

Kuwait International Quran contest 2017 begins



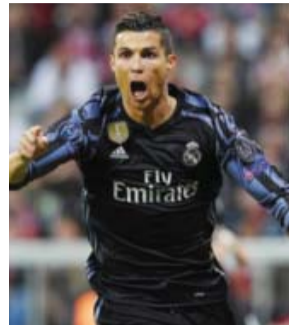
Putin slams Trump ties as top diplomats spar on Syria



Work starts on Qatar World Cup final stadium



Ronaldo hits 100 as Real Madrid beat Bayern Munich



150 FILS
NO: 17197
40 PAGES

THREE OPPOSITION LAWMAKERS FILE TO GRILL PRIME MINISTER

ASSEMBLY PASSES AMENDMENTS TO CORPORATE LAW



Min 25°
Max 44°
High Tide 01:23 & 13:10
Low Tide 07:29 & 19:57

AI WEIWEI URGES GULF TO DO MORE TO HELP REFUGEES

DOHA: Chinese artist Ai Weiwei called on wealthy Gulf Arab states to take in more Syrians displaced by six years of civil war, saying the surge of refugees fleeing conflict in the Middle East was a "test for humanity". Ai, often described as China's most high-profile artist and dissident, has won acclaim for artwork highlighting the plight of Middle East refugees fleeing in boats to Europe. Last year Ai wrapped the giant columns of the Berlin Konzerthaus with 14,000 life jackets brought from the Greek island of Lesbos on whose beaches over a million migrants have entered the European Union. He has visited camps in Greece, Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan to film a documentary about the refugee crisis.

Speaking after a talk in Doha on Tuesday night at Qatar's Museum of Islamic Art (MIA), Ai said a Gulf Arab policy of not granting Syrians and Iraqis refugee status was short-sighted. "Many Gulf states refuse refugees. I don't think that's an intelligent act because many refugees even have the same religious background to them and talk the same language," Ai said speaking in the zigurat-style museum's vast marble lobby. "I think this only shows very short-sighted politics ... like you're refusing to help out your brothers or your relatives," he said.

Continued on Page 13

AMIR OPENS SHAHEED PARK ANNEX



KUWAIT: HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah opens the second phase of Al-Shaheed Park in Sharq yesterday, accompanied by HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. — KUNA (See Page 3)

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: Opposition MPs Waleed Al-Tabtabaei, Mohammad Al-Mutair and Marzouq Al-Khalifa yesterday filed a request to grill HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah over a host of allegations including illegally revoking the citizenships of opposition figures for political reasons, squandering public funds, claims of corruption and raising utility charges. This is the first request to grill the prime minister in the current Assembly elected last November, in which the opposition controls about half of the 50 seats.

The grilling came just a day after the government and its supporters in the Assembly rejected a law to allow Kuwaitis who get their citizenships revoked by the government to seek recourse in courts. At present, Kuwaiti courts are not allowed to look into citizenship matters because they are sovereign issues.

The first issue in the grilling centers around the government's action almost three years ago to revoke the citizenship of a number of opposition figures and dozens of their family members using different pretexts. The grilling accuses the govern-

ment headed by the prime minister of violating the law and misusing its authority by revoking the citizenships of several opposition figures as a means of punishment and for politically-motivated reasons.

The grilling also holds the prime minister responsible for the government's violation of international civil rights covenants and misusing its authority to issue punitive and politically-motivated legislation against its opponents. It also accuses the prime minister of being responsible for the widespread corruption in the country, claiming that Kuwait dropped 20 places in the past year in the Corruption Perception Index. The grilling claims that the prime minister insisted on appointing senior officials who failed in their previous posts in new positions, as a reflection of rife corruption in the country.

The fourth issue in the grilling focuses on failure to implement the government's development program and squandering strategic assets owned by the state. The fifth and last issue in the grilling claims that the government has increased burdens on Kuwaiti citizens but still failed to check squandering of public funds and corruption.

Continued on Page 13



TEHRAN: Former Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (right) and his close ally Hamid Baghaei flash the victory sign yesterday as they arrive at the Interior Ministry to register their candidacy for the upcoming presidential elections. — AP

AHMADINEJAD TO RUN FOR PRESIDENT IN SHOCK MOVE

TEHRAN: Iran's former hardline president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad took the shock move yesterday of registering for next month's presidential election, going against the advice of the supreme leader. Ahmadinejad had previously insisted he would not stand after Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said last year that his candidacy would have a "polarizing" effect on the nation, and instead backed his ex-deputy Hamid Baghaei.

But the former president - whose tenure between 2005 and 2013 saw mass protests at home, plummeting relations with the West and a shattered economy - surprised everyone when he registered along with Baghaei yesterday. He told reporters at the interior ministry, where registration was taking place, that he remained committed to his "moral promise" to Khamenei of not running for the May 19 election. But he

said Khamenei's "advice was not a ban". "I repeat that I am committed to my moral promise and my presence and registration is only to support Mr Baghaei," he added without explanation.

Only last week, flanked by his former deputy at his first press conference in four years, Ahmadinejad said he had "no plans to present myself. I support Mr Baghaei as the best candidate". The formal registration period for presidential hopefuls began on Tuesday and will continue until Saturday evening, after which candidates are vetted by the conservative-dominated Guardian Council, with a final list to be announced on April 27. So far, 197 people have registered to run in the May 19 vote, eight of them women. No woman has ever been allowed to stand for the presidency in the Islamic republic.

Continued on Page 13

ZAIN SAUDI ARABIA RECORDS FIRST-EVER QUARTERLY PROFIT

REVENUES UP 9% FOR Q1 2017

News

in brief

Manila says Riyadh still needs its workers

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia will still need even more Filipino workers despite its "Saudization" policy, Manila's labor secretary said yesterday following a meeting between Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte and Saudi King Salman. To show Filipinos that they are still welcome, the Saudis are even willing to allow more than 100 "run-away" Filipino workers to return home, Secretary Silvestre Bello told reporters in Riyadh. He said Saudi officials told him they still need Filipinos who work in the Gulf kingdom in fields ranging from construction, domestic work, healthcare, retail, engineering, telecommunications, transportation and the oil industry. Asked how this would affect the policy of "Saudization," or giving jobs to Saudis, Bello said: "Saudization is sort of just a concept now."

Bangladesh hangs three for British envoy attack

KASHIMPUR, Bangladesh: Bangladesh hanged three extremists including the leader of a banned militant outfit yesterday, after they were sentenced to death over a 2004 grenade attack on the British ambassador. The authorities hanged Mufti Abdul Hannan, the leader of Harkatul Jihad Al Islami (HuJI), and one of his associates at Kashimpur prison just outside Dhaka and another associate in a jail in the northeastern city of Sylhet, home minister Asaduzzaman Khan said. The three were sentenced to death in 2008 for the grenade attack four years earlier at a 14th-century Sufi shrine in Sylhet, which killed three people and injured the British high commissioner at the time.

Woman seeking asylum returned to Saudi Arabia

RIYADH: A Saudi woman claiming she sought asylum in Australia was stopped on a layover in the Philippines and returned to Riyadh yesterday. Dina Ali Lasloom said in self-recorded videos the Philippine authorities had held her at the Manila airport and confiscated her passport. The videos circulated widely on social media over the last two days. "My name is Dina Ali and I'm a Saudi woman who fled Saudi Arabia to Australia to seek asylum," she said in one video, adding she feared violence from any relatives who came to bring her back home. The Saudi embassy in Manila issued a statement calling the case a "family matter" and added she had "returned with her relatives to the homeland". Meagan Khan, a Canadian tourist, told The Australian newspaper after landing in Bali that she had allowed Ali to use her phone to post the videos on Twitter.

RIYADH: Zain Saudi Arabia reported its first ever quarterly net profit for the three months ending March 31, 2017 driven by revenue growth and optimization of its operational cost structure. Key performance indicators for the first quarter Q1, 2017: Compared to Q1, 2016, Zain Saudi Arabia reported: First ever quarterly net profit amounting to SAR 45 million; Revenues of SAR 1,919 million, up 9 percent, Gross profit of SAR 1,291 million, up 19 percent; EBITDA of SAR 665 million, up 49 percent; Operational income of SAR 273 million.

Bader Nasser Al-Kharafi, Zain Group Vice-Chairman and Chief Executive Officer and Vice-Chairman of Zain Saudi Arabia commented, "This strong performance of Zain's operation in Saudi Arabia comes at a time when the Saudi telecom market is witnessing exponential growth in demand for digital services which we are exploiting, reflecting the success of our turnaround and cost optimization program, and justifying our heavy investment in expanding and upgrading the state-of-the-art 4.5G network."

Kharafi continued, "Despite the intense competitive challenges of the Saudi telecom market, Zain Saudi Arabia is now on a forward growth trajectory and the management team remain cautiously optimistic and clearly focused on strategic priorities, continually striving to improve all aspects of this key operation for Zain Group."

Furthermore, Kharafi said, "The decision to extend the operating license for an additional 15 years, combined with a unified telecom license and other favorable gestures by the Saudi authorities, will give Zain Saudi Arabia a significant stimulus towards achieving its business objectives and at the same time positively impacting its financial performance."

Revenues grew by 9 percent in Q1, 2017 reaching SAR 1,919 million compared with SAR 1,765 million in Q1, 2016. This also represented a 7 percent increase in revenues from SAR 1,801 million generated for the fourth quarter (Q4) of 2016. The company recorded a significant 49 percent increase in EBITDA to reach SAR 665 million in Q1, 2017, up from SAR 445 million in Q1, 2016, and a 36 percent increase from SAR 490 million in Q4, 2016. EBITDA



Bader Nasser Al-Kharafi, Zain Group Vice-Chairman and Chief Executive Officer and Vice-Chairman of Zain Saudi Arabia

margin rose to 35 percent for Q1, 2017 up from 25 percent in Q1, 2016, and 27 percent in Q4, 2016.

Zain Saudi Arabia also reported a 19 percent increase in gross profit to reach SAR 1,291 million for Q1, 2017, reflecting a gross margin of 67 percent, up from SAR 1,086 million and 62 percent gross margin in Q1, 2016. Gross profit also increased by 13 percent, up from SAR 1,142 million and 63 percent gross margin in Q4, 2016.

The company recorded operational income of SAR 273 million in Q1, 2017, compared to operational loss of SAR 32 million in the same quarter of 2016. Operational income increased by 214 percent compared to SAR 87 million in Q4, 2016.

Significantly, Zain Saudi Arabia announced its first quarterly net profit ever in Q1, 2017, amounting to SAR 45 million, compared to net losses of SAR 250 million in Q1, 2016 and SAR 135 million losses in Q4 2016. Kharafi concluded, "I would like to recognize the dedication of the entire Zain team in Saudi Arabia, and the continued support of the Board of Directors of both Zain Group and Zain Saudi Arabia, our shareholders and the Zain Group management team in the turnaround of this promising telecom entity."

INDIAN FISHERMEN RECALL GULF ORDEAL

CHENNAI: For six months, Indian fisherman S George lived in fear on a boat, thinking he would never see his wife and children again. George was one of 15 fishermen from the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu detained in October last year on charges of straying into Iranian waters while fishing in the region, officials said. Reaching their homes last week, after months with no contact with their families, the fishermen said nothing had prepared them for the ordeal they went through when they left their homes in 2014 to work on

fishing boats off the coast of Bahrain. "Once we were trapped, there were days of confusion," George told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. "It was not clear to us that we had crossed international waters into Iran while fishing and were being detained. What followed we never imagined could happen." There are an estimated six million Indian migrants in the six Gulf states of Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Oman, many of them trafficked and exploited, campaigners say.

Continued on Page 13



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah bids farewell to Sudanese President Omar Hasan Al-Bashir yesterday. — KUNA photos



Sudanese President Omar Al-Bashir meets with Director General of the Kuwait Economic Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) Abdulwahab Al-Bader.

SUDANESE PRESIDENT ENDS OFFICIAL VISIT TO KUWAIT

KUWAIT, SUDAN SHARE VIEWS ON REGIONAL ISSUES: SUDANESE FM

KUWAIT: Sudanese President Omar Hasan Al-Bashir and his accompanying delegation left Kuwait yesterday, ending an official visit to the country. He was seen off at the airport by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Minister of the Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah, in addition to other officials from the state, the army, the police, and Kuwait National Guard (KNG).

Prior to his departure, President Bashir received in his residence at Bayan Palace Executive Director of the General Reserve Sector at Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA) Bader Al-Ajeel, Director General of the Kuwait Economic Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) Abdulwahab Al-Bader and Director of the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD) Abdullatif Yousef Al-Hamad. Head of the honorary delegation and Advisor at the Amiri Diwan Khaled Al-Fuleij attended the meetings.

Similar views

Sudan and Kuwait share similar views on issues pertaining to the Middle East and North Africa, said Sudanese Foreign Minister

Ibrahim Ghandour. In an exclusive interview on the sideline of the Sudanese President's official visit, Ghandour said that the meeting between Sudan's leader and His Highness the Amir was important to coordinate political and diplomatic efforts.

Issues such as the Kuwaiti investments in Sudan and the food security initiative by the Arab League were amongst the chief topics discussed by the top officials, said Ghandour who affirmed that His Highness Sheikh Sabah and President Al-Bashir both expressed their satisfaction with the current level of cooperation and expressed desires to further boost ties on all possible levels.

Discussions between the two prominent leaders touched on the recent situations in Syria, Libya, Somalia, Iraq, occupied Palestine, and Yemen, said the Foreign Minister, adding that Kuwait and Sudan shared similar views on how to tackle the problematic developments in each respective Arab country.

On Yemen, Syria, Libya, and Iraq, Ghandour called for finding measures to bring peace and security to the troubled Arab countries, affirming that Kuwait and Sudan will back Arab and international efforts to resolve the wars and conflicts in these regions. On the issue of Palestine, Ghandour affirmed that this issue was the most prominent struggle in the world, calling on the international community to aid Palestinian efforts to establish an independent country with East Jerusalem as its capital. He also touched on the national reconciliation process in Sudan, saying that the process was



Sudanese President Omar Al-Bashir meets with Director of the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD) Abdullatif Al-Hamad.

heading in the right direction via the involvement of the UN and AU. However, international sanctions might prove to be an obstacle in Sudan's path for peace and security, said the Foreign Minister who called on the world to be just when addressing matters connected with his country.

Meanwhile, the Sudanese Foreign Minister took the chance to thank the

Kuwaiti leadership for its endless support to his country, noting that the projects developed by Kuwait in eastern Sudan were evident of the Kuwaiti interest in the welfare of the fellow Arab country.

Sudan has prepared a list of 220 projects for development of which 79 ones were good to go, said Ghandour who hoped that Kuwait would participate in providing support to

these ventures. The Foreign Minister commended the GCC efforts in his country, saying that the Gulf countries showcased their interest in the development of Sudan during their participation in the East Sudan development and reconstruction conference which was held in Kuwait.

Sudan-Egypt relationship

In the meantime, Ghandour described the Egyptian-Sudanese relationship as a twin that cannot be separated due to occasional strains in the bilateral ties, adding that such strains have been tackled due to wisdom of the top leaders, Bashir and Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi of Egypt.

Minister Ghandour further indicated that he coordinates with Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shukry on implementing guidelines by the top leaders, however he has blamed some media for causing such recurring jitters in the close bonds between the two neighboring nations.

He has acknowledged that Cairo and Khartoum have some differences over the border town of Halayeb and has denied reports suggesting that Khartoum is not standing firmly with Cairo over the issue of the Nile waters, namely the Ethiopian dam question.

"We in Sudan are convinced that Al-Nahdah dam in Ethiopia does not affect Egypt's water share," he has said. "We take into consideration Egypt's water security but at the time we have interests where the brothers in Egypt should care about." —KUNA



Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Mohammad Al-Jabri speaks during the ceremony. — KUNA photos



KUWAIT: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah inaugurates the 2017 Kuwait international Quran contest.



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah tours an exhibition held on the sidelines of the ceremony.

KUWAIT INT'L QURAN CONTEST 2017 BEGINS



KUWAIT: Under the patronage of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the attendance of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, the 2017 Kuwait international Holy Quran contest began yesterday with a ceremony held at the Sheraton Hotel.

During the opening ceremony, Minister of Awqaf (endowment) and Islamic Affairs as well as Minister of State for Municipal Affairs Mohammad Al-Jabri in addition to Undersecretary at the Ministry of Awqaf and

chairman of the contest's supreme organizing committee Fared Emadi delivered speeches to the event. At the end of the opening ceremony, His Highness the Prime Minister was given a present by the Quran contest organizing committee.

A sideline exhibition was held on Kuwait's efforts to spread Quranic studies and teachings. The current contest saw the participation of 123 competitors representing 69 nations. The contest involves competitions geared towards memorizing and reciting the Holy Quran. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Minister of Amiri Diwan Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah met yesterday with the Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Kuwait Elkhan Gahraman. The Amiri Diwan top official also met with the newly appointed Ambassadors of Benin and South Africa to Kuwait. The meetings between Sheikh Nasser and the foreign diplomats focused on issues of mutual concerns. — KUNA





KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is presented with a gift during the opening of the second phase of Al-Shaheed Park. — KUNA photos



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah tours the second phase of Al-Shaheed Park.

AMIR ATTENDS SHAHEED PARK 2ND PHASE OPENING

PARK A TOURISTIC, CULTURAL LANDMARK: DIWAN OFFICIAL



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah patronized and attended yesterday the opening of the second phase of Al-Shaheed Park which is located in Sharq. Accompanied by His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Amir was received at the park by Deputy Minister of the Amiri Diwan Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah and top executive at the Amiri Diwan Abdulaziz Saud Ishaq. After the initial ceremony, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah and the accompanying delegation took a tour of the park's second phase facilities. His Highness the Amir was accompanied by Sheikh Jaber Al-Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Sheikh Faisal Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and senior officials of the state. His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad and His Highness Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad were given presents during their tour of the park.

