMATH	1:45 PM							
	KONG: SKULL ISLAND	3:45 PM							
	AFTERMATH	6:30 PM							
	AFTERMATH	8:30 PM							
	AFTERMATH	10:30 PM							
MUHALAB-10	AFTERMATH	12:30 AM							
	GOING IN STYLE	1:00 PM							
	GOING IN STYLE	3:00 PM							
	GOING IN STYLE	5:00 PM							
MUHALAB-11	AFTERMATH	11:45 AM							
	AFTERMATH	1:45 PM							
	KONG: SKULL ISLAND	3:45 PM							
	AFTERMATH	6:30 PM							
	AFTERMATH	8:30 PM							
	AFTERMATH	10:30 PM							
MUHALAB-12	AFTERMATH	12:30 AM							
	GOING IN STYLE	1:00 PM							
	GOING IN STYLE	3:00 PM							
	GOING IN STYLE	5:00 PM							
MUHALAB-13	AFTERMATH	11:45 AM							
	AFTERMATH	1:45 PM							
	KONG: SKULL ISLAND	3:45 PM							
	AFTERMATH	6:30 PM							
	AFTERMATH	8:30 PM							
	AFTERMATH	10:30 PM							
MUHALAB-14	AFTERMATH	12:30 AM							
	GOING IN STYLE	1:00 PM							
	GOING IN STYLE	3:00 PM							
	GOING IN STYLE	5:00 PM							
MUHALAB-15	AFTERMATH	11:45 AM							
	AFTERMATH	1:45 PM							
	KONG: SKULL ISLAND	3:45 PM							
	AFTERMATH	6:30 PM							
	AFTERMATH	8:30 PM							
	AFTERMATH	10:30 PM							
MUHALAB-16	AFTERMATH	12:30 AM							
	GOING IN STYLE	1:00 PM							
	GOING IN STYLE	3:00 PM							
	GOING IN STYLE	5:00 PM							
MUHALAB-17	AFTERMATH	11:45 AM							
	AFTERMATH	1:45 PM							
	KONG: SKULL ISLAND	3:45 PM							
	AFTERMATH	6:30 PM							
	AFTERMATH	8:30 PM							
	AFTERMATH	10:30 PM							
MUHALAB-18	AFTERMATH	12:30 AM							
	GOING IN STYLE	1:00 PM							



Sheryl Crow doesn't expect number one

Sheryl Crow doesn't expect her new album to be a chart topper. The 55-year-old singer will release 'Be Myself' later this month but is realistic about her expectations for the record and is just thankful she is an "elder stateswoman" of music and doesn't have to compete with younger artists. She said: "I know that commercial pop music is really geared towards young people. 'I don't for one second kid myself that this record is going to shoot up the charts and be bought by a bunch of 13 year olds. It's just good if it gets heard. 'And now being one of the elder stateswomen of music... I look around and go, 'Oh gosh, there's just so much manoeuvring to be the next sexiest, the most trending.' I just think, wait till you get to the point where you're just happy to be who you are. It is liberating!" The 'All I Wanna Do' hitmaker - who has sons Wyatt, nine, and Levi, seven -

admits she couldn't see herself starting out in music nowadays because things are so sexualized. She said: "There's no way I could do it. I remember on my first album, this stylist came in with all these gorgeous clothes. I was, like, 'Urgh!' 'I thought to myself, 'I have to make sure I don't look glamorous because I want to be taken seriously.' So on my first couple of albums, you couldn't even see what I looked like - everything was blurry and I wore trashy clothes.' And Sheryl recalls being horrified when she saw the first edit for the video of her 1996 single 'If It Makes You Happy'. She said: "The way they shot it, you could see up my skirt. And when I got the cut, I said to the record label: 'We're going to have to re-edit this thing because you can see my underwear.' And they said: 'Is that really a bad thing?' We went through it and cut it frame by frame."



James Arthur: Zayn wants to be me

James Arthur thinks Zayn Malik and Justin Bieber want to be him. The former 'X Factor' winner has claimed the two pop superstars have used him as a huge source of inspiration for their own music and suggested their songs mimic his material. He said: "I think Justin Bieber and Zayn have both been listening to me a lot and they basically wanna be me. 'There's a couple of tracks of Zayn's where he ad libs. 'I asked Louis Tomlinson whether he's been listening to me and he said 'Yeah, he's been lurking.' The 'Can I Be Him' singer - who has previously spoken about how he slept on the streets after his parents split - also took a swipe at the likes of Ed Sheeran and Ellie Goulding for being able to make it because of the "support" they had in their home lives. He added to The Sun on Sunday newspaper: "I'm not saying none of these guys are talented, but people think Ed Sheeran crawled off a couch and

lived on the street or something but him, Ellie Goulding... they all come from Suffolk, Surrey, Richmond... they come from support. 'I think Sam Smith's dad got a huge loan or something to help his career. 'Those things can help artists get attention but I guess my song 'Say You Won't Let Go' proved it's about the song." The 29-year-old singer is "done with the tortured soul thing" and wants to make music "people can do it too" in the future. And James - who was infamously the subject of a kiss-and-tell story where his lover revealed he kept his socks on during their intimate moments - explained he tried to show his "vulnerable and honest" side on his latest album 'Back from the Edge' He said: "For this album I had to be vulnerable and honest to let people know I'm not such a bad guy. 'I think the perception was I was this bad boy who wears socks?..?but I was so confused all the time."



John Legend: I'm not an emotional guy

John Legend is "not an emotional man". The 'All of Me' singer - who has 11-month-old daughter Luna with his model wife Chrissy Teigen - may be known for his heartfelt lyrics, but he isn't so expressive about his feelings in everyday life. He told Cosmopolitan magazine: "I'm not an emotional man in general, which surprises people. 'However, I wrote 'Right By You' from my new album, for my daughter Luna, and when she was two months old, I sang it to her and Chrissy, which made me cry. 'Chrissy, Luna and music are my greatest loves.' The 38-year-old star admits he used to use his songwriting abilities to try and impress girls when he was younger. He said: "When I was at high school, I used to write gospel songs for girls I was trying to hit on. 'Sometimes it worked, but not all the time.' Meanwhile, John recently admitted becoming a parent had changed his songwriting style. Speaking about his current style and

how it differs from his 2004 debut album 'Get Lifted', John said: "I've grown up a lot in the last twelve years and had a lot more life experiences. Getting married and having a baby have added new perspectives and depth to the subjects I sing about too. Just from living in the world and seeing more contemporary issues have added new layers to my music which weren't there before." And the singer - who married his partner in 2013 - has praised his family for bringing more meaning and "positivity" to his album 'Darkness and Light'. He explained: "I think I've always been an optimistic person and I think that streak of optimism runs through each of my albums. 'I think there is just more depth to what I'm feeling because everything means more to me now I have a wife and daughter. Everything is more significant and I'm thinking more philosophically about things and thinking about life and death a lot more."

Gallagher once threatened Third Blind Eye guitarist Cadogan

Liam Gallagher reportedly "threatened" Third Blind Eye guitarist Kevin Cadogan after a show in the US. The former Oasis frontman is known for his outspoken ways, and 46-year-old Kevin has now claimed that the rocker once threatened to stab him after the star accidentally hit him with an empty can of Coca-Cola when his band supported the 'Wonderwall' hitmakers in 1996. He recalled: "That was a really cool move to get us that opening gig in San Francisco. It was pretty ballsy. It was just incredible. 'I got threatened by Liam that night with physical violence. I was drinking a can of Coke and had finished it and crumpled it up and was going to throw it, basketball-style, 20 yards away. The can hit someone who was in the corner - I just saw this glowing ash and the can rolled over to it.



After the show he said, 'You could have gotten stabbed.' Literally said that. I said, 'What are you talking about?' He was like, 'You threw that can at me, man.' I did not throw a can at him." And the 'Semi Charmed Life' hitmaker also claims Liam, 44, told him his band would "never make it", although he praised Liam's brother and Oasis guitarist Noel - who Liam frequently blasts on social media despite the band splitting in 2009 - as being "the serious one". Kevin added to Billboard magazine: "Noel [Gallagher] was studying one of my guitars, geeking out on it, and I could tell he was the serious one. Liam afterwards said, 'You guys are shite, you'll never make it.' The crowd really got into it. We were told by their management not to get too upset when we get stuff thrown at us at our hometown show."



Adele breaks Billboard 200 record with album 21

Adele's '21' has become the longest-charting album by a woman on the Billboard 200. The 28-year-old singer - who has four-year-old son Angelo with her husband Simon Konecki - has succeeded Carole King's 'Tapestry' by having the most weeks on the chart for an album by a female artist. The 'Water Under The Bridge' hitmaker topped the charts with the album in 2011, which has lead single 'Someone Like You', and it's currently on its 319th week on the list, beating the legendary American artist's by one week. The 'Hello' singer's global record spent 24 non-consecutive weeks at the top spot and currently stands at 103 in the most recent chart data. Carole 1971 album was popular in the charts for 302 consecutive chart weeks from its debut, which peaked at number 79 through to 1977, before making a chart return in 2010. Other albums proven to be a huge success in the chart since it began publishing on a weekly basis from 1956 include Pink Floyd's 'The Dark Side of the Moon', which currently holds the record for the most weeks on the chart at 927, followed by Johnny Mathis' 'Johnny's Greatest Hits' at 490 weeks. Meanwhile, the record-breaking artist recently admitted she is unsure if she will ever tour again. The bubbly blonde is currently on a lengthy world tour, but admitted it could be the last time she hits the road to perform. Speaking on stage at her concert at Auckland's Mount Smart Stadium recently, she said: "Touring isn't something I'm good at - applause makes me feel a bit vulnerable. I don't know if I will ever tour again." The only reason I've toured is you. I'm not sure if touring is my bag. My greatest accomplishment in my career is this tour."

Despite being one of the best-selling artists of all time, Adele previously admitted she still suffers from stage fright. The singer-songwriter confessed in 2015 that she was finding it harder to perform on stage and was "too frightened to try anything new". She shared: "I get so nervous with live performances that I'm too frightened to try anything new. 'It's actually getting worse. Or it's just not getting better, so I feel like it's getting worse, because it should've gotten better by now."

Harry Styles' single reflects the album

Harry Styles says his debut single is a "good representation" of his upcoming album. The former One Direction singer released his debut solo effort 'Sign of the Times' on Friday and has said that whilst not every song on his forthcoming solo album will follow the same style as the track, he believes the single is a sign of things to come. He said: "I think 'Sign of the Times', in terms of honesty, is a good representation of the album. I don't know if they all sound exactly like it, I think there's a lot of different little bits on there. But in terms of liking it, I do, which is handy." And Harry - who is the third member of the boy band to go solo after Niall Horan and Louis Tomlinson released the singles 'This Town' and 'Just Hold On' respectively - said his inspiration for the single came out of wanting to write "something honest". He told Carson Daly on American radio station AMP Radio: "I wanted to write something honest and something that I wanted to listen to. I think it's impossible to not be influenced by stuff you grow up listening to - stuff my parents played and stuff that I still listen to now. We just kind of started writing and wanted to see what came out. We're pretty happy with it." Meanwhile, Harry previously insisted that the 'Drag Me Down' hitmakers - which also includes Liam Payne, who is set to release solo material later this year, and previously included fifth member Zayn Malik before his departure in 2015 - are likely to reunite at some point despite all four of them pursuing solo careers. He



said: "I think the thing that's really cool about it is, you know, we all went through that together and it's like you know, something that we'll always have in common. I don't think any of us will ever rule out anything in the future. You know, it was a huge part of our lives and I think now it's really cool to kind of have everyone go and write what they want to put out as themselves, I think that's something really cool you know. It's the band, it's one thing. And when it's all together it's that and then I think it's interesting to get to see everyone kind of explore their own tastes as well."

Sting inspired by children's music taste



Stling has been listening to his daughters' pop music for inspiration. The 'Shape of My Heart' hitmaker, former frontman of new wave rock band The Police, has just released his new single '50,000', which was inspired by the late legendary singer Prince. And Sting has revealed his music taste has adapted to those of his children, particularly his 26-year-old daughter Eliot 'Coco' Sumner - who he has with wife Trudy Styler - who is the singer and founder of the London group I Blame Coco. Speaking on BBC Radio Two on Friday he said: "I'm listening to my daughter - I know that sounds like nepotism but my youngest daughter Eliot Sumner has a fantastic pop song." In 2014, she released the EP 'Information', followed by the full album of the same name in 2016. During her career she has laid vocals on the track 'End of the Road' by Sway and the single 'Splash' by Sub Focus. She did a cover version of the Radiohead song 'Creep' with Clint Mansell for the soundtrack to the 2013 movie 'Filth'. Sting - who is also father to Joseph, 40, Fuchsia Katherine, 34, Brigitte Michael, 33, Jake, 31, and Giacomo Luke, 21, from previous relationships - can spot some of his own influences in Eliot's music whilst his son, Joseph, who is a member of band Fiction Plane, has joined him on tour. He continued: "I'm fascinated by it because I recognize some of the DNA in it and there some of it that I have no idea where it comes from lyrically, harmonically, so she's very interesting. I'm incredibly proud. I've also got my eldest son [Joseph] on the road with me he's singing a couple of songs so it's a family affair." Joseph's band Fiction Plane was previously the opening act for The Police on their 2007 reunion tour.