Al-Shaheed Park 2, with a strategic location at the vibrant center of Kuwait City, is a landmark of civilization and tourism, Ishaq said. The second phase of the Al-Shaheed Park, accomplished by Kuwaiti hands under the supervision of the Amiri Diwan, was achieved



and handed over in a record time, Ishaq said in a statement after the opening of ceremony.

He stressed His Highness the Amir's keenness on enhancing the cultural and civilized dimension of Kuwait, as well as his support to development projects. His Highness the Amir closely followed up all the stages of the project, with its cultural corners, built in line with the latest international techniques, considering the preservation of the environment and power, he added. The Amiri Diwan official lauded the efforts of the Kuwaiti youth who managed to accomplish the project four months ahead of the set date.

Shaheed Park 2 includes various facilities covering an area of about 100 square meters, with an extraordinary design, a waterfall across it, in addition to a fountain and a lake. It also has restaurants and coffee shops where visitors can enjoy their time, besides a wide hall for about 500 people, a walking-track and a car park with the capacity of 970 vehicles. One part of the park was designed to represent Kuwait in the past and the present so that visitors can get acquainted with the old and the modern architecture through the different eras in Kuwait's history, he said. — KUNA



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah tours the second phase of Al-Shaheed Park.





KUWAIT: Fatima Hussein speaks during the open dialog. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



A general view of the audience.

KJA CHIEF RECALLS FEMALE STUDENTS EARLY STRUGGLES

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: The Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Centre organized an open dialogue with Kuwait Journalists Association (KJA) Chairperson Fatma Hussein on Tuesday. Hussein is an activist who has promoted equality for women in the media and during her diplomatic service, and found a platform as a writer, radio and television host. Hussein started the open dialogue by telling the audience about the recent history of Kuwait. "We had no electricity or water. We had only one Syrian doctor in our area," she recalled.

She added that the Lebanese, Palestinian and Syrian teachers were credited with changing the curricula of public schools for girls for the better. "We were studying what was called a female curriculum. When I was eight years old, our school taught us how to give a baby a bath and how to cook!" she said. Hussein hailed the role of a Lebanese teacher who changed their view of life. "Also, a Palestinian teacher was teaching us English and Science. They challenged us to sit for the same exams as the boys. We were shocked that we actually succeeded and were the smartest, although we did not have the chance to study the same things that they did," Hussein said.

After that, the principal of the school kicked out the teachers and accused them of incitement, and that is when the rebellion began. "The school replaced our teachers with useless ones, so we protested, made flyers and started to teach each other. We formed a study circle where every girl who was good in a subject taught the rest of us," she said. But the protest did not succeed, because they were afraid of their families' reaction.

Asked about her beginnings in the journalism field, she said that it was by chance. "I studied in Egypt. All classes were full with not less than 600 students. So I chose a specialty that had fewer students, and it was jour-

nalism," Hussein said. Fatma Hussein Al-Qenai was born in 1937. She entered the hearts of all Kuwaiti families through radio and television, where she supported women's issues. She started to write when she was a student at school. She studied at Al-Sharqia and Al-Wasta schools and Al-Qablia high school. In 1960, she obtained a journalism degree from Cairo University. She then traveled to the US with her husband in 1961 and enrolled in two English courses. She started work at a New York radio station with a show called 'The diaries of a Kuwaiti woman in New York.' She also participated in the international women's conference in Beijing in 1995.

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

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CONFEREES IN LEBANON CALL FOR WOMEN POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT

BEIRUT: Officials taking part in a forum on Arab women as business leaders called yesterday for empowering female activists in the political realm. Enas Abdelaziz, Chief Executive Officer of Kuwait-headquartered Dotspace Group noted that Kuwaiti women have succeeded in occupying a noticeable status in the political field in Kuwait.

Digital revolution has removed some barriers facing the women with business aspirations, she said, indicating that a large number of businesswomen in Kuwait have succeeded in marketing their products online.

Business has become largely easy, with no need to rent a store or find a male partner, she says, also opining that the "major obstacle facing women is no longer men but technological illiteracy." Lebanon's former finance minister Rayya Al-Hassan said that the major challenges facing women in the Arab world is representation in the parliaments and municipal councils.

The ex-minister of environment, Mohammad Rahhal, noted that Lebanon has established the ministry of women affairs with aim of improving status of this segment. Earlier, Lebanese Minister of State for Women Affairs Jean Ogazapian, lauded in the inauguration statement the Arab women for making achievements at various levels while remaining a functioning



BEIRUT: CEO of Dotspace Group Enas Abdelaziz attends the forum. — KUNA

parent, indicating that he is seeking to prove that men are supporters of women and do not "constitute a hindrance in their way."

Alya Abbas, the general director of the ministry of economy, said 59 percent of the coun-

try's eligible voters are women, however they occupy only eight percent of the parliamentary seats and one percent of the cabinet posts. Up to 18 occupy very senior posts in the State administration. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah is honored during the forum. — KUNA

MINISTER UNDERLINES CITIZENSHIP INCULCATION

KUWAIT: Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah yesterday called for instilling citizenship and inculcating Kuwaiti identity into the minds of children through cooperation and solidarity. In a keynote speech during a forum held under the rubric: 'Kuwaiti Identity...Where to?' Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, who doubles as Acting Minister of Information, said the mission of preserving identity cannot be restricted to governmental bodies as social and religious agencies should be involved. It is the duty and responsibility of state institutions and departments to contribute to establishing and promoting this concept in society positively, he said, pointing to social variation.

He emphasized that all mass media, ministries and civil society should work together in order to establish the concept of Kuwaiti identity. The minister hoped that these fora would lead to a further promotion of identity, while stressing the significance of scientific research to finding a mechanism to settle identity and educate young generations.

Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) Director-General Ahmad Al-Athari said his authority has a social and academic role to play so as to meet the scientific, technical and social requirements of the Kuwaiti society. Speaking at the PAAET-organized forum, Athari said the authority attaches much attention to the values of loyalty and strong

Kuwaiti identity in its theoretical and applied curricula. He noted that the forum manifests the historical, cultural and social dimensions of the Kuwaiti society, in addition to the role of young people in this regard. On his part, Director-General of the Public Authority for Youth (PAY) Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi said the history of Kuwait was based on tradition, challenge, firmness and bravery.

He underscored the need to hold more forums aiming at promoting and consolidating the Kuwaiti identity. Mutairi spoke highly of the PAAET's vital role in the promotion of national identity by means of launching programs aiming at instilling Kuwaiti culture and creating a generation aware of Kuwaiti values and tradition. — KUNA

POLICE FREE WOMEN TRAFFICKED FROM SIERRA LEONE TO KUWAIT

VICTIMS FORCED TO WORK AS DOMESTIC HELPERS

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Anti-vice and human trafficking police arrested a gang that trafficked in people, led by a Ugandan national who brought women from Sierra Leone. According to investigations, the prime suspect (identified in the Interior Ministry's report by his initials 'S.M') smuggled the women to Guinea by land, making authorities there believe that they were heading to Senegal. They were then locked up for a week in Guinea, before being brought to Kuwait after receiving promises that they will work at prestigious hotels and restaurants and also as nurses with salaries ranging between KD 600 to KD 700 per month. But when they arrived in Kuwait, they were forced under threat to work as domestic helpers for KD 70-80. The main suspect was placed under surveillance to find out where he lived and where the domestic helpers were detained. A warrant was obtained and his residence was raided. The detained women were released, while airline tickets and bank transfer slips were confiscated.

Fire department roundup
Two men were injured when their vehicle

flipped over following an accident. Nuwaiseeb fire center rushed to the scene and freed the two injured men (Asian nationals) and handed them to paramedics. Meanwhile, Nuwaiseeb Fire Center rescued a camel that fell in a septic hole at the camping area. Firemen used ropes and raised the camel from the bottom of the hole unharmed. Separately, Mishref fire center responded to an accident on Sixth Ring Road that trapped four expats in their vehicles. Firemen got the injured people out of the cars and handed them to paramedics. In another case, fire broke out in a Mubarak Al-Kabeer house, prompting Qurain center to respond. Trapped people were evacuated. They only suffered minor smoke inhalation. The fire was put out and losses were material only.

Vehicles impounded

The traffic department at the airport impounded 35 cars and issued 2,532 citations last month. The Interior Ministry's relations and security information department said that everyone must comply with the traffic law and not obstruct traffic flow, particularly at vital facilities. Meanwhile, Farwaniya municipality inspection team carried out a campaign in Ardiya during which 40 car



KUWAIT: A damaged vehicle is impounded during a municipality crackdown in Ardiya.

rental offices were inspected. Eight undertakings were made, while 40 stickers were placed on cars left in open yards in order to remove them. Twenty warnings and 18 citations were issued for exceeding the areas allowed to be used.

Letters to Badrya

Madam,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for raising burning issues in the Gulf, especially with regards to expatriates. It is indeed a pleasure to at least recognize our problem and hope it may bring some positive changes among employers, to be more humanitarian. It is always nice to see and meet like-minded people and I hope you excel more in your personal as well as professional areas.

Every one of you is special and I love what you are doing and continue to do for Kuwait Times. May Allah bless you with the best of health, wealth and prosperity in your life.

Afsar Ahmad

Madam,

Very well-crafted lines. Really a good article. Love it - keep it up!

Laiq Ur Rehman

KUWAIT A PIONEER IN TREATING PARKINSON'S DISEASE: PROFESSOR

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Neurology consultant, head of the neurology department at Ibn Sina Hospital and Kuwait University (KU) professor Dr Jassem Al-Hashel announced that in collaboration with the Kuwait Neurology Society (KNS), his department would organize the second awareness day for Parkinson's patients on Saturday, April 15. Hashel added that the awareness day coincides with marking World Parkinson's Day 2017 and it would be held under the auspices of Sheikha Anisa Al-Sabah at 10:00 am at Radisson Blu hotel.

Hashel stressed that Kuwait is a leading country worldwide in terms of treating Parkinson's disease and that this was achieved thanks to its integrated team working in Kuwait and abroad, which helped reduce the number of Parkinson's patients dispatched for treatment overseas. Moreover, Hashel said that his team had examined many cases over the past four years and conducted four complicated surgeries to implant special batteries. He also noted that his team succeeded in providing the latest treatments and medicines and that an international French doctor would arrive within 3-4 months to help diagnose and examine some cases.

Finally, Hashel explained that an integrated team of specialists would be available on the awareness day to answer patients' and their families' inquiries about the disease, medications and physiotherapy.



NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS GRADUATED

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: The 21st batch of non-commissioned officers graduated yesterday from the non-commissioned officers

institute under the patronage of Assistant Undersecretary for Education and Training Affairs Maj Gen Sheikh Faisal Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and in the presence of Commander of Protection and Backup at the National

Guard Maj Gen Faleh Sujaa, Acting Director of Saad Al-Abdullah Security Science College Maj Gen Nasser Burisli and Director General of the Training Department Maj Gen Anwar Al-Barjas.

MOCK DRILL AT SABAH MEDICAL ZONE



KUWAIT: A scene from a mock exercise held in Sabah Medical Zone yesterday.

KUWAIT: The Civil Defense Department carried out a mock exercise in Sabah Medical Zone, with the participation of the Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFSD), rescue police, medical emergencies department and the relations and security information at the interior ministry. The exercise was successful in completing the evacuation in record time. Separately, Director General of KFSD Lt Gen Khalid Al-Mikrad received a delegation from the Morton-in-March Fire Services College, headed by Managing Director of the College Darren Bance. Both sides discussed topics of mutual interest. In the meantime, Director General of the Investigations Department Maj Gen Dr Fahd Al-Dousari honored a number of members of the Hawally investigations department in appreciation of their efforts and distinguished performance.

News

In brief

40 C temperature predicted

KUWAIT: Meteorologist Essa Ramadan said temperatures are considerably rising in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the UAE, and might rise up to 40 C degrees by noon, then return to normal by Saturday.

Imams duties

KUWAIT: Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs and Minister of State for Municipal Affairs Mohammed Al-Jabri yesterday issued a ministerial decision substituting clause number 2 of the ministerial decision number 69/207 pertaining reducing the job duties of imams should do monthly.

Violations

KUWAIT: On direct instructions from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor's (MSAL) Undersecretary Mutar Al-Mutairi and as a preventive measure to control vegetable companies and prevent sellers from faking the country of origin of products displayed for sale at various co-ops, a special MSAL inspection team yesterday made a surprise field visit to Andalous vegetable market, where some violations were detected, said MSAL sources. The sources added that the team spotted a Kuwaiti farmer purchasing lots from auctions to display them for sale in the Kuwaiti products' section in co-ops, which is a severe violation. The team also found some companies doing the opposite, by changing the origin of local products and labeling them as imported, before displaying them at co-ops.

Financial support

KUWAIT: The court of appeal yesterday mandated a citizen to provide his children living expenses, pay the rent of a house for them and their mother, furnish it, provide a vehicle and pay for recruiting a maid and a driver, said the mother's lawyer Dalal Al-Mutairi, noting that despite his affluence, the father had not been supporting his children after the mother won a custody battle.

IRAQI MAYOR ALLEGES KUWAITI VIOLATIONS AGAINST FISHERMEN

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: The mayor of Faw in Basra Waleed Al-Shareef urged the Iraqi government to intervene to end what he described as violations committed by Kuwaiti marine patrols against Iraqi fishermen. Shareef claimed an Iraqi fisherman was shot in the abdomen by a Kuwaiti marine patrol in Khor Abdullah, while other fishermen escaped to avoid injury. He added that 'Kuwaiti harassments' continued in Iraqi national waters and said that many objections and problems would have been made if the injured fisherman was Kuwaiti. Notably, Basra governorate member Ghanem Hamed Saleh said the Iraqi fishing boat was shot at dawn yesterday by a Kuwaiti marine boat while inside Iraqi national waters, injuring a fisherman. The Kuwaiti side insisted that the Iraqi boat had violated Kuwaiti waters.

Power generation

The Arab Petroleum Investment Corporation (APICORP) said Kuwait's estimated power generation capability in 2016 is 17,000 megawatts, and it needs to reach 23,000 megawatts by 2021, which calls for investing \$14 billion in the medium run. APICORP added that the energy sector is currently building five projects that are expected to add 6,000 megawatts of electricity, including the North Zour refineries 1 and 2 (respectively producing 1,500 and 1,800 megawatts) and Al-Khairan project (2,500 megawatts), which is the first public-private-partnership (PPP) project.

Egyptian manpower

Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Minister of State Economic Affairs Hind Al-Sabeeh that she discussed electronically linking the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor (MSAL) and the Egyptian ministry of manpower with her Egyptian counterpart Mohammed Safan. Sabeeh added that the e-connection would include registering job applications as well as signing and delivering contracts. Sabeeh noted that the e-connection would be initially made with Egypt before extending it to other GCC states.

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Al-Anbaa

4TH CONSTITUENCY MPs, WHERE ARE YOU?

By Thaar Al-Rasheedi

Today, I am talking like a voter from the fourth electoral constituency, not like a political analyst or columnist. I have been writing for years now and have never criticized anyone personally. In this article, I am acting more like a voter or rather say, as someone who has a constitutional right to select the representatives of the constituency he lives in.

I am particularly talking about the fourth electoral constituency MPs, what they are doing, what they have done and they are expected to do later in this parliament. Unfortunately, though they consist of 20 percent of the parliament's lawmakers, they have neither individually nor collectively done anything to develop the fourth and largest electoral constituency; Jahra that voted for them and brought them to parliament as representatives.

Following up their proposals, statements and actions, we find that Jahra is the least of their concerns as they have only used it as a gateway to get votes and make it to the parliament before they completely forgot about it.

Have any of them demanded improving its parks? Have any of them drawn the attention to any of its facilities or streets? Have any of them talked about people's demands? The Answer is NO. For instance, Jahra streets are disastrous. None of them have ever asked the Ministry of Public Works to repair its streets, of which some in Al-Qasr area have been in need of over five years now. None of them raised the subject because it means nothing to them simply because they only represent Jahra without living in it. Even those living in Jahra forget that they are in parliament. I do urge the fourth electoral constituency MPs to only visit the second street in Al-Qasr, block 4, to know what I am talking about.—Translated by Kuwait Times



PROBE TO DETERMINE COMPANY'S INVOLVEMENT IN TERROR FUNDING

KUWAIT: The State Security Department launched an investigation into possible involvement of a company that processes laborers' transactions in labor-exporting countries in terror funding, an informed source said. The investigation comes after detectives in the Philippines confirmed that a Kuwaiti man arrested there with his Syrian wife on charges of funding the Islamic State (IS) is a shareholder in the same company. Recent reports from the Philippines have suggested that Winston Q8, a

company that facilitates the medical tests of Kuwait-bound overseas Filipino workers for a hefty price, was apparently led by people with links to IS. The investigations will determine how involved the company is in money laundering and financing the extremist organization, the source said. He added that the volume of financial transactions that the company processed is estimated at tens of thousands of dinars per month, which is enough to finance terrorism.—Translated from the Arabic press

Al-Anbaa

CAMELS MIRRORS

By Saad Al-Motesh

So many proverbs and sayings have been used by people without even knowing their meanings or why they were even said in the first place. I tried several times to ask some senior citizens about the meanings of some proverbs, but each of them gave me a different answer, including some logical ones and many others that were irrelevant.

One of those sayings says: "If only a camel could see its ears, it would wage war against its own time." Some of you may even wonder about the significance of using such a saying as many believe it is only used for its rhyme of ears (Athan) and time (Zaman). Well, it is not like that.

The real reason of using this saying is for people to express amazement at the relatively small size of those ears compared to the camel's size. I do wish some camel herder would place a large mirror in front of one of his camels to make it see its own ears. Maybe then we will know how the war between the camel and its time will be like.