Sarah Harding: I miss Girls Aloud

Sarah Harding "really misses" Girls Aloud. The 35-year-old singer shot to fame after winning a place in the band on reality show 'Popstar: The Rivals' alongside Cheryl, Nadine Coyle, Kimberley Walsh and Nicola Roberts 15 years ago, and though she admits it is unlikely the group will get back together again, she'd jump at the chance of a reunion. She said: "I get really nostalgic when I think about being in Girls Aloud. 'I found a CD of our Radio One Live Lounge performances the other day and it was so nice to listen back and hear us all bantering with each other. I really miss performing with the girls on stage. 'I don't think [a reunion] will happen any time soon, but I'd love the chance to do something again. A lot of our fans would love us to come back so we'll have to see what happens." Though Sarah rarely sees her former bandmates any more,



she insists she will "always care" about them. She told OK! magazine: "We've not seen each other properly for years, but Nadine and I still message each other. 'I don't live near any of them so it's hard to make time to see each other. 'Cheryl, Kimberley and Nicola are really close, but Nadine and I are much more independent. We might have gone our separate ways but we were like sisters for years, so I'll always care about them." Despite this, the blonde beauty is keeping busy in the music world at the moment as she's writing songs for other artists. She said: "I've written some tracks for a few people but I can't reveal too much right now. 'The music industry is a very difficult place to work, no one tells you how to make it after you've left a girl band. 'It can be tough but I have a studio at home and I'm always in there working on ideas. My dream is to get a publishing deal."



Hailey Baldwin reveals her acting plan

Hailey Baldwin wants to become an actress "when the time is right". The 20-year-old model wants to follow in the footsteps of her famous family, including father Stephen Baldwin and uncle Alec Baldwin, in the future, but for now, her current career path is going well so she is focused on fashion. Asked if she wants to act, she said: "Absolutely, when the timing is right. "But at the moment there's a lot of upcoming stuff and in 2017 I want my main focus to be fashion, fashion, fashion." And the blonde beauty has a particular passion for stage shows. She admitted: "I'm a musical theatre geek." Hailey - who previously dated Justin Bieber - is an avid user of Instagram and has over nine million followers, and credits

the secret to her social media popularity to simply sharing pictures of things she likes. She told HELLO! magazine: "If I like it, I post it. I like Instagram's Arden filter - you always mess with the highlights and shadows a bit. "I usually just Like everything - I'm an avid Liker." And Hailey has a few rules when it comes to taking pictures of herself to share on the site. She said: "No selfie stick - they're too much. "Would I take a no make-up selfie? If you are comfortable with it, I say do it." Hailey hopes she sets a good example for her young fans, and not just through her social media posts. She said: "I think, regardless of social media, you should always try to be a role model for your generation, and the one to come."

Alesha Dixon to launch film career

Alesha Dixon is taking acting lessons in a bid to land a Hollywood movie role. The 38-year-old singer - who has three-year-old daughter Azura with partner Azuka Ononye - is said to be focused on "making a big splash" in Los Angeles and has already had some "encouraging meetings" with film executives. However, if she does get her break on the big screen, Alesha could have to give up her beloved judging role on 'Britain's Got Talent'. A source told The Sun on Sunday newspaper: "Alesha's been taking acting lessons and is focused on making a big splash in LA. "She's had some really encouraging meetings and could be on the brink of a big role that could really establish her in America. "If it did, it could be the end of her time on 'Britain's Got Talent', which would be the only bad thing about an opportunity as she really loves that job." A movie career isn't the only new work path Alesha is gearing up for in the coming months, as she recently revealed she has signed a deal with Scholastic to write two children's books that center on Aurora Beam, a young female superhero, and although she is only in the middle of working on her first story she has big plans for her heroine. The former Mis-Teq singer wants kids to connect with Aurora in the same way they did with Rowling's boy wizard when Rowling's first tome 'Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone' was published back in 1997. She said: "I came up with this character called Aurora Beam. I wanted to create a young, female superhero. I wish I could be the next J.K. Rowling."



RYAN REYNOLDS REVEALS HIS ALIEN AMBITION

Ryan Reynolds wants to remake 'Alien' with himself in Sigourney Weaver's role. The 40-year-old actor insists his new sci-fi saga 'Life' isn't very similar to Sir Ridley Scott's famous franchise apart from the subject matter, but he could see himself portraying the actress' iconic character Ellen Ripley. Asked about the comparisons, he told heat magazine: "This isn't Sigourney Weaver, 'Get away from her you b***h' territory. Although, my God, to have my own take on Ripley - I think I'd make a good Ripley. "I'm tall, I could maybe work one of those mechanical crane robots if she showed me. Yeah. I could see it..." "This isn't extra-terrestrial ravenous xenomorph boards spaceships and slaughters everyone. Which I'm all for. "Here, this creature is trying to survive. It's encountered the scariest alien of all - humans. "It's basically being abducted by aliens, us, and is reacting to that. And this guy can defend himself." Ryan thinks the film is "very different" for a sci-fi movie, but he embraces the "unexpected" in his movies. He said: "It's a very different type of movie in this type of genre and, you know, having already encountered that with 'Deadpool', I like the unexpected - I admire the unexpected in movies, that's what movie creativity should be about. "That should be the backbone - having the guts to show the audience something they won't be expecting. "With 'Life', there's no



set-out pattern, no expectation that, just because your name is over the credits, that makes you safe. "You don't know what, which, where is going to happen, and that's a huge appeal for me. Not only as an actor, but an audience member too."

Scarlett Johansson insists motherhood hasn't changed her working life

The 'Ghost in the Shell' actress - who has two-year-old daughter Rose with estranged husband Romain Dauriac - is thankful her little girl is still young enough to adapt to her movie career, but knows it might not always be so easy. She said: "I have a job that's very advantageous in that way. I can parent and then go do the scene and go back and parent. "There's a bit of back and forth, but it works. "Has it changed what work I do? It hasn't but it might in a few years. Again, it's a job that works with you. "I have a freedom that others don't, so I'm grateful." And though the 32-year-old actress' daughter is too young to watch any of her movies just yet, Scarlett is mindful of the fact she will want to see them one



day so wants to set a good example as a working mother. She told OK! magazine: "She won't be seeing this for a long, long time. I'm not sure how much of an impact it's making right now, but absolutely, in the future, I want her to know and absorb the lesson of working hard, going for your dreams and making it happen." Meanwhile, although the 'Lucy' actress is proud of her action roles on screen and likes to think of herself as a "badass", Scarlett is unsure of how well she'd handle herself in real life. She said: "In my mind, I could take on anyone. On set, I think I'm the biggest badass ever. "But if someone catches me off guard and tries to mug me, I'll probably forget everything I've learned and just run."

Carrie Fisher to appear in Star Wars: Episode IX?



Carrie Fisher may appear in 'Star Wars: Episode IX' according to her brother Todd Fisher. The late Hollywood icon - who passed away in December - played Princess Leia in the popular sci-fi movie franchise, and although it was previously confirmed Disney wouldn't be using CGI to bring her back to life for the ninth installment of the saga, her brother Todd has hinted there's a chance the studio could reuse old footage of the actress. He told the New York Daily News: "Both of us were like, 'Yes, how do you take her out of it?' And the answer is you don't. She's as much a part of it as anything and I think her presence now is even more powerful than it was, like Obi Wan-when the saber cuts him down he becomes more powerful. I feel like that's what's happened with Carrie. I think the legacy should continue ... To me, Star Wars is the holy grail of storytelling and lore and you can't mess with it." The news comes after Disney and Lucasfilm ensured fans back in January that they had no plans to "digitally recreate" the character of Princess Leia for the movie. They said in a statement: "We want to assure our fans that Lucasfilm has no plans to digitally recreate Carrie Fisher's performance as Princess or General Leia Organa. "Carrie Fisher was, is, and always will be a part of the Lucasfilm family. She was our princess, our general, and more importantly, our friend. We are still hurting from her loss. We cherish her memory and legacy as Princess Leia, and will always strive to honor everything she gave to Star Wars." Carrie and her alter-ego will still appear in the upcoming 'Star Wars: The Last Jedi', because her scenes were already finished before the time of her death.

Joe Manganiello was almost offered the role of Superman in 'Man of Steel'. The 40-year-old actor has revealed he got as far as being measured for the famous superhero costume in preparation for taking on the role in the 2013 movie - which eventually cast Henry Cavill as Clark Kent and his lycra-clad alter ego - but claimed his commitments to the HBO supernatural drama 'True Blood' kept him from being offered the role. Speaking during an interview for MTV's 'Happy Sad Confused' podcast, Joe said: "I met with Zack [Snyder, the movie's director]. I had an hour and a half long meeting with Zack, which is what was causing all the trouble ... I went ahead and met with casting, and then they all brought me over to meet Zack. I met the producers, I met with Jon Jashni and Thomas Tull at Legendary, I met everybody - everybody involved - and then finally sat down with Zack for an hour and a half and had a big conversation about the character and where it was going, et cetera. Then they called the 'True Blood' costume shop for my measurements to build my suit and that's what caused - that's when it stopped." Although Joe missed out on the chance to play Superman, he hasn't been banned from the DC Comics universe completely, as it was previously announced he would be taking on the

JOE MANGANIELLO ALMOST PLAYED SUPERMAN



role of Deathstroke in 'The Batman' alongside Ben Affleck. He said about his role: "I'm very excited. I just started kung fu, qigong and cutting with a live katana blade. That's been a lot of fun. "I grew up rooting for the villain. These characters mean so much to so many people and there's a real opportunity to polarize an audience or have them walk away maybe not agreeing with my character but understanding why he does what he does. That's a really fun challenge."

Richie won't leave the house before a full-on moisturizing



Nicole Richie won't leave the house until she's moisturized her entire. The 35-year-old American fashion designer says her mother Brenda Harvey - the ex-wife of her adoptive father Lionel Richie - gave her the best beauty advice she's ever received which is to always rub lotion into your skin at the start of each day. Nicole explained: "My mom is from the South, and she is not playing around when it comes to lotion - her skin is like velvet. The way she raised me, you never left the house without lotion everywhere. That's how I am too. I have a friend who has really dry skin, and every time I go see her, I'll take a heavy CeraVe cream with me and lotion up her elbows. They are so dry." Nicole, herself, suffers from very dry skin and has to keep it hydrated so she avoids wearing too much make up. She said: "I want to avoid clogging my pores, so I try not to wear a lot of makeup. When I don't have to be out or working, I don't put on any at all, except Cl   de Peau Beaut   concealer to cover up my dark circles." Speaking about her beauty regime she told the new issue of InStyle magazine: "On my face I use Biologique Recherche products; face wash, serum, and moisturizer every day, and a mask a few

times a week. In the shower I exfoliate with gloves. I make a scrub with sugar and cucumbers from my garden in the summer, but in the winter I'll use whatever I can find. Then I put grape-seed oil (Whole Foods' 365 brand, but any will do) all over my body and the thick yellow Kiehl's cream over that. I'm a Virgo - I like to stay very organized. I have two trays on my vanity: one for body and hair products and one for my face. They are crowded but not too cluttered." And although the blonde beauty has a dermatologist called Harold Lancer, she only visits him once in a while for a facial as messing with her skin and hair makes it "freak out". She explained: "I have to give it breaks and room to breathe. Also, if I'm not eating well and drinking water, I'll break out in one second." But one thing she has learnt over the years is the benefits of wearing sunscreen. She added: "As far as sunscreen goes, I've gotten so many confusing messages over the years. I'm of mixed race, so I spent 25 years thinking the rules didn't apply to me. But I definitely need to start wearing sunscreen more. I'm not amazing at it - having sun is like drinking water to me, and my body really loves it. I have started wearing hats to protect my face."