If a camel is surprised by its small ears, please do not blame it because it does not know that we know it very well, just the same way we know about all those behind the threats to grill His Highness the Prime Minister. They are delusional if they do not realize that they are completely exposed to everyone. Everything is clear now and has been ever since a grilling motion was filed against former information minister Sheikh Salman Al-Humoud Al-Sabah, as the sports situation remain unchanged so far.

Therefore, I do advise whoever wishes to know the truth to use such mirrors to expose them. It was also said that 'footprints mark the route,' and it is up to you to figure this one out.

—Translated by Kuwait Times

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ZAIN HONORS WINNERS OF FIFTH IDEAL MOTHER AWARD

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, participated in honoring the winners of the Ideal Mother Award for Intellectual Disabilities. The company strategically partnered with the fifth edition of the award, organized by Al-Kharafi Activity Kids Center, which aimed at shedding light on the distinguished efforts of mothers of children with intellectual disabilities.

Zain took part in the honoring ceremony, which witnessed the attendance of the Honorary President of Kuwait Disabled Sports Club Shaikha Shaikha Abdullah Al Sabah, Chairperson of Al-Kharafi Activity Kids Center Sabeeka Al-Jaser, Director of the Ideal Mother Award Aisha Al Salem, Bahraini poet Fathiya Ajlan, as well as a number of prominent personalities from the Special Needs sector.

Through the event, Zain participated in honoring 19 distinguished mothers who showed dedication and determination to raise and develop their children with intellectual disabilities. The winners were from Kuwait, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates Qatar, the Kingdom of Bahrain, the Sultanate of Oman, Egypt, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and Lebanon.

Zain's strategic partnership of this annual event came in line with its support of the various social causes that are of interest to all segments of the society, especially within the special needs sector. The company is keen on reinforcing its partnerships with the many public and private entities that cater to people with special needs and their families within the local community all year round.

The Ideal Mother Award, held for the fifth consecutive year, mainly aimed at shedding light and recognizing the most distinguished and dedicated individual

efforts of mothers who cared for and developed their children with intellectual disabilities. The organizing committee selected 19 distinguished mothers from across Kuwait, the GCC, and the Arab region, and formally honored and recognized them during the special event held recently.

Zain constantly shoulders initiatives that work towards enhancing the society's welfare, especially within the special needs sector. Zain's long-term cooperation with the various private and public entities that cater to people with special needs springs from its belief in the importance of having a positive print by supporting and launching initiatives that cater to various interests of the community.

Zain dedicates a great part of its Corporate Sustainability and Social Responsibility strategy towards people with special needs. During 2016, the company inaugurated 'Zain Lab' in the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor's Career Rehabilitation Department. The fully equipped computer lab offers people with special needs the needed equipment and necessary training for them to explore job opportunities that suit their specific needs in both the public and private sectors. The initiative also aims at empowering people with special needs to be more productive and active members of the Kuwaiti society.

The company also participates in the annual celebration of the International Day of People with Special Needs on December 3rd of every year. This United Nations sanctioned day aims at celebrating the capabilities of people with special needs and their families in a family-oriented atmosphere. Zain also holds annual visits to people with special needs at the Ministry of Social Affairs' Care Centers throughout many occasions each year.



AHLI UNITED BANK PRESENTED ITS ANNUAL LECTURE FOR NEW LAW SCHOOL GRADUATES

KUWAIT: As part of its leading role in community development, while raising the knowledge of recent Kuwaiti law school graduates to increase their knowledge, Ahli United Bank (AUB) recently presented a lecture to fresh law school graduates, which was held at the General Social Insurance Authority's headquarters. Amal Al-Howaidi, the lawyer at the Bank's legal department presented the lecture, which focused on the legal aspects concerning trademarks. The lecture highlighted the definition and structure of what trademarks constitute, the types and forms of trademarks,

how they are chosen, registration process and protecting copyright issues against forgery and replications.

Moreover, the lecture further outlined Kuwait's international rating in terms of trademarks registering, as well as showcasing the most well-known trademarks across the GCC. The lecture also included an open discussion and Q&A session focusing on practical examples about legal treatments for trademarks.

On this occasion, Ahli United Bank said in a press release: we are proud to participate in this program at the General Social Insurance Authority for seven consecutive years, starting in 2011. Especially that the lectures presented by AUB are witnessing great success and positive interaction from the young law school graduates at the Authority.

This lecture is part of Ahli United Bank's commitment towards its social responsibility; and its awareness of the importance of enriching the graduates' knowledge. To this end, Ahli United Bank put together a special training program for fresh law graduates, which included the introduction to the basis of the banking operations and related legal principles.

Crime

Report

DUO ARRESTED FOR SEXUAL ASSAULT

KUWAIT: A Somali woman and her friend were raped by two citizens near Wafra farms, according to their statements. The Somali woman told police that she recently started dating a citizen, and decided to meet him with her friend in Qadisiya, where he was joined by another man. The two men asked them to get in their car, and drove them to Wafra farms, where they assaulted them. The women lodged a complaint with Ahmadi detectives who sent them to forensics to confirm the claims. Detectives arrested the two men after two hours, said security source.

House stormed

Mubarak Al-Kabeer detectives are looking for a man who stormed a house, tied up a woman who was inside, then cut her hair and escaped. Forensics and criminal detectives went to the house in Ali Sabah Al-Salem area as an investigation was launched. The girl was questioned as part of investigations to determine the suspect's identity, as detectives believe that she might know him.

Drug abuse

A girl lost consciousness due to excessive use of drugs. A security source said a call was received from a group of girls about the incident, which happened during a gathering. Police and medical emergency teams rushed to the house and took the girl to Mubarak hospital, where doctors managed to stabilize her condition. The doctor reported to the hospital's investigator that the girl was under the influence of drugs. Her friends said she abused too much drugs and lost consciousness as a result.

Con artist at large

Three female citizens lodged consecutive complaints at Rumaihiya police station accusing a citizen of swindling, a security source said. A citizen born in 1938 told police that she was scammed by a citizen who sold her a real estate in a Gulf country, then when it was time to deliver, he disappeared and switched off his phone. Two similar complaints were lodged by female citizens born in 1969 and 1998 respectively.

—Translated from the Arabic press



Street turned to rubble in Mosul

EGYPT'S LEADER JUGGLES INSURGENCY, ECONOMY

SISI FENDS OFF CRITICISM OF RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AND AUTHORITARIANISM

CAIRO: The deadly bombings of two churches have left Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi grappling with the question of how to defeat a tenacious Islamic State insurgency that three years of warfare have failed to crush. He's also trying to repair a broken economy, carrying out tough austerity measures that have won praise from economists but have sent prices soaring. El-Sisi must juggle these tasks while fending off criticism of human rights violations and growing authoritarianism - all with an eye to presidential elections due in 14 months.

One thing he has going for him - he hopes - is strong support from US President Donald Trump. El-Sisi received a warm welcome and praise from Trump in Washington last week after being shunned by the Obama administration. The Egyptian leader is believed to have brought a wish list for weapons and hardware for the fight against the militants, including drones and helicopter gunships. But so far, it is hard to tell if El-Sisi has new answers on fighting the militants after the attacks, in which suicide bombers hit churches in Tanta and Alexandria during Palm Sunday services, killing 45 and wounding dozens.

In Tanta, the bomber managed to inside the church before blowing himself up, despite promises of increased security after an IS church bombing in Cairo in December that killed dozens. There was one new response: The security chief in the Nile Delta province where Tanta is located was fired, an unusually swift and rare show of accountability. El-Sisi also declared a three-month state of emergency and created a new state council to fight terror and extremism. Army troops were ordered to help police protect vital installations. But it is unclear how effective these will be. Northern Sinai, where the IS militants are centered, has already been under a state of emergency for several years. In the rest of Egypt, security forces already informally wield broad powers of arrest - the new status enshrines those powers and is likely to fuel human rights criticism. The state council will be made up of Cabinet ministers, heads of state

institutions, experts and public figures - a body that could bring new ideas to the fight or could prove an unwieldy talk shop that becomes irrelevant. Visibly angry, El-Sisi said in televised comments that Egyptians must stay united. He also renewed familiar pleas: Religious discourse must be moderated and the media must safeguard the nation's interests.

An adapting insurgency

The security forces have largely succeeded in keeping the insurgency contained in northern Sinai, away from the heavily populated Nile Valley. Thousands of troops backed by tanks, fighter jets and helicopter gunships have been deployed in the area bordering Israel and Gaza. But the militants are adapting and finding new ways of hitting back, shattering frequent claims in the pro-government media that the insurgency is on its last legs. Though the militants have been unable to control territory, they carry out sudden attacks in north Sinai towns to show they can operate with relative impunity. They have shifted from suicide car bombings against security forces and instead have grown more effective at planting roadside bombs.

The security forces meanwhile are left with little or no actionable intelligence from informers, a vital component of counterterrorism. That is in part because they are believed to have lost much of the goodwill of the local population because of tactics like collective punishment, indiscriminate shelling and random arrests. Also, the militants have succeeded in instilling fear among residents, sending the message that any person, tribe or clan that works with the security forces faces death. In the main northern Sinai city of El-Arish, IS fighters have brought suspected informers into the streets and killed them. They have assassinated critical Muslim clerics.

Attacks on Christians

IS has made clear Christians are now a target. A series of killings of Christians in north Sinai sent members of the minority community fleeing across the Suez Canal to the city of Ismailia

for refuge. The aim appears to be in part to embarrass El-Sisi by exposing holes in security. The church bombings show that IS has been able to plant small cells of fighters in Egypt's heartland, a scenario that could prove disastrous for the country's stability and economic prospects. They also stoke political tensions. Christians have been strong backers of El-Sisi since, as army chief, he ousted Islamist President Mohammed Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood in 2013. The attacks push the community more toward the

president but also stoke anger among Christians that the government is not doing enough to protect them.

The Economy

The bombings and the ensuing state of emergency only further undermine efforts to revive Egypt's tourism industry - an engine of economic growth that has been severely damaged by the turmoil of recent years. El-Sisi has sought to dismantle a decades-old contract that allowed

Egyptians to buy cheap food items, fuel and a range of services in return for their loyalty. He knew the serious risks, particularly the potential for popular unrest, but still went ahead - a show of courage that his predecessors always balked at. Fuel subsidies have been partially lifted and charges were hiked on electricity and water. Late last year, he took the boldest step, launching harsh austerity measures in return for a vital \$12 billion loan from the IMF. The Egyptian pound was floated, sending its value tumbling.—AP



TANTA: Blood stains pews inside the St George Church after a suicide bombing, in Tanta, Egypt. — AP

AFTER EGYPT CHURCH BOMBINGS, COPTS COMPLAIN OF EXTREMISTS

CAIRO: For years, Egyptian Copt Michel Fahmy could hear a Muslim preacher invoking God's wrath on Christians in sermons blared over loudspeakers from a mosque near his home. The radical message, he says, is a reason for jihadist attacks on his minority like the twin bombings of churches on Sunday that killed 45 people. Sunday's attacks followed a December 11 suicide bombing in a Cairo church.

The Islamic State group claimed responsibility for all three. "In mosques there are prayers to harm Christians," says Fahmy, referring to Friday prayer sermons in which some preachers lead congregations in imprecations against Islam's "enemies". "They incite to violence, youths are being filled with hatred against us and acting on it," says the 50-year old who runs a souvenir shop in Cairo. "It concerns us all. It leads to terrorism and to Christians being targeted," he adds.

The shock from the Palm Sunday attacks was palpable on the faces of Coptic passersby doing their Holy Week shopping, as they passed by the wooden crucifixes and statues of Christ and Mary lining Fahmy's store front. "Society does not teach youths that Muslims and Copts are brothers and of the same nation, upbringing plays a big role" he says. Some Copts point to the school system, where Muslims and Christians attend different religious classes. "The problem starts at school where children are treated differently," says Lillian Anis, 23, who works in a clothing store. "In school some refused to speak to me because I was a Christian," she adds. Coptic Christians have also long complained of radical discourse in some mosques and on Islamic satellite channels.

'Incitement everywhere'

Several Coptic Christians said they had heard similar messages in Friday sermons or on Islamic television channels. President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi has repeatedly urged Cairo's Al-Azhar, the prestigious Sunni Muslim institution,

to "modernize religious discourse." Following Sunday's bombing, he said a committee would be formed to tackle the issue. Many of the Islamic satellite channels in Egypt that broadcast criticisms of Christians had been closed after the military ouster of Islamist president Mohamed Morsi in 2013. The religious endowments ministry which oversees mosques has also cracked down on unlicensed preachers and mosques, and picks the weekly topic for Friday sermons nationwide, to ensure any potentially subversive political content is avoided. Sectarian unrest in Egypt had increased since the 1970s when president Anwar Sadat was seen as empowering Islamists over his socialist opponents. The violence usually revolved around rumors of Christian-Muslim love affairs or reports that Christians were building churches.

Jihadists have also targeted Christians before the recent bombings, with a suicide bomber blowing himself up outside a Coptic Church in Alexandria in 2011. Some Islamist extremists look down on Christians as second-class citizens. Law student Abram Anis says the extremists are "brainwashed by the religious incitement they hear against Christians everywhere." The incitement intensified after Morsi's ouster, which led to a crackdown that killed hundreds of his supporters and unleashed a jihadist insurgency that has left hundreds of policemen and soldiers dead. Morsi's overthrow was announced by then army chief Sisi, flanked by Coptic Pope Tawadros II and Muslim religious leaders and politicians. The Islamists singled out the Christians for blame, and following the deadly dispersal of pro-Morsi camps in Cairo on August 14, 2013 attacked dozens of Coptic properties across the country. Sunday's attacks brought home the dangers of the incitement to the Christian minority, which makes up about 10 percent of Egypt's 90 million people. "I'm afraid for my daughter-I can't stop worrying about it," says Hala Bushra, clasping the hand of her five-year-old.—AFP



CAIRO: An Egyptian Coptic nun weeps as she looks at damage inside the St Mark Cathedral in central Cairo, following a bombing. —AP

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MOSUL: Two boys pose for a photo while sitting atop a destroyed house in a neighborhood recently retaken by Iraqi security forces from Islamic State militants, in west Mosul, Iraq. — AP

STREET TURNED TO RUBBLE IN MOSUL

FOOD REMAINS A PROBLEM

MOSUL: Two houses are all that remain standing on the street with no name in western Mosul, just blocks from the front lines of the battle to retake Iraq's second-largest city from the Islamic State group. The once-bustling neighborhood has been reduced to rubble, its sidewalks piled high with a jumble of concrete, bricks and metal. Standing amid the debris of what was once his home on the newly liberated street, Maan Nawaf blamed IS for the destruction around him.

It was IS fighters, he said, who drew the devastating firepower of the Iraqi and coalition warplanes to the street by positioning snipers on top of the buildings after ordering residents to leave, including his elderly mother. "We said we have a disabled woman, she can't walk. They said if you don't go, we will kill you," he said. The family knew the militants would make good on the threat: IS fighters killed two of his brothers, one of whom was a policeman, as well as his nephew, Nawaf said.

For the few residents who remain in Mosul's Wadi Hajar neighborhood, the war is far from over. Just blocks away, police units fired mortars at IS positions and helicopters circled overhead,

firing into the streets below. IS returned fire only sporadically, the treacherous calm luring the residents into the street between the crashes of mortars. Iraqi forces backed by US-led coalition airstrikes launched their assault on western Mosul in mid-February after taking the eastern sector of the city in more than three months of heavy fighting. While nearly two months of house-to-house battles have flushed the militants out of parts of the city's western sector, fighting rages nearby.

Food remains a problem. Few aid trucks reach the area and food distribution can descend into chaos. Among those who managed to grab a parcel at a recent distribution was Firas Mohammed Al-Jibouri. Taking it home with his young son, he opened it in his living room to find a packet of baby milk, bulgur and two bottles of oil. There was also some sugar and wheat. "It's just enough for one day. We are 25 people here - 25. Just one day," he said, looking forlornly at the small pile of provisions.

A former truck driver, Jibouri has lost his livelihood: His house is one of the two still standing but his truck is gone. Any vehicles that survived

the airstrikes were used for barricades or destroyed by advancing Iraqi forces fearful of car bombs. Out in the street, Jibouri pointed at individual piles of rubble and recalled those who were killed there, many of them members of his extended family. One pile used to be the Khaled Ibn Al-Waleed mosque, the centerpiece of the neighborhood. Jibouri said 43 people were killed there two months ago when it was hit by back-to-back airstrikes, the second striking as people were trying to dig out the victims of the first.

Surrounding one of the damaged trucks, a group of men and boys worked to remove a valuable intact wheel. One child rolled it away, and it wobbled away from him into a puddle of mud. As he struggled to lift it, a man and his young daughter sat silently in front of their house. Mahmoud Alo said the only thing he hears from his daughter, Amna, these days is a brief yes or no. Clearly traumatized by the violence around her, she has been sleeping little and spends her days staring into space. As gunfire reverberated nearby, drowning out her father's words, Amna looked around nervously at a helicopter rocketing an IS position. — AP

WHY IT MATTERS: AHMADINEJAD FILING FOR IRANIAN PRESIDENCY

DUBAI: Former Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has defied the advice of the Islamic Republic's supreme leader and registered to run again for the nation's presidency. While the hard-line showman's candidacy still would need to be approved by authorities, his entering the race could upend politics in the country of 80 million people and affect global affairs. Here's why it matters:

Internal politics

Ahmadinejad's decision runs directly counter to advice offered in September by Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who has final say over all state matters. While Ahmadinejad described that directive as "only advice," his decision challenges Khamenei's authority. Ahmadinejad's 2009 re-election sparked massive internal unrest. Coming back to the political stage now could reopen those wounds.

Worried neighbors

Sunni Arab states in the Gulf remain highly suspicious of Iran, especially after it secured its landmark nuclear deal with world powers. They see Iranian influence in the campaign of Shiite rebels in Yemen who hold that nation's capital despite a Saudi-led military campaign against them. They also stand opposed to Iran's backing of embattled Syrian President Bashar Assad. Israel is staunchly opposed to Ahmadinejad, who questioned the scale of the Holocaust and called for Israel's destruction as he presided over a massive expansion of Iran's nuclear activities.