Claflin says Arterton 'pushed' him as an actor

Sam Claflin says Gemma Arterton helped "push" him as an actor. The 30-year-old actor stars with the brunette beauty in the romantic comedy 'Their Finest', and has praised his co-star for her ability to push him to be the best he can be, and receive the same motivation in return. He said: "We're now officially very good friends. She's not afraid of pushing you as an actor; and she's not afraid of being pushed. "On the set of 'Their Finest' I accidentally knocked her over when I ran into her. She went flying. She forgave me though." 'Their Finest' tells the story of an introspective film producer, played by Claflin, who hires a woman (Arterton) to help him write the stories for the government's propaganda unit in World War II. And it's not the only war movie Claflin is working on either, as he's also recently wrapped filming on a screen version of the R.C. Sheriff play 'Journey's End', in which he plays Captain Stanhope. Director Saul Dibb said of Claflin's performance: "Sam goes to very dark places in 'Journey's End'. He looks like a man who has endured the awful things that happened over there." But acting wasn't always something



that Claflin - who rose to fame after portraying Finn  ck Odair in 'The Hunger Games' franchise - wanted to do, as he always thought he would be a footballer before he broke his ankle aged 16. He told the Daily Mail newspaper: "I ate, drank and slept football. I have played every single position bar goalkeeper. I didn't have any inkling of what I wanted to do with my life, other than play or coach or live football. — Bang Showbiz

Failed Pepsi, Nivea ads show industry's diversity problem

Recent high-profile advertising missteps by Pepsi and skin-care company Nivea underscored anew Madison Avenue's awkward relationship with racial diversity at a time when the United States is becoming less white. PepsiCo's ill-fated "Moments" spot, featuring model Kendall Jenner, was quickly pulled with an apology after being vilified for trivializing the "Black Lives Matter" movement. Nivea also apologized and withdrew an ad for a deodorant after its "White is Purity" pitch was embraced by white supremacists.

Social media had a field day with the botched campaigns, which seemed to suggest scant progress from the white male bubble of the 1960s depicted in the popular television series "Mad Men." "Between Nivea's 'white is purity' ad and Pepsi's 'Black soda matters' ad, I think it's time to open my 'Ask a Black person' consulting firm," comedian Travon Free said on Twitter. In fact, data shows a diversity deficit in a sector that both reflects and molds public sentiment. Only 4.1 percent of advertising industry employees in the country are African Americans, well below their 13.3 percent of the overall population. Latinos account for 12.3 percent of the industry, compared with 17.6 percent of the population.

Nearly half of respondents among advertising employees said the industry was "terrible" or "not great" at hiring diverse professionals, with another 25 percent describing it as "mediocre," according to a survey released last September by the American Association of Advertising Agencies. The trade group's outgoing president Nancy Hill made publicly calling out "racist and misogynistic behavior" her New Years resolution for 2017. "I have realized given the current climate in our country and our industry, that doing that privately is tantamount to condoning the behavior," Hill said in a column on a marketing industry website.

"Others involved need to know that this industry does not tolerate this kind of thinking and its resulting behavior any longer." Some major advertisers, such as Verizon, General Mills and Hewlett-Packard have threatened to fire firms that aren't diverse enough.

Pepsi misfires

The demise of the Pepsi spot has especially provoked intense discussion throughout the industry. The company is led by Indian-born chief executive Indra Nooyi, a vocal proponent of diversity. A poll by PR Week showed 40 percent on respondents blamed the debacle on lack of diversity or diversity of thought, while 25 percent said it reflected an overzealous approach to attracting millennials and 13 percent blaming the fact that it was made by Pepsi's in-house creative team and did not involve an outside firm.

The spot follows Jenner as she is stirred from a fashion shoot by a handsome Asian cellist to join an unspecified but peaceful street protest with people of all ethnicities, including African American street dancers. The two-and-a-half minute short film culminates with Jenner handing a Pepsi to a handsome grinning police officer, a move that draws wild applause from the crowd, including from a hijab-wearing photographer who nods in agreement as she records the moment. The spot spurred instant ridicule, most witheringly from Bernice King, who posted a picture of her father, Martin Luther King, being apprehended at a civil rights march by police. "If only Daddy would have known about the power of #Pepsi," King wrote on Twitter.

History repeating?

Kelly O'Keefe, a professor of brand strategy at Virginia Commonwealth University, said the spot was shockingly heavyhanded in its constant hawking of cola. It reflected a "cloistered view of the world and distorted view of diversity," he said, adding that the spot has dominated discussion in class this week. Jake Beniflah, executive director of the Center for Multicultural Science, thought the ad was a spoof when he first saw it because of the omnipresence of the product and in its creation of "utopian" world where every race is shown.

"Perhaps they thought diversity on camera was enough, but obviously it wasn't," Beniflah said. "In fact, it backfired." For Judy Davis, a marketing professor at Eastern Michigan University, the controversy stirred memories of Barbara Gardner Proctor, one of the women she profiled in her book, "Pioneering African American Women in the Advertising Business: Biographies of MAD Black WOMEN." Proctor was fired in the 1960s from a large firm when she refused to work on a campaign that showed black women clamoring in the street for a hair product. The ad was a tasteless allusion to the civil rights movement, she said. "It was the same kind of trivialization of a serious social movement and taking that to promote some brand," Davis said. "You would think in 2017 things would be different. But here we are seeing some of the same problems that were present 50 years ago, and I think that's pretty amazing." — AFP



Products are seen on display for sale at The Summer of Love Experience: Art, Fashion, and Rock & Roll, an art exhibit.



A woman walks towards the entrance of The Summer of Love Experience: Art, Fashion, and Rock & Roll, an art exhibit.

The Summer of Love Experience

Art, Fashion, and Rock & Roll, an art exhibit



Juleano Wade (left) dances during The Summer of Love Experience: Art, Fashion, and Rock & Roll, an art exhibit, at the deYoung museum in San Francisco, California on April 06, 2017. The exhibit and event celebrates 50 years since the famed San Francisco summer of 1967 that birthed activists, artists and a blossoming hippie movement. — AFP photos



A man takes a photo of poster art during The Summer of Love Experience: Art, Fashion, and Rock & Roll, an art exhibit at the deYoung museum.



A woman looks at art pieces at The Summer of Love Experience: Art, Fashion, and Rock & Roll, an art exhibit.



A woman walks towards the entrance.



A man walks by a sign at The Summer of Love Experience: Art, Fashion, and Rock & Roll, an art exhibit.



The Summer of Love Experience: Art, Fashion, and Rock & Roll, an art exhibit, is seen at the deYoung museum.



Mannequins donning 1970's garb are seen on display as part of The Summer of Love Experience: Art, Fashion, and Rock & Roll, an art exhibit.

Thousands pack Europe's first VidCon for online stars

Thousands flocked to Amsterdam from around Europe this weekend to meet their online video heroes and mingle with young fans, eager to learn how they too can become a YouTube star. They were taking part in the first VidCon Europe, an off-shoot of VidCon US set up in Anaheim, southern California, eight years ago and now a hot venue amid an online revolution. While such YouTube stars as Tyler Oakley, or Hannah Hart may not be household names to most, they have built up a huge fan base among children and young adults with their funny, often anarchic videos.

Though sometimes dealing with serious issues, they are filmed mostly with a tripod or webcam from their own kitchens or living rooms. Amsterdam is VidCon's first foray out of the United States. Organizers are hoping it may become an annual event, and are also looking towards the first VidCon in Melbourne, Australia, later this year. "The European place for online video is a few years behind the US one, but it is approaching it. Every day another kid starts a channel and wants to be famous," Michael Gardner, chief operating officer, told AFP. Some 3,500 people from as far as Latvia, Serbia and Estonia trekked to Amsterdam for the three-day event, where industry figures also mixed with creators, or video producers often referred

to as YouTubers, and fans. Although small compared to the 26,000 who travelled to Anaheim in 2016, organizers said it was a good debut and the crowd was three times larger than the first VidCon in the US eight years ago.

"Authenticity" is the key to success for new YouTubers, Gardner said. "These online video stars, they're not on script, they're being themselves." "It's like having a real good friend, who talks to you every day."

TV doesn't talk back

YouTube's biggest star, PewDiePie, was absent amid a row over a few videos he posted containing anti-Semitic remarks and Nazi references. A 27-year-old Swede, real name Felix Kjellberg, he has 54.5 million online followers on the Google-owned service. He is also YouTube's top earner making roughly \$14.5 million (13.6 million euros) last year through revenue-sharing and sponsorships, according to estimates from social media data firm NeoReach. Gardner said fast technological advances and expanding bandwidth meant online video was an "equal opportunity for everyone to have their voice heard, to tell their narrative."

Every VidCon "I see two people come together, and they say, 'Wait, you like this? I like this too. I thought I was the only one! And all of a



Hailey Knox, a singer and YouNow star, hangs out in the Instagram lounge for talent at VidCon, a convention for online video, at the Anaheim Convention Center in Anaheim, California, June 23, 2016. — AFP

sudden this bond forms." Asked if television is dead, Gardner joked: "I wish it was." Online video was more active, involving engagement

between its stars and their audience such as comments, likes and dislikes, he said. "TV doesn't have those factors and in an increasingly discon-

nected world people are craving those elements. They're craving engagement, and TV just doesn't talk back to you."

The power of nerds

Many of the stars use their platforms to help advocate for gay rights, greater equality or to end the stigma of mental illness. Founded by American author John Green—who wrote the bestselling young adult novel "Fault in our Stars"—and his brother Hank Green, VidCon is a forum for self-confessed nerds. Known online as the Vlogbrothers, the two are now in their late 30s and describe their channel launched in 2007 as "raising nerdy to the power of awesome". "I want kids to value passion and excitement, and not to disguise it through irony because people will think it's lame," John Green told an audience in Amsterdam.

Starry-eyed fans not only get a chance to meet their favorites, but can gather in meet-ups to hang out with others who share the same interests. "I was always an oddball," confessed pink-haired British star Lizzie Dwyer, who as LDSshadowlady has amassed almost three million followers, who watch her play and comment on video games such as Minecraft. "But it's great there are people on YouTube who appreciate the weirdness about me." — AFP

Michael Douglas on Kirk's dismay over 'Cuckoo's Nest' snub

Their once rocky relationship is closer than ever, but Michael Douglas has revealed dad Kirk still harbors one grudge-being snubbed for his son's Oscar-winning "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest." The younger Douglas was just 29 when he earned his place among Hollywood's elite as the producer behind the first movie in 40 years to sweep the "big five" Oscars for best picture, director, actor, actress and screenplay.

Kirk, now 100, had starred in the Broadway version and even handed the movie rights for the iconic 1975 drama to his son, but was shocked when he was passed over for the role of convict Randle McMurphy in favor of the younger Jack Nicholson.

Michael, 72, told a Q&A in Hollywood on Saturday how his father's plans to adapt the moderately successful 1963 play based on Ken Kesey's novel had foundered after a number of years and he was about to sell on the rights. "I say, 'Please, Dad, don't sell the project. It's a great project. So let me take it and run with it and I'll try to get it set up as a production and for you to play the part,' and Dad said, 'Okay great,'" Douglas recalled. "Here's where Kirk's and my story digress. On his version, yeah sure, Michael gets the project, takes a year, sets it all up and doesn't cast me in the part. If he were here right now, it's the first thing he'd want to tell you."

Too old

Douglas told Turner Classic Movies presenter Ben Mankiewicz, who was hosting a discussion on the actor's glittering career, that he remembers one key part of the story differently, insist-



Michael Douglas

ing he wasn't to blame for his dad's rejection. "It was about 20 years since Dad did the play on Broadway, his career's changed a little bit, and our director Milos Forman was like, 'Kirk's a little old for the part.' I said 'Yeah,'" Douglas said. "Dad's version is that I rejected him. I said, 'Since when did the producer have casting control? That was the director.' It was my first time out."

"One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" tells the story of a felon who fakes insanity to avoid a jail term and finds himself in a psychiatric hospital in Oregon where the patients live in fear of the malevolent ward supervisor, Nurse Ratched. McMurphy is considered to be 79-year-old Nicholson's career-defining role, although Forman only considered him after trying unsuccessfully to secure Gene Hackman, Marlon Brando and Burt Reynolds. Several actresses-including Anne Bancroft, Geraldine Page and Angela Lansbury-were considered for Nurse

Ratched, before Louise Fletcher was hired. It was the first movie since "It Happened One Night" (1934) to sweep the "big five" Oscars-a feat that has only been matched once since, by "Silence of the Lambs" (1991). "I like to tease my father because I gave him half of our producing deal and he made more money off that movie than any movie he ever made," Douglas laughed.

'You were terrible'

Now a Hollywood icon, Michael Douglas was a TV actor-a job considered very much less illustrious than big screen acting at the time-on crime series "The Streets of San Francisco" when he took on his debut producing role. He went on to win another Oscar-this time for best actor in "Wall Street" (1987) — and became one of the most bankable stars in the world through a series of roles in cinematic hits including "Romancing the Stone," "Fatal Attraction" and "Basic Instinct." Douglas described speaking to his father, ever the taskmaster, after his very first performance, as a messenger in a college production of William Shakespeare's "Much Ado About Nothing," and being told: "Michael, you were terrible."