The nuclear deal

Ahmadinejad's return to Iran's presidency could see the West, particularly the US, reevaluate the nuclear deal struck under the

administration of moderate President Hassan Rouhani, who is expected to seek re-election. Iran agreed to limit its enrichment of uranium in exchange for the lifting of some economic sanctions. Since the deal, Iranian oil has started flowing more freely in the world market. Airplane manufacturers Airbus and Boeing Co. have struck billion-dollar deals. US President Donald Trump, a staunch critic of the nuclear deal, could move to dismantle it, particularly if a hard-liner like Ahmadinejad is elected.

His chances of winning

Ahmadinejad's candidacy must be approved by the Guardian Council, a clerical body, before he can stand in the May 19 election. Half the 12-member council's members are selected by Iran's supreme leader and half by the country's judicial chief with parliament's approval. Even if his candidacy is given the green light, it's unclear whether he has enough popular support to win. Ahmadinejad remains a deeply polarizing figure, even among hard-liners, and his decision to register for the election could be a political stunt to try to remain relevant.

The bottom line

Iran remains a major force in the Middle East and supports Shiite militias fighting the Islamic State group in Iraq. It routinely has tense encounters with the US Navy in the Strait of Hormuz and the Persian Gulf. An Ahmadinejad presidency could inflame those tensions while increasing the likelihood of an Israeli military strike on the country's nuclear facilities. His name appearing on the ballot could cause unrest and spark other challenges to Iran's clerically overseen government. — AP

KAZAKHSTAN SETS A TIMELINE TO SWITCH TO LATIN ALPHABET

ASTANA: Kazakhstan's President Nursultan Nazarbayev yesterday set out a timeline for the ex-Soviet country to switch from Cyrillic letters to the Latin alphabet as part of a modernization drive. The 76-year-old leader has long called for ditching the Cyrillic alphabet which Kazakhstan shares with neighbor and ally Russia in favor of the more widely used Latin one. In an article published in the state-owned Egemen Kazakhstan newspaper Nazarbayev called for the government to begin "preparatory work" and "create a schedule" for the switch.

"By the end of 2017, after consultation with academics and representa-

tives of the public, a single standard for the new Kazakh alphabet and script should be developed," Nazarbayev wrote. "From 2018, [Kazakhstan] must train specialists to teach the new alphabet and produce textbooks for secondary schools," Nazarbayev added in the Kazakh-language paper. Nazarbayev has said in the past that the country should switch to the Latin alphabet by 2025. The Kazakh language is part of the Turkic family, like Turkish. It currently uses a modified version of the Cyrillic alphabet with 42 letters. Kazakhstan briefly used the Latin alphabet during the Soviet era before switching to Cyrillic letters in 1940. — AFP

Kuwait Times Celebrates the 12th edition of student painting competition Kuwait Beautiful & Green

Sponsored by Zain, Jazeera Airways, Samsung
Hosted by; JW Marriott Hotel

With the aim of boosting environmental public awareness, developing the sense of aesthete and caring for environmental issues in Kuwait, Kuwait Times prepared for its 12th Students Painting Competition to invest the success so far achieved since its inception in 1994, namely that achieved in the previous cycle in 2016 where over 8000 students aging 618- from over 135 public, private, Arab and foreign schools in Kuwait took part. We do hope 2017 participants would exceed 15000.

It has been already twelve years since Kuwait Times started organizing the 'Kuwait Beautiful & Green' students painting competition with the aim of promoting students' environmental awareness, encouraging them to effectively take part in various environment-oriented activities with an ultimate end of acquiring more knowledge and skills, sense of responsibility as well as positive attitudes. It also aims at boosting the principles of moderation and tolerance among students and encourages them to be ambitious, to protect public resources and to take sustainability-related initiatives that would help protect the environment. Environmental protection is not just a motto or meaningless words. It is in fact an integral part of our history and heritage. It is a way of life because we have been and will always be committed to peaceful co-existence between man and nature.

All Students aging 618- in various stages were invited to participate in the competition with drawings and paintings elaborating their environmental passions as the environment are the base of sustainable development in the form of planting rather than desertification, cleanliness rather than negligence and public safety rather than the lethal pollution.

This is how we want our Kuwait to be; a green beautiful oasis that reflects the beauty and high taste within our souls.

The last day of receiving drawing sheets will be on 20th April 2017



COLOMBIA FORCES STRUGGLE TO ROOT OUT COCA

LLORENTE: Colombian forces sent to rip green coca plants from the earth to end a trade fueling violence complain the crops are being replanted as fast as they can destroy them. Colombia is ranked by the United Nations as the world's biggest producer of coca—the raw material for cocaine—which has funded armed groups in the more than half-century conflict.

In a new peace deal, the state and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the country's biggest rebel group, agreed to eradicate coca and replace it with safer crops like coffee and cacao. In Narino, a major coca-producing region in the southwest, those carrying out the eradication work are feeling exasperated. Sweat soaks the face of Ivan Hidalgo, a 19-year-old assistant police official, rifle on shoulder, who has spent the past two months uprooting coca plants in the sweltering settlement of Llorente. "You're tearing out the coca," he said, "and the farmers are planting it again behind your back."

'Too much coca'

The surrounding municipality of Tumaco had nearly 17,000 hectares in 2015, according to the latest UN figures. The Narino district overall has

nearly 30,000. Among so much coca, assistant police officials like Pablo Riveros are tearing out the plants with their bare hands. "There is too much coca," Riveros says. Authorities have since January eradicated 200 hectares by hand and a further 400 hectares by spraying them with chemical herbicide. But their efforts hardly seem to be making a dent in Narino. The mountains of the area are still blanketed in lush green coca leaves. "The community is always going to be there watching out for people coming to eradicate the crops," says Elvins Caldon, who sprays the coca with herbicide.

Earning a living

Coca farmers complain they are getting a raw deal under the eradication agreement. They say the government has not delivered on promises to replace the crop, which yields four harvests a year. Coca growers in Narino have blocked roads and faced off with authorities in recent weeks, sparking clashes that have left at least one person dead and four injured. "We want a decent living for our children," the National Coca, Poppy and Marijuana Growers' Coordinator organization said in a statement. — AFP



TUMACO: Colombian policemen destroy a coca plantation in a rural area of Tumaco, department of Narino, Colombia. — AFP

DAILY MAIL APOLOGIZES TO FIRST LADY MELANIA TRUMP

LONDON: Britain's Daily Mail newspaper yesterday apologized to US First Lady Melania Trump and agreed to pay her damages over an article that included allegations that she worked as an escort in the 1990s. "The defendant is here today publicly to set the record straight, and to apologize to the claimant for any distress and embarrassment that the articles may have caused her," Catrin Evans, the lawyer for Associated Newspapers, publisher of the Daily Mail and MailOnline, told the High Court in London.

Although the total amount of damages was not disclosed, the Press Association news agency said it was believed to be under \$3 million (2.8 million euros). John Kelly, Melania Trump's lawyer, said the article in the Daily Mail-Britain's second biggest-selling newspaper-in print and online in August last year "included false and defamatory claims". The allegations "questioned the nature of her work as a professional model, and republished allegations that she provided services beyond simply modeling," Kelly said.

The article stated that there was no support for the allegations and provided denials from her spokesperson and from Paolo Zampolli, who ran the modeling agency where she worked. But the allegations "strike at the heart of the claimant's personal integrity and dignity," Kelly added. Trump's lawyers launched a lawsuit against the Daily Mail in September in New York, asking for \$150 million in damages.

The paper had already published a retraction in September, saying it "did not intend to state or suggest that these alle-



US First Lady Melania Trump

gations are true". In documents filed in February, the US first lady said that because of the Daily Mail's allegations she and her brand had missed out on "multiple millions of dollars" in licensing, marketing and endorsement opportunities that would otherwise have been available to someone spending time as "one of the most photographed women in the world". She said the publication had prevented her from reaping the "once-in-a-lifetime" windfall to be had as a business lady married to new US President Donald Trump. — AFP

PUTIN SAYS TRUST ERODES UNDER PRESIDENT TRUMP

MOSCOW ICILY RECEIVES TILLERSON

MOSCOW: Vladimir Putin said yesterday trust had eroded between the United States and Russia under President Donald Trump, as Moscow delivered an unusually hostile reception to Secretary of State Rex Tillerson in a face-off over Syria. Any hope in Russia that the Trump administration would herald less confrontational relations has been dashed in the past week after the new US leader fired missiles at Syria to punish Moscow's ally for its suspected use of poison gas.

Just as Tillerson sat down for talks, a senior Russian official assailed the "primitiveness and loutishness" of US rhetoric, part of a volley of statements that appeared timed to maximize the awkwardness during the first visit by a member of Trump's cabinet. "One could say that the level of trust on a working level, especially on the military level, has not improved but has rather deteriorated," Putin said in an interview broadcast on Russian television moments after Tillerson sat down with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov in an ornate hall.

Assad's enemies

Putin doubled down on Russia's support for Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad, repeating denials that Assad's government was to blame for the gas attack last week and adding a new theory that the attack may have been faked by Assad's enemies. Moments earlier, Lavrov greeted Tillerson with unusually icy remarks, denouncing the missile strike on Syria as illegal and accusing Washington of behaving unpredictably. "I will not hide the fact that we have a lot of questions, taking into account the extremely ambiguous and sometimes contradictory ideas which have been expressed in Washington across the whole spectrum of bilateral and multilateral affairs," Lavrov said.

"And of course, that's not to mention that apart from the statements, we observed very recently the extremely worrying actions, when an illegal attack against Syria was undertaken," Lavrov also noted that many key State Department posts remain vacant since the new administration took office—a point of sensitivity in Washington. One of Lavrov's deputies was even more undiplomatic. "In general, primitiveness and loutishness are very characteristic of the current rhetoric coming out of Washington. We'll hope that this doesn't become the substance of American policy," Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov told Russia's state-owned RIA news agency. "As a whole, the administration's stance with regards to Syria remains a mystery. Inconsistency is what comes to mind first of all."

Tillerson kept to more calibrated remarks, saying his aim was "to further clarify areas of sharp difference so that we can better understand why these differences exist and what the prospects for narrowing those differences may be." "I look forward to a very open, candid, frank exchange so that we can better define the US-Russian relationship from this point forward," he told Lavrov. After journalists were ushered out of the room, Lavrov's spokeswoman, Maria Zakharova, wrote on her Facebook page that US journalists travelling with Tillerson had behaved as if they were in a "bazaar" by shouting questions to Lavrov.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Tillerson might meet Putin later on Wednesday if the two top diplomats decided it would be useful to brief the Russian president on their talks. But Peskov too did not hold back his criticism, saying calls from Western powers for Russia to cut support for Assad amounted to giving terrorists a free hand. Moscow's hostility to Trump administration figures is a sharp change from last year, when Putin hailed Trump as a strong figure and Russian state television was consistently full of effusive praise for him.

Cover-up

The White House has accused Moscow of trying to cover up Assad's use of chemical weapons after the attack on a town killed 87 people last week. Trump responded to the gas attack by firing 59 cruise missiles at a Syrian air base on Friday. Washington warned Moscow, and Russian troops at the base were not hit. Moscow has stood by Assad, saying the poison gas belonged to rebels, an explanation Washington dismisses as beyond credible. Putin said that either gas belonging to the rebels was released when it was hit by a Syrian strike on a rebel arms dump, or the rebels faked the incident to discredit Assad.

Trump came to the presidency promising to seek closer ties with Russia and greater cooperation fighting against their common enemy in Syria, Islamic State. Tillerson is a former oil executive who was awarded Russia's Order of

Friendship by Putin. Last week's poison gas attack and the US retaliation upended what many in Moscow hoped would be a transformation in relations between the two countries, which reached a post-Cold War low under Trump's predecessor Barack Obama. The United States and its European allies imposed financial sanctions on Russia in 2014 after Putin seized territory from neighboring Ukraine.

Washington is leading a campaign of air strikes in Syria against Islamic State fighters and has backed rebels fighting against Assad during a six-year civil war, but until last week the United States had avoided directly targeting the Syrian govern-

ment. "We're not going into Syria," he said in excerpts of the interview on the station's website. "But when I see people using horrible, horrible chemical weapons ... and see these beautiful kids that are dead in their father's arms, or you see kids gasping for life ... when you see that, I immediately called (Defense Secretary) General Mattis." Tillerson travelled to Moscow with a joint message from Western powers that Russia should withdraw its support for Assad after a meeting of the Group of Seven industrialized economies also attended by Middle East allies.

Some of Washington's allies had been wary of Trump, who spoke during his election campaign



MOSCOW: Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov (right) welcomes US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson before a meeting in Moscow yesterday. Tillerson meets Lavrov as Washington confronts Moscow about its support for the Syrian regime. — AFP

ment. Russia, meanwhile, intervened in the civil war on Assad's side in 2015 and has troops on the ground, which it says are advising government forces. Both Washington and Moscow say their main enemy is Islamic State, although they back opposing sides in the wider civil war which has killed more than 400,000 people and spawned the world's worst refugee crisis.

In an interview with the Fox Business Network, Trump said he was not planning to order US forces into Syria, but that he had to respond to the images of dead children poisoned in the gas

of seeking closer ties with Moscow and questioned the value of US support for its traditional friends. Tillerson's mission sees the Trump administration taking on the traditional US role as spokesman for a unified Western position. Trump's relations with Russia are also a domestic issue, as US intelligence agencies have accused Moscow of using computer hacking to intervene in the election to help Trump win. The FBI is investigating whether any Trump campaign figures colluded with Moscow, which the White House denies. — Reuters



PRETORIA: Tens of thousands of opposition parties and civil society organization members take part in a march to Union Buildings to protest against South African president Jacob Zuma and ask for his resignation yesterday in Pretoria, South Africa. — AFP

RIVAL SOUTH AFRICAN PARTIES UNITE AT ANTI-ZUMA PROTEST

PRETORIA: Rival South African opposition parties joined forces yesterday when several thousand demonstrators marched through the capital Pretoria calling for President Jacob Zuma to resign. The march to Union Buildings, the official seat of government, was organized on Zuma's 75th birthday and came after nationwide rallies against the president last week. Zuma's recent sacking of respected finance minister Pravin Gordhan has fanned years of public anger over government corruption scandals, record unemployment and slowing economic growth.

Supporters of the radical leftist Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), the main opposition Democratic Alliance (DA), and smaller parties mingled at yesterday's demonstration in a display of unity. Police said the event had begun peacefully. "I came because Zuma has to step down. He sold the country. I don't want him anymore," Mavis Madisha, a 37-year-old EFF supporter said. Gordhan's sacking triggered unprecedented criticism from senior figures within the ruling African National Congress (ANC), including from Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa. The ANC has since tried to close ranks behind Zuma and has vowed to defeat a no-confidence vote against him in parliament. The vote is scheduled for next Tuesday but may be delayed due to a legal tussle over whether it should be a secret ballot.

'Moment of crisis'?

"At this moment of crisis, we, as political

parties, put our differences aside for one common cause to save South Africa from Jacob Zuma," said John Moodey, DA leader in Gauteng province, which includes Pretoria and Johannesburg. "(Zuma's supporters) will do everything to stay in power, even intimidating MPs. With a secret ballot, we could put Zuma out by a huge majority. "Even if it doesn't succeed, I can guarantee you that we will have a coalition government in 2019." Zuma, who came to office in 2009, is due to step down as head of the ANC in December, and as national president ahead of the 2019 general election.

He is seen as favoring his ex-wife, former African Union chief Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, to succeed him. Protesters yesterday held placards reading "Zuma must fall", "Hamba tsotsi!" ("Go away thief!"), and "Zuma liar". Zuma has been accused of being in the sway of the wealthy Gupta business family, allegedly granting them influence over government appointments, contracts and state-owned businesses. The Constitutional Court last year found Zuma guilty of violating the constitution after he refused to repay taxpayers' money used to refurbish his private rural house. He is also fighting a court order that could reinstate almost 800 corruption charges against him over a multi-billion dollar arms deal in the 1990s. The dismissal of Gordhan saw the Fitch and Standard & Poor's agencies cut South Africa's sovereign credit rating to junk status due to fears of political instability and growing corruption. — AFP

NIGERIAN POLICE THWART ATTACK TARGETING US, BRITISH EMBASSIES

ABUJA: Nigerian security officials said yesterday they have thwarted plans by Islamic State group-linked Boko Haram members to attack the embassies of the United States and Britain. A statement by the Department of State Services said that late last month it broke up a ring that had "perfected plans to attack" the embassies along with "other Western interests" in Nigeria's capital, Abuja. The statement said five suspects who had been based in Benue state and the Federal Capital Territory were arrested. It gave no further details, and officials with the department could not immediately be reached.

The US embassy did not immediately respond to a request for comment. The State Department on April 5 issued an updated travel warning for Nigeria, warning that Boko Haram has targeted government installations and other venues in the past in the Federal Capital Territory and elsewhere. One faction of Boko Haram is allied with the Islamic State group. Nigeria's president late last year declared the Boko Haram insurgency "crushed," but its fighters continue to threaten the vast region around Lake Chad in defiance of a multinational force. It has increasingly used children, especially girls, as suicide bombers. Boko Haram's seven-year Islamic uprising has killed more than 20,000 people and driven 2.6 million from their homes, with millions facing starvation.

Using kids as bombers

Radical Islamic militants from Boko Haram

are increasingly forcing children to carry out bombings, with the number of attacks since January already nearly reaching the total for all of last year, according to a report released yesterday by the UN children's agency, UNICEF says at least 117 attacks have been carried out by youth in the Lake Chad basin region since 2014, with nearly 80 percent of the bombs strapped to girls, who were sometimes drugged before their missions. The very sight of children near marketplaces and checkpoints is sparking fear, according to Marie-Pierre Poirier, UNICEF's regional director for West and Central Africa. As a result, nearly 1,500 children were detained last year across Nigeria, Cameroon, Niger and Chad. "These children are victims, not perpetrators," Poirier said. "Forcing or deceiving them into committing such horrific acts is reprehensible." Children have been used to carry out 27 attacks in the first three months of this year, after 30 such attacks last year.

The new report coincides with this week's third anniversary of the mass abduction of Chibok schoolgirls by Boko Haram, which has pledged allegiance to the Islamic State. The mass abduction of 276 girls from a boarding school in Nigeria in 2014 mobilized an international campaign to find and free the girls, many of whom were forced into marriages with fighters and became pregnant. Dozens quickly escaped, and 21 were freed in October through negotiations with Boko Haram mediated by the Swiss government and the International Committee of the Red Cross. — Agencies

WHAT CHANGES UNDER TURKEY'S NEW CONSTITUTION?

ISTANBUL: Turkey on Sunday votes in a landmark referendum on a new constitution that would grant President Recep Tayyip Erdogan expanded powers. While critics say the move is part of

a grab by Erdogan for one-man rule, supporters say it will simply put Turkey in line with France and the United States and is needed for efficient government. The current constitution was

adopted in 1982 after the 1980 military coup. Erdogan has denounced as "lies" claims by opponents that parliament would be neutralized and the judiciary would come under his political authority. What would change under the proposed 18-article constitution for the nation of 79 million people?

More powers for Erdogan

Under the new constitution, the president would have strengthened executive powers to directly appoint top public officials including ministers. The president would also be able to assign one or several vice presidents. The office and position of prime minister, currently held by Binali Yildirim, would be scrapped. The changes would implement a shake-up in the judiciary, which Erdogan has accused of being influenced by supporters of his ally-turned-foe, the Pennsylvania-based Islamic preacher Fethullah Gulen.

Gulen is blamed for the July failed coup but denies the government's accusations. The president and parliament would together be able to choose four members of the Supreme Board of Judges and Prosecutors (HSYK), a key judicial council that appoints and removes personnel in the judiciary. Parliament would choose

seven members on its own in what would be renamed the Board of Judges and Prosecutors (HSK). Military courts, which have convicted officers and even sentenced former Prime Minister Adnan Menderes to death following the 1960 coup, would in the future not be allowed.

Longer state of emergency

Under the proposed constitution, a state of emergency would be imposed in the event of an "uprising against the homeland" or "acts of violence which put the nation in... danger of being divided". The president would decide whether or not to impose a state of emergency and then present it to the parliament. Initially the emergency would last six months-as opposed to three now-then it can be extended by parliament after a presidential request for four months each time. Turkey has twice extended the current state of emergency imposed after the failed July 15 coup.

Erdogan can rejoin AKP

The number of members of the Turkish parliament would rise from 550 to 600. The minimum age limit for MPs would also be lowered from 25 to 18. Legislative elections would take place once every five years-instead of four-

and on the same day as the presidential elections. The parliament would still have power to enact, modify and remove legislation. If the president were accused or suspected of a crime, then parliament could request an investigation. The president will also have to be a Turkish citizen at least 40 years old, and can be a member of a political party. Currently the president must be impartial and without party favor, although opponents have accused Erdogan of blatantly flouting this. The change would again allow Erdogan to become leader of the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) that he co-founded.

Erdogan in power to 2029?

The proposed constitution states that the next presidential and parliamentary elections are to be held simultaneously on November 3, 2019. The president would have a five-year term with a maximum of two mandates. Erdogan was elected president in August 2014 after over a decade as prime minister, in the first ever direct elections for a Turkish head of state. But with the clock wound back under the new system, the changes would mean that Erdogan could stay in power for another two terms until 2029. —AFP



ISTANBUL: A Turkish woman supporting the 'No' vote in the upcoming constitutional referendum campaign waves a Turkish flag in front of Yeni Camii yesterday during a campaign rally for the 'yes' in Istanbul's Eminonu district. —AFP

BRUSSELS TELLS POLAND AND HUNGARY TO TAKE IN MIGRANTS OR FACE LEGAL ACTION AUSTRIA BACK ON BOARD BUT DIVISIVE PLAN STILL STALLED

BRUSSELS: The European Union's executive stepped up pressure on Poland and Hungary yesterday to take in asylum seekers under the bloc's migration plan or risk legal action if their reluctant governments refuse. Warsaw and Budapest have stonewalled the scheme to move 160,000 people from Italy and Greece - the main ports of arrival - to elsewhere in the EU. Other mem-

The influx of some 1.6 million refugees and migrants into the EU in 2014-2016 has led to rows on how to share the burden among member states. Only about 16,340 people have been moved so far under the emergency scheme that ends in September. "If Member States do not increase their relocations soon, the Commission will not hesitate to make use of its powers ...

Italy has been in the forefront of calling for cuts to EU subsidies to Poland and Hungary over migration. Germany, Sweden, Austria and France - the most frequent final destinations - have also been stepping up pressure on the hold-outs. Bulgaria, Croatia, Slovakia and the Czech Republic have taken in only a few asylum seekers and the European

Rare good news

In rare good news, Brussels noted that Austria has now decided to join the relocation program. Vienna was previously exempted since it had taken in some 90,000 asylum seekers in 2015 as it sits on one of the key migratory routes into Europe. Austria's interior minister said he would make preparations for the country to receive people, with the first group expected to be around 50 unaccompanied children from Italy. Some 14,000 people are currently eligible for relocation from Greece, the Commission said. It recommended that Italy speed up the necessary legal and security proceedings as it currently only has some 3,500 people waiting to be moved.

EU officials are split over whether to open legal proceedings over relocation, with some noting Poland and Hungary should be punished for undermining the bloc's solidarity. Others say that such so-called "infringements" would have to be launched against just about every EU state since so many cut corners on various agreements. Hungary has filed its own lawsuit against the relocation scheme, which assigns each EU state a specific number of asylum seekers to receive. A hearing at the EU's top European Court of Justice is due on May 10.

Poland and Hungary's disputes over migration with the bloc are just one area on which the two post-communist countries, now governed by eurosceptics, clash with Brussels and the wealthier western European states. The bloc has voiced concern over the weakening of the rule of law and undermining of democratic standards by both Budapest under Prime Minister Viktor Orban and Warsaw under the right-wing government of the Law and Justice (PiS) party. The Commission yesterday separately warned Hungary it risked being sued in court over a number of Orban's policies. —Reuters



TOMPA, Hungary: Syrians carry their belongings through the forest near the Hungarian border fence at the Tompa border station transit zone as the Hungarian Interior Minister Sandor Pinter (not pictured) presented the camp to the media. —AFP

ber states have also dragged their feet, leaving the divisive plan stalled. The eurosceptic governments in Poland and Hungary have also put their media and judiciary under tighter state control, raising concerns in Brussels and other EU capitals that they are infringing on the bloc's democratic checks and balances.

for those which have not complied," the bloc's executive arm said in a statement. The Commission had proposed to fine member states for failing to take in migrants, but there has been little political backing for such a step. A court case would not resolve the issue quickly, but could add to mounting pressure for action from other EU states.

Commission also underlined their weak response to the plan. The Commission statement recalled the relocation plan was decided by EU leaders in September 2015 despite Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Romania voting against it. Although generally opposed to it, Poland eventually voted with majority.

GERMAN POLICE INVESTIGATE 'ISLAMIST LINK' IN EXPLOSIONS

DORTMUND: German police investigated a possible Islamist link to three explosions that rocked the Borussia Dortmund football team bus as the club vowed yesterday it won't give in to "terror". Dortmund's Spanish international Marc Bartra and a policeman were injured in the roadside blasts set off as the team headed to a Champions League game against Monaco on Tuesday night. The match was put back yesterday amid a ratcheting up of security around Dortmund and in Munich where Bayern Munich take on Real Madrid.

Extra forces were deployed around team hotels and their buses will take designated safe routes to the stadiums. UEFA said "security procedures will be enhanced accordingly wherever needed". A letter found at the scene of the attack "claims responsibility for what happened," prosecutor Sandra Luecke said late Tuesday. The "authenticity is being verified," she added. Luecke did not give details, but a copy of the letter circulated by national media showed it referring to the Berlin Christmas market attack in December that killed 12 people. The attack was claimed by the Islamic State group.

It also demanded that Germany withdraw its deployment of Tornado reconnaissance missions in the anti-IS international coalition and close the US base at the western German town of Ramstein. The assault was described by Dortmund city's police chief as a "targeted

attack" against the team. But Dortmund's chief executive Hans-Joachim Watzke vowed that his side "will not give in to terror", as Dortmund players returned to training a day after the blasts. "We will play not only for ourselves today. We will play for everyone... we want to show that terror and hate can never determine our actions," he said in a statement. Monaco's vice president Vadim Vasilyev said "football must not be taken hostage", as he pledged that the quarter final will go ahead on Wednesday.

'Shocked players'

German authorities have not called the attack organized terrorism. But the probe has been taken over by federal prosecutors, whose remit includes terror investigations. Separately, national news agency DPA said a second claim of responsibility emerged online, this time possibly linked to "anti-fascist" far-left groups. But doubts over its authenticity were raised by sources in the radical-left. Germany has been on high alert since a series of jihadist attacks last year, including the Berlin market assault.

The explosives detonated minutes after the Dortmund team bus pulled away from the squad's hotel and headed for their quarter-final, first-leg tie against Monaco. Bartra underwent surgery on a broken wrist after he was hit by flying glass, Dortmund president Reinhard Rauball told NTV news channel. The

injured policeman, who was on a motorcycle escorting the team bus, suffered trauma from the noise of the blasts. "We are assuming that they were a targeted attack against the Dortmund team," said the western German city's police chief Gregor Lange. The explosives shattered the bus windows and the vehicle was burned on one side.

"The bus turned on to the main road, when there was a huge noise—a big explosion," Dortmund's Swiss goalkeeper Roman Burki told Swiss media. "After the bang, we all crouched down in the bus. We did not know if more would come." Some players hurled themselves to the ground, he said, adding that Bartra was "hit by splinters of broken glass".

'Hard to absorb'

Germany's best-selling Bild daily quoted anonymous sources saying that investigators were hunting for a getaway car used by the attacker. The vehicle had foreign car plates, said the newspaper, which added that police believed the explosives were a particular type of pipe-bomb. The announcement that the game was postponed was only made to the stunned stadium about 15 minutes before kick-off. In a show of solidarity, some Dortmund fans took in stranded Monaco supporters for the night. Bild also put out a full-page advert in Dortmund's yellow and its BVB 09 logo, with the message: "You'll never walk alone." —AFP



ANKARA: Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his wife Ermine wave to supporters from the balcony of the AK party headquarters. —AFP

TURKEY UNDER ERDOGAN

ISTANBUL: Turkish voters are to decide on Sunday whether to grant President Recep Tayyip Erdogan expanded powers in a referendum. Here are key dates since Erdogan's ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) came to power:

AKP takes over

The Islamic-rooted AKP scores its first electoral victory on November 3, 2002 after years of political instability and an unprecedented financial crisis. The victory sets off alarm bells in the secular establishment. Its leader Erdogan becomes prime minister in March 2003.

EU accession talks

From 2002 to 2004, Ankara adopts a broad range of democratic reforms, including allowing Kurdish-language broadcasts on public television and abolishing the death penalty. On October 3, 2005, it begins accession talks with the European Union (EU). However, the EU process has since stalled.

Presidential breakthrough

On August 28, 2007, lawmakers elect foreign minister Abdullah Gul as president, the first time an Islamic-rooted candidate is named to the country's highest office. His victory is seen as one for the AKP over lay factions backed by the army, and the new government progressively brings the army to heel. But it causes shudders in the secular establishment as Gul's wife wears the Islamic headscarf.

Ankara backs Syrian rebels

In 2011, Turkey sides with majority Sunni rebels in neighboring Syria who have launched a revolt against the government of Bashar Al-Assad. Ankara has since taken in some 2.9 million Syrian refugees.

Anti-Erdogan protests

On May 31, 2013, security forces crack down on demonstrators who staged a rally against government plans to redevelop a park near Istanbul's Taksim square. The protest quickly grows into nationwide demonstrations against Erdogan but peter out after a month. Erdogan is elected president on August 10, 2014 with 52 percent of a vote held for the first time by universal suffrage. Ever

since, he has argued that the position requires reinforced powers.

Kurdish rebellion resumes

In July 2015, the outlawed Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) breaks a unilateral ceasefire with the Turkish army and fighting resumes in an insurgency that has left tens of thousands dead in over three decades. Repeated attacks attributed to Kurdish militants or the Islamic State (IS) group have kept Turkey on edge ever since.

Coup attempt, then purges

Early on July 16, 2016 a failed coup by members in the army kills 249, not including the plotters. Erdogan blames the coup on exiled US-based Muslim cleric Fethullah Gulen. Since then more than 113,000 people are fired, suspended from their jobs, or detained. The government imposes control over the army whose political influence ebbs.

Making up with Moscow

Erdogan meets with Russian President Vladimir Putin on August 9, 2016 to cement relations with one of the main backers of Assad's regime in Syria. The meeting also helps restore trust after Turkey shot down a Russian jet over the Syrian-Turkish border in late 2015. Two weeks later, Turkey launches a major military operation in northern Syria, driving Islamic State group fighters from several cities. Another key target for Turkey is Kurdish militia groups which Ankara considers allies of PKK separatists.

Tensions with EU

In March 2017, several European countries cancel rallies by Turkish ministers and bar its politicians from campaigning in favor of a 'Yes' in the April 16 referendum. A war of words ensues, with Erdogan repeatedly accusing Germany and the Netherlands in particular of behaving like "Nazis".

Support for US strikes

On April 4 Erdogan denounces a suspected chemical attack that killed at least 86 civilians in rebel-held northwestern Syria, calling Assad "a murderer". Three days later Turkey welcomes a US missile strike on a Syrian regime airbase in retaliation for the attack. —AFP

TURKEY SET FOR WATERSHED POLL ON EXPANDING ERDOGAN POWERS

ISTANBUL: Turkey on Sunday votes in a tightly-contested referendum on expanding the powers of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan that will shape its political system for the next generation and determine the key NATO member's future relationship with the West. A crossroads in the history of the modern republic founded amid the ashes of the Ottoman Empire in 1923, the referendum is seen as too close to call, with the country polarized between the 'Yes' and 'No' camps.

Critics fear victory in the referendum on a new constitution creating an executive presi-

dency would pave the way for one-man rule and allow Erdogan to tear up the secular principles established by Turkey's founder Mustafa Kemal Ataturk. But supporters say that the system—which would eliminate the post of prime minister—is needed to eliminate the political crises that marred the 1980s and 1990s before the rise of Erdogan's Islamic-rooted Justice and Development Party (AKP). The vote is also shadowed by the failed military coup against Erdogan in July that was rapidly followed by a state of emergency that remains in place and has seen tens of thousands of people arrested. —AFP

News

in brief

China blasts India

BEIJING: China lashed out at India for hosting the Dalai Lama near their disputed border, warning yesterday that the Tibetan spiritual leader's visit has touched on the political foundation of the Asian giants' relationship.

Turkish denies spying

ZURICH: Turkey's ambassador to Switzerland has denied that his embassy spied on expatriate Turks, distancing his staff from a criminal investigation by Swiss prosecutors into suspected espionage.



CARACAS: A young woman who was overcome by tear gas shot by riot police is carried away by fellow demonstrators when opposition activists clashed with riot police in Caracas. —AFP

Venezuela student killed

CARACAS: A 19-year-old student died Tuesday after he was shot during clashes between Venezuelan police and demonstrators, prosecutors said, the second death in a week at violent protests against President Nicolas Maduro.

Israel welcomes apology

JERUSALEM: A senior member of Israel's government welcomed yesterday White House spokesman Sean Spicer's apology for saying Adolf Hitler did not use chemical weapons, comments that overlooked the killing of millions of Jews in Nazi gas chambers.

Navalny calls for rally

MOSCOW: Russia's top opposition leader Alexei Navalny yesterday called fresh protests after rallying the biggest anti-Kremlin demonstrations in years and drawing a harsh response from the authorities.

Zambia's Hichilema charged

LUSAKA: Zambian opposition leader Hakainde Hichilema has been arrested and charged with treason for allegedly obstructing the motorcade of President Edgar Lungu, the nation's police chief said yesterday.

PAKISTAN HINDU WOMEN HOPE FOR 'PROTECTION' IN NEW LAW

WOMEN LIVE IN THE SHADOW OF CONSTANT FEAR

ISLAMABAD: Sapna Gobia is busy preparing for her wedding in Pakistan in a few weeks. In many ways, her wedding will follow traditions passed down through generations, with the bride and groom circling a sacred fire lit by their families.

"We - Hindu girls and married women have lived in the shadow of constant fear ... of being kidnapped, forced to abandon our faith and convert and re-married forcibly to someone not from our faith," said Gobia, a graduate in English literature from a government college in the town of Dharaki in southern Pakistan.

"With our marriages now legally registered with government authority ... no one could be able to stop us and our husbands from proving our marital status," Gobia said. "More importantly, bigamy has now been termed an unlawful and punishable crime in the new law - that is a big relief."

Hindus in Pakistan are now estimated to number around 3 million out of a population estimated at nearly 190 million. Discrimination and violence against religious minorities is common. "Our married daughters and sisters have been kidnapped by local non-Hindu influentials and forced to convert to Islam," said lawyer Arjun Das, chairman of Pakistan Council of Meghwar, a Hindu community, who campaigned for the marriage law.

Kidnapped

Sixteen-year-old Anjali Kumari was kidnapped three years ago from her home in Dharaki in broad daylight - and was forcibly converted to Islam within a day. "We had to take refuge in Karachi as we faced murder threats by the kidnapers with connections to a local political group when we raised our voices and took to the streets calling for release of our daughter," Kumari's father,

"She succumbed to the pressure and eventually went away with him."