"He was so relieved. He said, 'Thank God I don't have to worry about my son going into this business,'" Douglas remembered. The actor said he suffered crippling stage fright in his early years and would keep a waste basket at the side of the stage in case he needed to throw up. "Finally, a couple years later, Dad came back and he was wonderful. He was busy in his career but he saw most of my shows and he said, 'You were okay-you were good.'" — AFP

Faberge egg reunited with its missing 'surprise' in Texas

A Faberge egg and the jeweled elephant designed to fit inside it are being reunited for the first time in almost a century thanks to a loan from Queen Elizabeth II to a Texas museum. A gallery that opens Monday at the Houston Museum of Natural Science features the elephant, which only recently was discovered to be the egg's missing "surprise." "It's a really good opportunity to see the two together and marvel at Faberge's workmanship," said Caroline de Guitaut, a curator at the Royal Collection Trust. De Guitaut announced in 2015 that she'd discovered that the small elephant in the queen's collection was created by famed Russian artisan Peter Carl Faberge.

"It had been sitting there in many ways in plain sight, minding its own business in a display case," she said. The Imperial Diamond Trellis Egg, originally an Easter gift from Russian czar Alexander III to his wife in 1892, belongs to a Houston couple whose private collection of items created by Faberge is housed at the Houston Museum of Natural Science.

The reunited pieces will be displayed in a new gallery showcasing more than 600 Faberge items from Dorothy and Artie McFerrin that have been part of the museum for several years. Joel Bartsch, president of the Houston museum, said the elephant will remain on display there for a year before returning to England. De Guitaut said the elephant caught her eye because it



This undated photo provided by the Houston Museum of Natural Sciences shows a Faberge egg and a jeweled elephant designed to fit inside it. — AP

seemed to match the published description of the missing elephant. Upon careful examination, she eventually figured out that the tower on the elephant's back had a lid and found the Faberge mark on the inside rim. "I did feel quite sort of giddy, kind of dizzy and a little bit faint," de Guitaut said.

She said the two items were believed to have

last been together when the Russian government sold them around 1922. De Guitaut said the elephant, which walks and moves its head when wound, was purchased in 1935 by King George V, apparently with no knowledge that it was Faberge. She said Faberge only made 50 eggs for the Russian royal family as Easter gifts; only 43 are known to survive. — AP

Brazil love motel uses scandal as gimmick to draw customers



Handcuffs lay on a bed as part of the decoration inspired by the "The Car Wash" bribery scandal in the Atlanta Motel in Brasilia, Brazil.



Decorator Cristina Bertozzi stands in front of the of corruption panels she designed, as she talks about her work at the "The Car Wash" suite, inspired in the recent bribery and corruption scandal, at the Altanta Motel in Brasilia, Brazil.

As-called "love motel" in Brazil's capital is using the country's corruption scandal as a gimmick to draw customers. One of the suites at the Altanta Motel in Brasilia features metal bars around the bed to put couples in the mood. If that's not enough to make you feel naughty, it's decorated with photos of politicians and businessmen

charged in the alleged kickback scheme at state-owned oil company Petrobras.

There are even pictures of prosecutors in charge of the probe, if do-gooders are your thing. Motel receptionist Claudia Leticia says about US\$4,800 was spent to decorate the suite. Such models are used almost exclusively for sexual encounters. — AP



With bars on the door and around the bed, in addition to political prisoners images, a room at the Atlanta Motel uses "The Car Wash" bribery scandal as inspiration for decoration, in Brasilia, Brazil.



An access corridor with news clips of politicians jailed during the "The Car Wash" bribery scandal, are seen at the Atlanta Motel in Brasilia, Brazil. — AP photos



The Jano band-a rare rock band in Ethiopia-has been playing locally and touring in Europe for the past five years. —AFP photos

Ethiopian band wins fans by melding rock with African sounds

At a hotel in Addis Ababa well-known for hosting jazz greats, thousands of fans lined up on a Saturday night to headbang along with what is still a rarity in Ethiopia's diverse music scene-a rock band. Jano, named after a popular item of traditional clothing, has made a name for itself in Africa's second most populous country, as well as abroad, by blending local styles of music with Western rock and roll. "We're trying to make something very, very different," said Hailu Amerga, one of four vocalists in the eight-piece, mixed ensemble, that also features a drummer, keyboard player, guitarist and bassist.

"Rock, it was really far away from our country, and it's not our tradition," he said. Ethiopian music is generally known for its distinctly non-Western scales and instrumentation, and is a staple of the nightlife in the Ethiopian capital. At open-air beer gardens, young people dance shoulder-shaking jigs to playlists that alternate between Ethiopian singers and hip-hop hits by west African artists like Sarkodie and Davido. Perhaps no style of Ethiopian music is better known outside the country than its unique kind of jazz, pioneered by musicians such as Mulatu Astatke and Mahmoud Ahmed, and known worldwide as Ethio-jazz. The longstanding jazz culture evolved from a brass band movement that was begun by an Armenian band brought to the country by Haile Selassie, Ethiopia's last emperor, after he saw it perform in Jerusalem during a visit in the 1920s.

'People are so confused'

"When... you give them that traditional jazz, the satisfaction never (finishes)," said Melaku Belay, owner of Fendika, a club where crowds gather for Friday night showcases of traditional music by the dozens of ethnic groups in the country. Ethiopia's music scene was not always so free. During the 14-year communist regime of Mengistu Haile Mariam, jazz was suppressed and many musicians fled the country. Though the musical culture has experienced a rebirth in the years since Mengistu's 1991 ouster, rock music has not developed much of a following in Ethiopia, said Dibekulu Tafesse, another of Jano's vocalists.

"At first, we were afraid to introduce it," he said. "Some people are so confused. At the same time, it's not our culture." Jano was assembled in 2011 by Addis Gessesse, a band manager and concert promoter, who has since cut ties with the group. The band's sound drifted away from the reggae, jazz and pop that dominate Ethiopia's music scene as it took on new members. "When we first came together, we didn't have the plan to create a rock band. Everybody has their own inspiration," said Dibekulu. Bill Laswell, a New York-based bassist and producer who worked on Jano's first album, Ertale (2012), worried how the genre would go down in Ethiopia. "I thought the rock thing would be kind of risky with the older audience, but I

'Everything is from here'

While the guitar riffs in Jano's songs would not be out of place on an Aerosmith or Guns N' Roses record, much of the songwriting is distinct to the Horn of Africa. The vocalists sing in Amharic, Ethiopia's main language; the keyboardist sometimes emulates the sound of a masinko, a string instrument used in music across the region; and the ululating of the female vocalists is typical of Ethiopia's traditional music. "The melodies are from here, the musical arrangements, everything is from here," singer Halleluya Tekletsadik said.