Protection

The historic Hindu Marriage Act aims to protect families, and the women and children of the Hindu community particularly, by recognizing their marriages in law, said Zahid Hamid, federal law and justice minister. It will also allow Hindus to file for divorce and remarry. "Marriage

Representatives of the Pakistan Hindu Council and Pakistan Council of Meghwar have long struggled for a law to protect women from conversions to other faiths and forced marriages. But Ramesh Kumar Vankwani, patron-in-chief of Pakistan Hindu Council, said the new law needed strong political will to ensure its implementation and campaigns in schools and the media to raise awareness of the legislation. "It is the responsibility of the state to pro-



ALLAHABAD: Hindu devotees walk towards the Sangam river confluence in Allahabad. —AFP

Kundan Mal Meghwar, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

"She was forcibly converted and married off ... against her free will," Mal Meghwar said. A court in the port city of Karachi ruled in 2014 that Anjali should stay in a shelter in the city where her parents could visit her. "But we were never allowed to meet our daughter, giving her the impression that we were no longer interested in saving her ... from her kidnapper," he said.

registrars will be appointed by the government in different parts of the country as provided in the law," he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. "The registrars will be authorized to register Hindu marriages under the act.

Besides maintaining Hindu marriage records, they will also be authorized to issue legal marriage certificates." The minister said particular efforts had been made to address the issue of bigamy in Pakistan.

vide all sorts of protections to the country's minority groups including (protecting) Hindus from all sorts of atrocities meted out to them and ensuring they enjoy the same rights as any other person in the country," Vankwani said. High court lawyer and minority rights activist, Nand Lal Lavha, said awareness among lawyers, magistrates and police was key to ensuring the new law brought justice for Hindu girls and women. —Reuters

LIVES HALF-LIVED: THE HIDDEN COST OF CONFLICT IN KASHMIR

MUZAFFARABAD: Muhammad Ashraf's eyes fill with tears, overwhelmed by grief and joy all at once, as he recounts being reunited with his family 26 years after they were torn apart by insurgency in disputed Kashmir. "My son was 12 years old when we separated. Now my grandson is 16," he said of his odyssey to see his loved ones again, bittersweet for its brevity and because it lay bare how much he missed out on.

By October that year, amid reports of mass detentions and widespread torture as authorities tried to crack down on militants, Ashraf's family fled in fear. Along with 20,000 other Indian Kashmiris, they crossed the de facto border and sought refuge in Pakistan's territory. Ashraf was left behind. It was a week before word even reached him that they were gone, and little did his family realise it would be more than a quarter of a century before they embraced him again. "The golden time of my life, which I should have spent with my family, is gone," he said.

Ashraf's tale highlights the plight of thousands of refugee families divided by a conflict that stretches back as far as the bloody partition of India in 1947, when the subcontinent shook off British rule. Kashmir is one of the world's most dangerous flashpoints, bitterly split between nuclear rivals India and Pakistan but claimed in full by both. They have already fought two wars over the mountainous region, with no end to the dispute in sight.

Trapped

Ashraf found himself trapped by his career as a soldier. "I thought if I quit my post I would be considered a traitor," he said, adding he also feared repercussions for the one daughter who also remained in Indian Kashmir. He was not allowed to visit Pakistani territory, while on active duty. But when he retired in 2006 he redoubled efforts to see his family again. First Ashraf applied to use the Kashmir Bus Service, which was launched a year earlier to facilitate meetings between divided families. He tried five

times in total - all in vain. Access to the service remains largely at the whim of authorities and is routinely disrupted during periods of high tensions. He then decided to apply for a passport to allow him to cross the formal border further south in Punjab province, but the document took 10 years to procure. The reasons for the delay are unclear, but it is possible that as a former Indian soldier, authorities were not keen for him to travel to Pakistan. The passport finally arrived in 2016 - but it was too late for him to see his parents again, they both died in Pakistani-held Kashmir. His children's weddings, the births of his grandchildren all took place there too - over the long years they were without him. He also missed a lifetime with his wife, Badar Un Nisa, who is now 62. "I wept during the weddings of all my children because I missed my husband," she said. "My mother worked very hard," Ashraf's son Muhammad Asghar added. "It is very difficult for a woman to bring up her children without her husband's support."

Near but far

When a ceasefire agreement was signed in 2003, authorities designated two spots on the Neelum River, which cuts through Indian- and Pakistani-held Kashmir, where relatives on either side can wave to one another across the rushing waters. Ashraf's family describe catching a glimpse of him there once, at Eid, in 2006 - 16 years in to their separation. The river is just around 80 feet wide there, but with armed soldiers watching closely on either side, all the families can do is look. For many, it only heightens the pain. Ashraf Jan, 60, who is from the same village as Muhammad Ashraf-Karen in Indian-held Kashmir has also been separated from her family since 1990.

She describes her heartbreak at seeing her son, Ashiq Hussain, across the Neelum River. "I wanted to jump in and reach him," she said. "I was weeping on the one side of the river while my son was weeping on the other side. We were helpless," she added. Seeing them again this February was like being "re-born," she explained. But for her and Ashraf both the reunions are tinged with grief: their visas only lasted a month. —AFP



MUZAFFARABAD: Elderly Indian Kashmiri Muhammad Ashraf (center) is being helped by his son Muhammad Asghar (left) and a relative as he touches the grave of his mother at a graveyard on the outskirts of Muzaffarabad, the capital of Pakistani-administered Kashmir. —AFP



DHAKA: Activists from a Bangladesh Islamist group shout slogans as they take part in a protest calling for a statue referred to as a 'Greek goddess' installed at the Supreme Court to be destroyed or removed in Dhaka. —AFP

BANGLADESH PM BACKS ISLAMISTS ON CONTROVERSIAL STATUE

DHAKA: Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has been accused of "kowtowing" to hardline Islamists after expressing dislike for a controversial statue that religious radicals want removed from the Supreme Court. The statue of "lady justice" has ruffled feathers in the Muslim-majority nation, with hardliners staging massive protests in recent weeks against what they say is a Greek god unbecomingly Bangladesh. Protesters want the statue of the blindfolded woman holding scales, said to represent justice, destroyed and replaced with a Quran, despite Bangladesh's secular constitution.

Hasina, who had kept the furor at arms length, broke her silence late Tuesday after inviting top Islamist leaders to her residence where she described the statue as "ridiculous." "I don't like it myself. It's being called a Greek statue, but how did a Greek statue get here?" she said in comments published in online news portal bdnews24.com. Court officials have defended the statue as a symbol of justice while secular groups expressed dismay that Hasina and the secular ruling party, the Awami League, was seemingly siding with hardliners on the issue. "The government and Awami League's kowtowing to this type of demand will be

suicidal for Bangladesh," Shahriar Kabir, secretary of Bangladesh's leading secular rights group said. In a further major concession to Islamists, Hasina also said Tuesday her government would recognize degrees from hardline madrassas, paving the way for millions of religious scholars to qualify for jobs in public and private sectors. The prime minister made the announcement after meeting Islamist leaders including the head of Hefazat-e-Islam, a fundamentalist group that has called for gender-segregated workplaces and tough blasphemy laws.

Conservative Bangladesh has experienced increasing tensions between hardliners and secularists in recent years, suffering a spate of killings of atheist bloggers, religious minorities and foreigners. Her policy shift on madrassas has shocked secular groups, who consider it further evidence of creeping Islamisation as headline elements push for Bangladesh society to more closely reflect its Muslim traditions. It comes as Hasina prepares for an early general election later this year, more than 12 months ahead of schedule, with analysts speculating the prime minister could be trying to corner the Islamist-allied centre-right opposition. —AFP

WAR BETTER THAN PEACE FOR UGANDA'S REBEL CHILDREN

NAIROBI: Children whose mothers were raped by rebels in Uganda say war was better than peace because they felt a greater sense of family cohesion and status during the conflict compared to the violence, stigma and rejection they face in peacetime, a study showed. Researchers from Canada's McGill University interviewed 60 children born to women abducted by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebel group, which waged a brutal insurgency in Uganda for two decades until 2005, when it was forced over the border.

"The fact that children and youth identify the state of war and captivity - when violence, upheaval, starvation, deprivation and ongoing terror were at its height - as better than life during peacetime is highly disconcerting," Myriam Denov, the study's lead author and professor at

McGill's School of Social Work, said in a statement on Tuesday. The children, some of whom were fathered by LRA's messianic leader, Joseph Kony, often drew themselves and their siblings with sad faces after the war.

"In my family, they hate the three of us who were born in captivity," the researchers quoted one child as saying. "My uncle beats us and said he would kill us." The children said their families and communities perceived them as dangerous, rebel children who had brought bad spirits with them from the bush. The LRA is notorious for mutilating civilians and kidnapping children for use as fighters. Many children were forced to kill their friends and family. Dominic Ongwen, a former LRA commander who was captured and recruited as a young boy, is on trial for war crimes at the International Criminal Court. —Reuters

TAIWAN BANS EATING DOGS AND CATS

TAIPEI: Taiwan has banned the eating of dogs and cats, lawmakers said yesterday, as pressure grows to improve animal welfare after a spate of cruelty cases that stirred public outrage. Parliament passed legislation to outlaw the consumption, purchase or possession of dog and cat meat, with offenders facing a fine of up to Tw\$250,000 (\$8,170). Authorities can also name and shame those who break the law.

"This shows that Taiwan is a society with advanced animal welfare," said lawmaker Wang Yu-min who proposed the new rules. The bill also hiked the penalty for killing or abusing animals to a maximum two-year jail term and a stiff fine of Tw\$2 million. Dog consumption-believed by some in Taiwan to help boost male potency-was common on the island decades ago but has become less popular amid growing calls to protect animal rights.

In 2001, Taiwan amended its animal protection law to ban the slaughter of pets-which included dogs and cats-for food, although there was no penalty on eating or buying the meat. Sales of pet meat were banned at the end of 2003. But a string of much-publicised animal abuse cases have continued to triggered deep public concern and demands for tougher protection laws. Last year, the military was forced to apologize after a video surfaced of three soldiers torturing and strangling a stray dog to

death with an iron chain, prompting several street protests. And in 2014, a male hippo famous for regularly performing at a private zoo in central Taiwan died after breaking a leg and sustaining other injuries during transportation, sparking a public outcry. Reactions to the new law were mixed, with some deeming it unfair to only single out cats and dogs for better protection. "This is the cute animal protection law? only cute animals are protected while the rest deserve to die?" read one message posted on Apple Daily's website. "Why doesn't the parliament amend laws to toughen punishment on drunk driving, fraud and homicide? what a lousy job it is doing," said another post.

Dog meat consumption is also common in countries such as China, Vietnam and South Korea. Last year, China's most notorious dog meat festival drew crowds despite international outrage, as more than 10,000 dogs were killed at the event in conditions activists described as brutal. South Koreans are believed to consume somewhere between 1.5 million - 2.5 million dogs every year, but the meat farming industry is in decline, with little demand among the younger generation. In Vietnam, cat meat-known locally as "little tiger"-is also a delicacy and although officially banned it is widely available in specialist restaurants. — AFP



TAIPEI: A Taiwanese man holds his dog during a gathering to demand establishment of a government department to protect dogs and cats from their owners who abused or dumped the animals. Taiwan has banned the sale and consumption of dog and cat meat and increased the penalty for animal cruelty. — AP



JAKARTA: A youth ferries a friend on a rented bicycle on the main square of Jakarta's old town. — AFP

ONE THIRD OF INDONESIAN WOMEN FACE PHYSICAL OR SEXUAL VIOLENCE

UN CALLS FOR URGENT ACTION

JAKARTA: One third of Indonesian women have faced physical or sexual violence, according to new government data, prompting calls by a United Nations agency for urgent action to protect women. The government's first national survey on violence against women showed 33 percent of women aged between 15 and 64 - around 26 million people - said they have faced abuse in their lives.

Cases of violence are most common among women who have received higher education and those who live in urban area, according to the survey released in late March. "The survey findings are sobering. It shows that violence against women occurs around us," Annette Robertson, head of the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) in Indonesia told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. The issue of violence against women hit the headlines in Indonesia last year after a schoolgirl was gang-raped and murdered, sparking public uproar and leading to

the introduction of tougher punishments for sex offenders.

"Violence against women is a human rights violation and rooted in gender inequality. It deprives women and girls of the chance to enjoy a dignified life and present and future opportunities to live up to their full potential," Robertson said. The government's survey has been welcomed by women's rights campaigners as a way to tackle and address the root causes of violence against women in Indonesia, the world's fourth-most populous nation with 250 million people. Women's groups in the country have long said a lack of comprehensive data hampered education and prevention of violence, making it harder to reflect the prevalence of the crime.

The government is due to release further findings and analysis of the survey in June. Indonesia was ranked 88th out of 144 countries in the World Economic Forum's 2016 Gender Gap Index after scoring poorly on economic

participation, education and political empowerment. While Indonesia's economy has raced ahead over the past decade, critics say old-fashioned social attitudes persist and women are often subject to scrutiny about their behavior. The UNFPA, which has helped the government carry out the survey, urged action from authorities and communities, saying failure to act could cost the country, including through productivity losses.

Robertson cited a previous study in Vietnam which showed women survivors of violence earned 35 percent less than women who are not abused. "Silence and non-action are not an option. The stakes are high," she said. Globally, one in three women experience physical or sexual violence, according to the UN Women agency. Women who have been physically or sexually abused are more likely to have an abortion, experience depression, or get HIV, the group said. — Reuters

PHILIPPINE MILITANTS FLEE AFTER FOILED KIDNAP RAID

MANILA: Islamic militants who landed on a Philippine tourist island triggering deadly clashes with security forces had planned to stage a mass kidnapping, the military said yesterday as it pursued five fighters still on the loose. The army said the Abu Sayyaf group, notorious for a kidnap-for-ransom spree that has targeted foreigners, had planned to snatch up to a dozen tourists around Easter Sunday when resorts are packed. The group of 11 gunmen landed by boat on Bohol-one of the country's top tourism spots-sparking a gunbattle with security forces on Tuesday that left six insurgents dead and also killed three soldiers and a policeman.

Five Abu Sayyaf gunmen, along with an unknown number of local collaborators, remain at large after the clashes which took place in a rural district, said military chief of staff General Eduardo Ano. Ano said the gang, which arrived on three boats, had planned to acclimatize in the area and send scouts into resorts to scope out kidnapping targets. "They are expecting probably to kidnap four or five persons per boat, so at least 10 to 12 kidnap victims was their (overall) plan," he said. The Abu Sayyaf launched the strike from their remote stronghold on the lawless southern Philippines island of Jolo, which is about 500 kilometers away from Bohol.

The island is just half an hour's boat ride from Cebu, another major tourism draw. The incursion is the first on a major destination in recent years by the group, which pledges allegiance to the Islamic State. Ano said the Bohol plan was put into motion late last week as millions of local and foreign tourists prepared to hit the country's beaches ahead of the Easter holidays. Philippine intelligence agencies got wind of the plot last week, and alerted the military and foreign counterpart agencies, though authorities lost track of the

gunmen in the open seas. The US and Australian governments later warned their citizens about possible "terrorist" abductions in Bohol and Cebu.

Tourism fallout?

Ano said the five remaining fighters fled after an overnight siege near a remote village. "They are all running for their lives," he said. Helicopter gunships were used to bomb the militants, who fought back with high-end sniper rifles while holed up in a concrete house, according to officials. Ano said that among the dead was a key Abu Sayyaf leader known by his alias Abu Rahmi. The claim could not be independently confirmed. He said Abu Rahmi was behind a 2015 raid on the southern island resort of Samal in which four tourists-two Canadians, a Norwegian and a Filipina-were snatched. The two Canadian men were beheaded last year while the Norwegian man and the Filipina were freed unharmed. Ano said Abu Rahmi's group also attacked a German couple on a yacht at sea last year, murdering the woman on board and taking the man hostage. He was later killed.

Authorities in Cebu, an island of nearly five million people, warned their citizens about potential kidnapping raids following the Bohol attack. "It is unlikely that they have the operational capability to do further damage now. However, other elements may exist," Cebu city Mayor Tomas Osmena said on his Facebook page. As the government moved to contain the fallout on the lucrative tourism industry, the military said it would repel similar incursions. Authorities said some 100 residents had fled the fighting. Hoteliers and visitors said the incident had not affected tourist traffic on the island, though there was increased police security. — AFP



PYONGYANG: People dance to celebrate the fifth anniversary of respected Supreme Leader Kim Jong Un's assumption of the top posts of the Workers' Party of Korea and the state. — AFP

A GRIMACE AND A SHRUG, BUT NO FEAR OF US STRIKE IN PYONGYANG

PYONGYANG: Residents thronged the wide boulevards of North Korea's capital Pyongyang yesterday, some practicing for a parade to be held at the weekend, with no visible signs of the tensions engulfing the region over the isolated state's weapons programs. A US aircraft carrier group is headed to Korean waters amid concerns that Pyongyang may conduct a nuclear or long-range missile test and threats from US President Donald Trump of unilateral action "to solve the problem."

It was a sunny, spring morning in Pyongyang and many people were on the streets around the city's biggest sights, the Arch of Triumph and Kim Il Sung Square. Some of them spoke to Reuters journalists, who were escorted by North Korean officials. "I am a normal citizen, so I don't concentrate on politics too much," said a woman who gave her name as Ri Hyon Sim. "But one thing is very very clear, so long as we are with our supreme leader Marshall Kim Jong Un we are not afraid of anything."

North Korea has invited foreign media to cover celebrations this week of the 105th birth anniversary of founding president Kim Il Sung, the grandfather of current leader Kim Jong Un. However, journalists' movements are closely managed and conversations with the people are moni-

tored. As Ri spoke, women in flowing pink, red and yellow dresses walked by after dance rehearsals for a performance likely on Saturday when a parade is expected to celebrate Kim Il Sung's birthday.

North Korea also often marks important anniversaries with tests of its nuclear or missile capabilities. Hyon Un Mi, a tour guide at the Arch of Triumph, built to commemorate Korean resistance to Japanese occupation in the early 20th century, said she was following events on television and in newspapers. She called the United States an imperialist power that wanted to occupy her country. "Our people don't like these imperialists... In recent days they want to occupy our country again and again," she said.

"The president of the US....," Hyon said, tailing off with a shrug and a grimace. North Korea remains technically at war with the United States and its ally South Korea after the 1950-1953 Korean conflict ended in a truce, not a peace treaty. Hyon however said she wanted reunification between North and South Korea. "Our people are suffering from the division," she said, adding that she was distressed while watching a women's football match between the two Koreas last week. "All the people feel very sad watching the football, our country divided into two," she said. The match ended in a 1-1 draw. — Reuters

MP CHARGED FOR UPENDING CHINESE, HONG KONG FLAGS

HONG KONG: A Hong Kong lawmaker was arrested yesterday for "desecrating" the Chinese and Hong Kong flags by turning them upside down in parliament, in charges he said were designed to suppress anti-Beijing sentiment. Cheng Chung-tai upended small China and Hong Kong flags that some pro-Beijing legislators had displayed on their desks in the legislative assembly last October. The incident happened in a feisty session where two pro-independence lawmakers were barred from taking up their seats in a row over the oath-taking ceremony.

Under Hong Kong law, it is an offence to desecrate national and regional flags by "publicly and wilfully burning, mutilating, scrawling on, defiling or trampling on them". "The clear and obvious goal is to eliminate dissent" before the city's newly elected pro-Beijing leader Carrie Lam takes office in July, Cheng told reporters after he was bailed. He said that Hong Kong was facing a "massive purge" against pro-democracy voices. The city was handed back to China by colonial ruler Britain in 1997 under a "one country, two systems" formula. But there are concerns China is interfering in the semi-autonomous city, eroding its freedoms and way of life.

Some activists have angered Beijing by calling for greater autonomy or even independence for Hong Kong, with some jailed or awaiting trial over anti-China clashes. A protester was jailed for more than four years Monday for rioting and arson during a 2016 protest known as the Fishball Revolution, where police fired warning shots and demonstrators hurled bricks torn up from pavements. Three other activists had been jailed for three years on riot charges for their role in the same protest. Other prominent activists were arrested late last month over 2014's Umbrella Movement, which saw tens of thousands occupy the city's streets for 79 days in an unsuccessful campaign for election reform. — AFP

MOUNTAINS, DAMS AT PYONGYANG BUS STOPS

PYONGYANG: The bus stops of Pyongyang have no advertisements. Instead of exhortations to buy an energy drink or sign up to a mobile service, travellers are offered soothing images before they cram into packed vehicles. From mountain, coastal and farming landscapes to views of dams and city squares, the depictions have no words or slogans, unlike the ubiquitous propaganda posters that take the place of commercial messages in North Korean urban centres.

Buses are by far the most common means of public transport in the capital of around three million people, where access to private cars is rare, and offer the most extensive network. Tickets cost 5 won each - less than 0.1 US cents at free-market rates, making journeys virtually free. AFP journalists working in Pyongyang are restricted in what and who they can photograph, film

and interview by North Korean rules. The city is one where everyone almost always appears to have a purpose, whether going to or from work, or taking part in some kind of group activity.

At bus stops, though, commuters are forced to disrupt that process as they wait for a vehicle. It is a moment that reveals their private interests - whether talking to friends and colleagues, pensively watching the world go by, or sometimes playing with a smartphone. Shop assistant Sin Hyi-Yong uses the time to plan her day, she said, crediting the country's founding father Kim Il-Sung - the 105th anniversary of whose birth will be marked this weekend - and his descendants and successors for building up the system. "When you go to and from work using the bus you can feel the warm love of the great leaders every time," she said. — AFP



PYONGYANG: Commuters wait at a bus stop in Pyongyang. Buses are by far the most common means of public transport in the capital of around three million people, where access to private cars is rare. — AFP

AI WEIWEI URGES GULF TO DO MORE TO HELP...

Continued from Page 1

Civilians fleeing Syria's nearby war have found scant refuge in the Arab world's richest countries despite several being backers of combatants in Syria's conflict, including Qatar. Gulf monarchies say they have in fact taken in hundreds of thousands of Syrian citizens since the civil war there began in 2011, including half a million in Saudi Arabia and 100,000 in the United Arab Emirates - just not as refugees. Like the rest of the expatriates that form a majority in many Gulf States, Syrians have been admitted mainly as temporary guest workers, which generally means they must have jobs lined up before they arrive, or as their family dependents.

Gulf states also say the criticism also overlooks the billions

donated to Syrian refugee camps abroad, as well as the delicate demographics of countries where expatriate workers are as numerous as locals or outnumber them. Ai said the six Gulf Cooperation Council states - Saudi Arabia, Oman, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Bahrain and Qatar - should sign the UN convention on refugees which has governed international law on asylum since World War Two.

"(Signing the convention) is not just to help but to testify that a state can understand what humanity is about," he said. "Because this is really a test of our humanity and willingness to defend those integrities of human life. It doesn't matter how rich you can be or how self-protected - if we cannot meet this challenge I think the future is very dark." — Reuters

INDIAN FISHERMEN RECALL GULF ORDEAL

Continued from Page 1

"We are seeing increasing cases of fishermen being detained," said Josephine Valarmathi of the non-profit National Domestic Workers' Movement, based in Chennai. "Even as this lot of fishermen have returned, another 24 have been caught in the same circumstances and are now stranded. Most of them are not clear on what visa they have travelled or the terms and conditions of the workplace."

George said they were given very little food, forced to drink water from toilets, made to do sit ups and often went hungry. After being held in a prison in Iran for a few days, the fishermen were kept on their boats off the coast. "We were under constant watch," George said. "Sometimes we were given just one roti (bread) and survived on that all day. We earn our livelihoods from fishing but living on a boat under fear of death was not what we had signed up for."

A Maria Joseph Kennedy said language was a barrier to understanding of what was going on. "We were forced into a prison for four days and then back on the boat. We were herded like cattle," Kennedy said. Officials at the Iranian embassy in New Delhi declined to comment on the matter. According to the Tamil Nadu Migration Survey 2015, the first comprehensive study on emigration from the state, roughly

every tenth household has one or more workers abroad.

The survey showed that a migrant spends an average of 100,000 rupees (\$1,500) to secure a job overseas, with half going to recruitment agencies and the rest for visas and travel. The survey of 20,000 households also revealed that 39 percent of women and 21 percent of men who work abroad reported not receiving the promised wages. "Often workers get duped, can't deal with the work situation in the Gulf and come back in adverse circumstances, forgoing their income," said Bernard D'Sami, co-author of the migration survey. "They then get trapped in an unending cycle of debt that sometimes forces them to go back to the Gulf and work."

Paid on the basis of the catch they brought back from the sea, the fishermen said they were back home with no savings and big loans that needed to be paid back. The fishermen called for urgent action to prevent others suffering similar ordeals, including education campaigns about the risks of migration. "I didn't understand or assess the risks," said George, now worried about repaying the nearly 100,000 rupee loan he took out to get to Bahrain. "And nobody told me either. So many people dream of a Gulf job. The government needs to make sure it doesn't become a nightmare." — Reuters

THREE OPPOSITION LAWMAKERS FILE TO GRILL...

Continued from Page 1

The grilling cites the increase in the prices of petrol and electricity, saying that it is well known that the hike in electricity prices was not based on scientific studies and even before the government succeeds in collecting hundreds of millions of dinars in unpaid bills. It said that the decided hike is highly exaggerated. It also said the hike in petrol prices and the increase in other charges will leave a negative impact on citizens.

Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem said the grilling will be on the agenda of the April 25 regular session to decide when to debate it. The prime minister can ask for a delay if the Assembly agrees. Minister of Justice Faleh Al-Azeb however said that the government will study if the grilling is in line with the constitution and then

decide its next course of action. Two other opposition lawmakers, Riyadh Al-Adasani and Shuaib Al-Muwaizri, are scheduled to file a second grilling against the premier on Sunday. After debating the grilling, MPs may file a no-cooperation motion against the prime minister. To pass, the motion needs the support of 25 lawmakers. If approved, the matter will be sent to HH the Amir, who will decide whether to sack the prime minister or dissolve the Assembly and call for fresh elections.

In the Assembly session yesterday, MPs approved a criminal extradition treaty with Britain. It will help extradite the former chief of the social security institution who has been sentenced to jail for embezzling tens of millions of dinars. It also passed amendments to the corporate law to make it easier to set up commercial companies in the country.



Desert monkeys gather along Al-Hada Road that leads to the city of Taif, on the slopes of the Sarawat Mountains near the holy city of Makkah in Saudi Arabia yesterday. — AP

AHMADINEJAD TO RUN FOR PRESIDENT IN SHOCK...

Continued from Page 1

Ahmadinejad lost the support of many mainstream conservatives during his contentious presidency, and some said yesterday that violating the supreme leader's advice was a final straw. "With today's move - registering for the presidential election, my belief in you was broken," ex-lawmaker and Ahmadinejad loyalist Mehdi Koochakzadeh wrote on social media. "End of Ahmadinejad," tweeted Elyas Naderan, another conservative former MP.

Analyst Farzan Sabet, a fellow at the Center for International Security and Cooperation in Stanford University, said his registration was indeed "shocking". But his motivation "may be to send an implicit threat to the Guardian Council that if they disqualify Baghaei - like they did his former chief-of-staff Esfandiar Rahim Mashaei in the 2013 presidential election - he will go back on his pledge and run for president," said Sabet.

He added that the Guardian Council would find it hard to disqualify Ahmadinejad, a two-time president who previously had the firm support of conservatives and the supreme leader. "Although it is quite possible that Ahmadinejad will be disqualified by the Guardian Council, this could turn out to be politically messy for them," said Sabet. The conservatives have been struggling to unite

around a single candidate to challenge President Hassan Rouhani, who is expected to register in the coming days.

They held a mass meeting last week at which they shortlisted five candidates, who will be narrowed down to one before the vote, although some conservatives have already suggested they will run independently. Ebrahim Raisi, a judge who currently heads the powerful Imam Reza charitable foundation in the Shiite holy city of Mashhad, topped the shortlist. Tehran mayor Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf was also on the list, but it remains unclear if he will make his third bid for the presidency.

Rouhani has stabilized the economy and ended some sanctions through a 2015 nuclear deal with world powers. But many Iranians are frustrated by the continued lack of investment in the economy and a jobless rate that remains at 12 percent. Rouhani's administration argues it inherited a devastated economic landscape - the result of Ahmadinejad's populist policies that included monthly cash handouts and ill-fated housing projects.

But these policies have also ensured Ahmadinejad, 60, retains considerable popularity, particularly among the poor, potentially undermining attempts by conservatives to unite their base around a mainstream candidate. If Ahmadinejad is allowed to run, "he would likely draw more votes away from conservative candidates than from Rouhani," said Sabet. — AFP

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Focus

TWO REASONS WHY
ITALIANS ARE TURNING
SOUR ON THE EURO

The euro zone's greatest existential threat may no longer center on small, peripheral countries such as Greece and Portugal dragging it down, but instead on the prospect that its third largest economy, Italy, could abandon ship. Two recent economic reports show what the euro has meant to Italians and why polls suggest they are no longer keen. One suggests they are poorer as a result of being part of the currency bloc, the other that they are falling further behind their counterparts in main trading partner Germany.

It is a distant risk to the currency bloc that Italy will actually walk away, but not beyond imagination. Italy's 5-Star movement, which wants to dump the euro through a referendum, has been surging in opinion polls recently, getting as much as a third of the vote in a March Corriere Della Sera poll. The anti-European Union Northern League got another 12 or so percent - and there are others. But actually leaving the euro zone would come down to whether Italian voters believe 15 years or so of the currency had been good or bad for them.

The recent analyses suggest it has been the latter. Consider, first, how much Italians have to spend. A December report from Eurostat, the European Union's statistics agency, looked at GDP per capita - the economy divided by its people - in terms of purchasing power between 2004 and 2015. Assuming a base of 100 for the EU's combined 28 countries, powerhouse Germany rose to 124 from 120 over the period. Italy, however, sank to 96 from 110. That puts Italy closer to emerging economies like the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Slovenia that it does to Germany. France was pretty much unchanged at 106. This means that simply in terms of what they can buy, Italians are poorer than they were in 2004, a few years after they swapped the lira.

Your Euro, My Euro

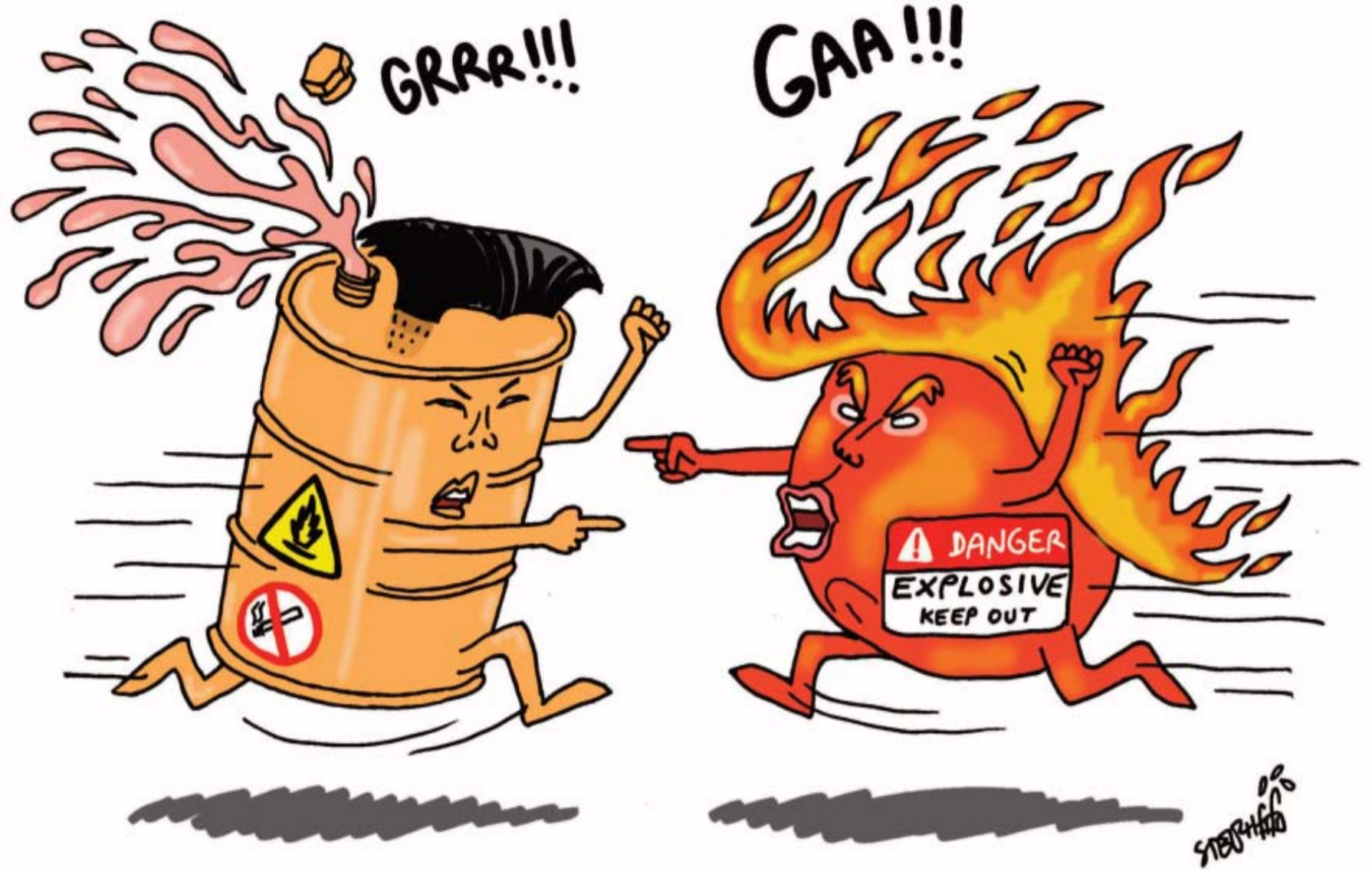
Second are some findings this month from research group World Economics that suggest Italy's problems from its currency linkage with Germany are increasing. Germany has become much more competitive as a member of the euro zone. By comparison, Italy has not. World Economics takes a basket of representative goods and services in US dollars and compares it in purchasing power terms with the cost in other currencies. The result is its World Price Index (WPI).

For the euro zone, the index allows for counter-intuitive comparisons between member countries - essentially creating German euros, French euros, Italian euros and so on. Over the past two years, the "Italian euro" has gone from being 3 percent overvalued to 4 percent undervalued in the WPI, effectively a better position vis-à-vis the dollar. But the difference between it and the "German euro" has widened by two percentage points as the latter has become 14 percent undervalued.

This means Italian businesses exporting to Germany, their top destination, are facing worse conditions than previously. It also makes German imports cheaper and therefore more competitive domestically. World Economics points to other euro zone countries that have a worse problem - France and Greece, for example - but suggests that Italy is a new fault line for the euro zone. "Italy looks like becoming the next 'domino' to suffer from the strength of the German economy as trends ... have become much more pronounced over the past 12 months," it said in a note.