The rise of Jano comes amid a wave of musical diversification in Ethiopia, said Henock Temesgen, a bassist who has played with several Ethiopian jazz acts. "A lot of bands are trying to experiment with mixing Ethio music with other elements, like jazz. Jano is just one element of that," Henock said, adding that before Jano, there was no real rock band in the country. Jano plans to release a second album in the coming months, and regularly performs abroad, including in the Middle East, US and Europe. While their shows are popular with the Ethiopian diaspora, Dibekulu said Jano has wider appeal. "There were Africans, Latinos," he said, of their last show in New York. "Everybody enjoyed our music." — AFP



The Jano band-a rare rock band in Ethiopia-has been playing locally and touring in Europe for the past five years.

thought the younger audience would be... ready for what they were doing," Laswell told AFP in a telephone interview. When Jano began performing after two years of rehearsals, audiences were sometimes taken aback by their unconventional style. "Usually in our country, most bands perform standing still," said Dibekulu. Not Jano, which prides itself on its energetic stage presence. "People usually think we are high..., but we're not," he added.



In this two photo combo composed on Thursday, April 6, 2017, the color-by-numbers image of Adolf Hitler before, left, and after been coloured in, in a book which went on sale this week. — AP

Coloring book with Hitler image pulled from Dutch stores

A chain of Dutch stores has apologized after inadvertently selling children's coloring books featuring an image of Adolf Hitler. The Kruidvat chain of drug-stores posted a statement on its website saying the coloring books, which went on sale this week, were immediately pulled from shelves after the discovery of an "inappropriate image."

The image shows Hitler giving a Nazi salute. On his left arm is a red band with a swastika. Without directly referring to Hitler, the company says it is investigating how the image got into the books "despite various checks of the content." Kruidvat declined further comment Thursday. It was not clear how many of the books were sold. — AP

Ethiopian band wins fans by melding rock with African sounds

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Sculptor Donatan Mockus from Lithuania works on a sculpture of a monster fish at the annual sand sculpture festival in Ahlbeck on Usedom island, Germany, Saturday. This year's festival concentrates on 'Maritime Adventures'. The sculpture exhibition can be seen until 5 November 2017. — AP

Cockfighting in Kabul: Once-banned bloodsport takes wing

A boisterous roar sweeps through the crowd as a pair of roosters spar in a sandy pit, their spurs kicking, wings flapping and beaks pecking. "Bizan! (Hit it)," one spectator barks in Dari. "Bokoshesh! (Kill it)," hisses another. Cockfighting, known in Afghanistan as "Murgh Jangi", has the trappings of a gladiatorial contest. Wings outstretched, the avian fighters tear into each other as bets furiously exchange hands. Feathers are shredded and blood is drawn. In a few seconds, it is over. One bird collapses and half of the baying crowd lets out a roar of triumph.

Cockfighting, like all animal fighting and gambling, was banned under the Taliban's 1996-2001 rule. But the gory bloodsport, a symbol of masculinity and virility, has since made a swift comeback as a popular winter pastime in Afghanistan. Kabul's biggest amphitheatre for cockfighting is tucked away behind the bombed out ruins of the historic Darul Aman Palace, an enduring symbol of the destruction wreaked by decades of conflict. Outside, opium addicts swaddled in wrinkled



An Afghan referee blows water onto a fighting rooster during a match against another cock in a fighting ring on the outskirts of Kabul.



Afghan men watch roosters spar in a fighting ring.



Afghan men watch roosters spar in a fighting ring on the outskirts of Kabul. — AFP photos



Afghan rooster farm owner Tela Mohammad holds onto a fighting cock.

shawls crouch along the walls. Inside, there is tiered seating for two groups of rooster owners, bloodsport enthusiasts and imperious Godfather-like figures recording gambling bets in crumpled notebooks. Shouts of "I bet double!" compete with "I bet triple!". Up to 200,000 Afghani (\$3,000)



Afghan rooster farm owner Tela Mohammad feeds a fighting cock at a farm on the outskirts of Kabul.

can exchange hands, a small fortune in a country wracked by poverty. "People may not have food to eat, but they come here to bet," said spectator Muhammad Humayoon, a private telecom company operator. "I have seen very poor people walking out rich."



Afghan rooster farm owner Tela Mohammad walks past a fighting cock in a cage.

Escapism

But it is not just about money. As rampant joblessness and a roiling conflict spur pessimism about the future of the country, ancient bloodsports-however brutal-offer a sense of beguiling escapism.

From cockfighting to quail fighting to buzkashi-polo with a headless animal carcass-Afghanistan's violent pastimes are redolent in some ways of the tumult that the country has experienced in four decades of war. But unlike war, cockfighting is a contest of equals. Only birds of the same size and weight are paired against each other in a fight while the taped-on spurs attached to their claws to inflict damage on opponents have to be equally sharp.

In between the bouts, owners cradle roosters beneath woollen shawls, their puny claws dangling below, feeding them energy drinks directly from an oral syringe. Others delicately swab their injuries with moist sponges. Some perform improvised surgeries-gluing together cracked beaks, stitching together broken feathers and sucking out clotted blood pooled in the necks of their fowls. Hawkers move through knots of people, selling boiled eggs and dried beans with sprinklings of salt.

'Not money but pride'

In a country where women's groups voice a shockingly common refrain to be granted the same basic dignity given to animals, the birds are sometimes treated even better than family members. "We feed them everything we cannot afford to eat ourselves-anar (pomegranates), kebabs, grains, almonds, pistachios," said a 29-year-old rooster owner, requesting anonymity.

Training begins at an early age, with no expense spared to ensure that they win. The owner demonstrated to AFP how his roosters are made to jog to improve their lung capacity-around the enclosure of a hen. Roosters, like men, who are otherwise clumsy tend to be more disciplined around females, he joked. But fighting roosters rarely live past the age of three and many do not survive their first bout. Birds do not usually fight to the death, but they can be blinded and sometimes bloodied with fatal injuries.

"Cockfighting (is) illegal in many parts of the world, and if Afghanistan wants to be seen as a progressive nation, it should follow," Jason Baker, from People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), told AFP. "What does it say about humankind, when a stadium full of people is bursting with boisterous applause at the death of an innocent animal?" But it is unlikely to be prohibited in a country where the concept of animal welfare barely exists. "Cockfighting is part of our culture," said Karim Langari, an elderly rooster owner. — AFP