None of this may be caused by the euro per se, or be enough to outweigh the benefits of pooling a currency and the protection that can bring. But added to other factors - annual GDP growth struggling to reach 1 percent, for example, or declining capital investment in business and infrastructure - they do go some way towards explaining why fewer Italians tell pollsters the euro is a good thing. —Reuters

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STOCKHOLM ATTACK PUTS CHOKEHOLD ON TOLERANCE

Hours after the truck attack that killed four people in the heart of Stockholm, Muslim taxi driver Abdi Dahir found himself in a suffocating chokehold from a man sitting in the backseat. Struggling to breathe, Dahir, who moved to Sweden from Somalia as a child, felt he could die too, at the hands of an angry passenger who blamed the country's openness to Muslim immigrants for the attack that afternoon.

"We have done everything for everyone, we have given them mosques, we have given them everything but they kill our own people. Then we'll kill them," the man growled at Dahir before grabbing him around the neck, according to an audio recording of the assault. Dahir, who recorded part of the conversation on his cell phone, said he had also activated a concealed alarm, prompting police to intervene. Stockholm police said they were investigating the incident. "I tried to work, but I'm too nervous to have anyone sitting behind me in the car," said Dahir, his voice still hoarse.

Anti-Muslim anger is putting the Nordic country's deep-rooted liberal traditions to the test, after a man hijacked a beer truck and rammed it into a busy downtown pedestrian mall. At the time of the attack, the suspect, 39-year-old Rakhmat Akilov from Uzbekistan, had applied for asylum but had been rejected and faced an expulsion order, making him one of more than 12,000 people wanted for deportation in Sweden. In court on Tuesday his lawyer said he had confessed to a terrorist crime.

Europe's most welcoming nation to asylum seekers has tightened immigration policy in recent years and is considering new measures after Friday's attack, including

better policing of deportation orders and banning membership of terrorist groups. It is also bracing for rising intolerance and hate crimes. "I'm quite worried about the political climate," said Mohamed Nuur, 25, a local politician from the ruling Social Democrat party who represents constituents in Rinkeby, a sprawling area of apartment blocks largely planned and built for workers in Sweden's progressive heyday of the late 1960s.

It is part of a belt of heavily immigrant neighborhoods that ring Stockholm. Drab grey terrace houses line the streets where small shops advertise halal products in both Arabic and Swedish. Many women there wear head scarves when they go out. "We already see manipulated images spread by Nazis and others who want to spread hateful messages," said Nuur, a Muslim of Somali descent.

Rinkeby has seen trouble such as riots among disaffected youths, but it looks well kept compared to many of the more run-down areas around major cities in Europe. In Rinkeby metro station, Refa Jafari, a slight 23-year-old in a black baseball cap who came to Sweden as an unaccompanied minor from Afghanistan in 2010, stood handing out free SIM cards for a mobile operator. "I will try to prove to Swedes that all people who have black hair are not Muslim and that all Muslims are not terrorists. We have been suffering the very same problem in our own countries," he said. "That is why we are here."

White Power

Fearing reprisals, Sweden's Security Police are stepping up surveillance of white supremacist groups. "There is talk of taking

revenge, of using violence, or a threat of violence, to show that we are angry about what has happened here," security police chief Anders Thornberg told local TV. Suspected right-wing extremists have planted bombs at asylum centres in the past, he noted. Sweden, a country of 10 million people, has received around 700,000 asylum seekers since the end of the 1990s. In 2015, when hundreds of thousands of migrants entered the EU across the Balkans, Sweden took in a record 163,000, more than any other European Union member relative to the size of its population.

That huge migration wave from two years ago has since subsided after the EU reached a deal with Turkey to take back refugees and other migrants that cross illegally. But it caused soul-searching in Sweden, where the government tightened residency rules, cut benefits and imposed more border controls. Support has grown for the anti-immigration Sweden Democrats, which opinion polls rank as the second biggest party behind Prime Minister Stefan Lofven's Social Democrats. "We've not been taken seriously, maybe even a bit ridiculed, and I hope we can leave that behind us now," Sweden Democrats Vice Chairman Julia Kronlid told Reuters after the attack.

By far the biggest act of terrorism in the Nordic region was carried out not by an immigrant but by an anti-immigration fanatic, Anders Breivik, who killed 77 people in 2011 in an Oslo bomb attack and shooting rampage at a Norwegian summer camp. Although hostility to immigration is still a political taboo for most mainstream political parties in the region, calls to shut the door are growing louder.

An hour after last week's attack, Christian

Tybring-Gjedde, a lawmaker from Norway's ruling populist Progress Party, accused Lofven in a Facebook post of "implementing Europe's most irresponsible, naive and culturally self-destructive immigration policy". Back in February, US president Donald Trump attacked Sweden's immigration record, tweeting: "Give the public a break - The FAKE NEWS media is trying to say that large scale immigration in Sweden is working out just beautifully. NOT!"

Last week, before the truck attack, members of a vigilante anti-immigration group, Soldiers of Odin, which has expanded from Finland to the Nordics and Baltics, entered the gates of Al-Azhar, a Muslim school in Vallingby, a suburb near Rinkeby. Assistant school head Roger Lindquist told Reuters two men had walked around the school yard days before the attack, taking photos of students and putting up stickers with their emblem. The school had felt compelled to hire security guards, he said. "Why do they hate us? Why do they want to harm us and why do they want to shut down our school?" he said.

Sweden's liberal tradition is far from defeated, however. Friday's truck attack prompted countless acts of generosity and solidarity and brought thousands of people onto the streets of central Stockholm in a show of unity against violence and extremism on Sunday. "It was fantastic. A sea of people that came together and showed love, all kinds of people. That is what Sweden is about, and that is how we must keep it," said Juma Lomani, 32, who came to Sweden as a 19-year-old from Afghanistan and now works for an organization helping young refugees adapt to Swedish society. —Reuters

NATIVE AMERICANS FEAR LOSS OF CULTURE

Ever since he can remember, Richard Saunders has seen families cross the fence on his Native American reservation in southern Arizona, where the US-Mexican border splits his tribe's land in two, to seek work, see a doctor or go to school. Laborers from Mexico would stop by his grandfather's house on the US side of the reservation, the ancestral home of the Tohono O'odham nation, which today is marked off by a barrier of loosely spaced metal bars designed to block vehicles between the two nations.

"He'd stand out there and converse with them, take a shot of tequila. Grandma would make them some burritos, and they'd be on their way," recalled Saunders, a senior figure in the nation's administration, heading its public safety department. But Saunders and other nation members fear US President Donald Trump's plan to sever their land with a border wall will be no different to slicing through their culture and their community.

"If I was to walk into your home and build a wall right in the middle of your house, how would you like that?" said Verlon Jose, vice chairman of the Tohono O'odham, whose name means "Desert People." "Over my dead body will this happen," Jose told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. For more than a century, the Tohono O'odham - like other Native Americans - have seen their ancestral lands shrink as a result of hundreds of broken land deals with the US government in its westward expansion in the 1800s.

Of the 3,500-km border wall that Trump says will stop drugs, crime and rapists from Mexico, 100 km would run through Tohono O'odham land, putting most of the reservation, which is slightly larger than Lebanon, in the United States and a smaller piece in Mexico's Sonora state. For now, the border barrier, with three gates for the American Indians to use, zigzags around cactus, riverbeds and ancient burial sites, letting through the desert's jaguar, deer, pig-like javelinas, venomous Gila monster lizards and poisonous sidewinder snakes.

Francine Jose, 50, a cousin to the tribe's vice chairman, lives about four miles from the border. About 10,000 people live north of the border, where the schools, com-

merce and services are located, and another 2,000 live on the Mexican side. "I think about the Berlin Wall," she told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. "Why do we have to hate or be mad at the country next to us?"

Opposition

The Tohono O'odham's government has not ruled out a high-profile protest similar to one which began last August in the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation, where activists camped for months in opposition to a proposed oil pipeline in North Dakota. At its height, thousands of protesters gathered at Standing Rock, and more than 700 were arrested. The protest ended after efforts to stop the pipeline lost in court. "It could turn into that," said Jose, 50. "If we're to see bulldozers start to come in, we will not be standing alone."

However, he is encouraged by Department of Homeland Security Secretary John Kelly, who recently said it was "unlikely that we will build a wall or physical barrier from sea to shining sea". A suggestion by Department of Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke that electronic monitors may be used in some sections has also helped to allay concerns. Tribal leaders say the border could be best protected with high-powered surveillance cameras, better access roads and more personnel.

The harsh desert itself, with no year-round sources of running water, is an effective deterrent. Once across the border, the nearest main roads lie 20 miles north. Last year, the bodies of 85 migrants were found on the reservation compared with 16 so far this year, significantly down from years when more than 100 were found, Saunders said.

Even though barbed wire along the border was replaced by the sturdier vehicle barrier in 2006 - in response to the rise of Mexican drug-smuggling cartels and security fears following the 9/11 attacks - evidence of stealthy crossings is easy to spot. Drug traffickers leave behind cloth slippers with carpeted soles, used to obliterate their footprints.

Abandoned black plastic water jugs are strewn amid the towering Saguaro cactus, poignant signs of thirst that can kill in the desert where summer temperatures

are typically well above 38 Celsius. Crisscrossed with dry stream beds, or washes, that flood during the violent summer monsoon season, the landscape burns under a relentless sun. Turkey vultures circle, and a few long-horn cattle huddle under the mesquite trees.

Broken Treat

Tohono O'odham was under Mexican jurisdiction before its modern borders around 2.8 million acres (1.13 million hectares) of territory were laid out in a 19th century land deal between the neighboring nations. Under US law, Native American reservations are sovereign nations that govern themselves, and building a border wall through Tohono O'odham land would amount to a treaty being broken by the US government, said Carlos Velez-Ibanez, Regents' Professor and Founding Director Emeritus of the School of Transborder Studies at Arizona State University.

"Indigenous populations on their land have treaty rights, and they're treated as nations, and they're recognized as nations," he said. "Trump and Co would in fact be violating the treaty rights of indigenous nations." Asked about Arizona Republican Sen John McCain's position on the reservation wall, McCain's office did not respond. He told CNN the wall was not a "viable option" and that border security needs technology and drones.

The state's other US Senator, Republican Jeff Flake, said in an email that the most effective border security "might mean a wall in some places or a fence in others, as well as the right combination of manpower and surveillance". "Arizona communities along the border should be a part of the discussion and planning as they are of the most affected," he wrote. Tohono O'odham Tribal Police, with nearly 100 officers, work with the US Customs and Border Protection, which has more than 1,000 agents at the reservation, said Saunders. It's only fitting that the Tohono O'odham, who have hunted, gathered food and grown crops for thousands of years in the region, are caught up in issues of border protection, Jose said. "It is embedded in our culture to protect. Not to own, but to protect," said Jose. "That is what we are doing." —Reuters

AUSTRALIA VETERANS GET BARBARIANS CALL-UPS

LONDON: Australia veterans Adam Ashley-Cooper and Will Genia have both been included in the initial group of players selected by coach Vern Cotter for the Barbarians matches against England and Ulster. The invitational Barbarians face England at Twickenham on May 28 before taking on Ulster in Belfast on June 1. Wing Ashley-Cooper (116 caps) and scrum-half Genia (75 caps) were 2015 World Cup finalists when the Wallabies were beaten by champions New Zealand at Twickenham. New Zealander Cotter, who is soon to be replaced as Scotland coach by Gregor Townsend, has also called up Argentina back-row Facundo Isa and Samoa prop Census Johnston who, in common with Ashley-Cooper and Genia, are now based with French clubs. They will be joined by New Zealand's Corey Flynn, with the veteran hooker now playing for Glasgow and uncapped Connacht centre Bunde Aki, who will become qualified for Ireland later this year through residency. —AFP

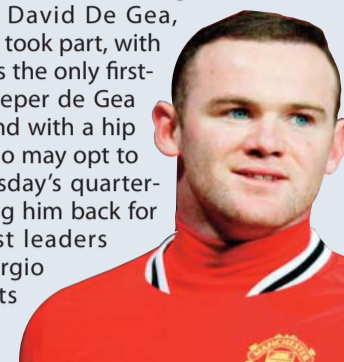


EIGHT LEICESTER FANS ARRESTED IN MADRID

MADRID: Eight Leicester City fans were arrested for public disorder ahead of the English side's Champions League quarter-final, first leg with Atletico Madrid, Spanish police said yesterday. Three police officers and two fans also suffered minor injuries in clashes between police and the travelling supporters in one of central Madrid's tourist hotspots, Plaza Mayor, at 2200 local time (2000GMT) on Tuesday night. "Eight hooligans were arrested for public disorder and vandalism," a police spokesperson told AFP. Videos showed riot police charging at the Leicester fans, who had gathered to drink in the various bars and restaurants in the Plaza Mayor, a spot often invaded by travelling fans for Champions League matches. "There was a group of 70 hooligans when the police charged," said a spokesperson for the municipal emergency services. "On the ground we attended five people, three police officers and two English ultras for cuts and bruises, but nobody was taken to hospital." The police source said the intervention was caused by Leicester fans "throwing bottles at the police." — AFP

ROONEY BACK WITH TRAINING AHEAD OF ANDERLECHT MATCH

MANCHESTER: Wayne Rooney was seen training with his Manchester United team-mates yesterday, a day before their Europa League tie away to Belgian side Anderlecht. The England striker missed United's last two Premier League matches, against Everton and Sunderland, with an ankle injury but was involved in the session at the English giants' Carrington training ground. David De Gea, Antonio Valencia and Ashley Young also took part, with Juan Mata, Chris Smalling and Phil Jones the only first-team regulars missing. Spanish goalkeeper de Gea missed Sunday's 3-0 win over Sunderland with a hip problem. United manager Jose Mourinho may opt to keep de Gea out of action come Thursday's quarter-final first leg match in Brussels and bring him back for this weekend's league fixture against leaders Chelsea instead. That would mean Sergio Romero continuing between the posts against Anderlecht. — AFP



Mike Chen, Cyril Despres seen during the FIA World Rally Championship 2017 in Bastia, France



Red Bull TV hosts Cyril Despres, Mike Chen, Matthew Wilson at the podium ceremony of the FIA World Rally Championship 2017, Stop 4 in Corsica, France.

FIA WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP 2017, STOP 4 IN CORSICA, FRANCE

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE TOUR DE CORSE

CORSICA: Hyundai driver Thierry Neuville from Belgium made it four manufacturers (and four nationalities) winning the first four rounds of the 2017 World Rally Championship, following one of the most intense rounds seen so far this year. Red Bull TV was there to capture all the action along with a very special guest. He is more used to tearing up the deserts in his go-anywhere cross-country Peugeot 3008DKR, but

Cyril Despres got a taste of something truly different when the Frenchman swapped his crash helmet for a microphone and joined the program hosts Mike Chen and Matt Wilson as guest reporter on the Tour de Corse. And here's what he's going to remember most about the three-day adrenaline rush on the 'Island of Beauty'...

Riding a motorbike on the roads used for the rally

"On Friday, we made a film for the programme with a motorbike ride through the Novella stage and that was a first for me! In fact, this was only the second time I had ever been to a WRC rally. So it was really exciting just to ride through the stage and see what rally drivers experience – very narrow roads and different types of surface – but at low speed. My passenger was Red Bull TV presenter Mike Chen: Let us just say that he is a bit bigger than me, so when I brought the bike back they asked me why there was more tyre wear at the back than the front! Living the stages on a bike, my second home, was a great experience."

Being blown away by the speed of the cars

"The sheer speed of the new generation

of cars is mind-blowing. You can't really compare it to my Dakar Peugeot, which is rear-wheel drive and heavier, or even to the experience I had last year, when I drove the Citroen DS3 WRC on gravel. This is just something else. The sheer amount of grip, acceleration and braking that these cars have is phenomenal, so to experience it up close and see the cars connected to the road is very special."

Working out just how competitive the WRC is

"Because my background is in cross country, I'm kind of used to measuring gaps in hours and days! Here, it is amazing that you can have the top 10 drivers on a stage covered by 30 seconds: to have such tiny differences, with all the drivers going flat out, is incredible. One of my favorite

elements of the Red Bull TV show is a 3D graphic that shows you how the time gaps between the drivers translate into distances. On one stage, we saw that the winning advantage was just 59 meters after 30 kilometers! Then at the finish, the difference between second and third place was less than two seconds, while the difference between fourth and fifth was a tenth of a second! Unbelievable."

Sharing my world with Matt and Chenny

"I've had a microphone stuck under my chin a few times before, but this was my first time commentating. It was great fun to do it with Mike Chen and Matt Wilson, and it was also nice for me to share a little bit of my world with them. Chenny was at the Dakar for the first time this year, so he's had a taste of what it's all about, but it was

all new for Matt. We had some fun times, just talking and chatting about cars, bikes and rallying; both WRC and cross country. I loved the whole atmosphere of the rally."

Commiserating with Kris Meeke over a steak sandwich

"I know Kris Meeke from back home in Andorra, where he lives as well, and I love his attacking style: it's actually quite the opposite from the way that I drive! I didn't know he had retired from the lead with an engine problem until we saw the Citroen truck going to pick him up on Saturday. So we went to the end of the stage and managed to find him just after it happened. There was a van selling steak sandwiches, so he was having a steak sandwich and frites as a consolation! But in the end, he was quite cool about it. He was doing a

great job in the lead, and these things happen in motorsport: you just have to accept it. But at least we could commiserate with him."

Meeke took the lead on the opening day of the rally and was pulling out an advantage before an engine problem stopped him halfway through the opening day. This gave Neuville the lead, chased down by reigning world champion Sebastien Ogier. However, Ogier was delayed by a hydraulic problem and then an intermittent electrical fault on the final day of the rally, which contained the longest stage at 53 kilometers. The Frenchman managed to seal the runner-up spot from Hyundai's Dani Sordo by less than two seconds, while Neuville claimed his first win of the year by nearly a minute.



Sebastien Ogier (FRA) performs during the FIA World Rally Championship 2017 in Bastia, France on April 9, 2017



Thierry Neuville (BEL) celebrates the podium during the FIA World Rally Championship 2017 in Bastia, France on April 9, 2017

FIGURE SKATING

JAPAN'S ASADA 'GAVE HER ALL', HAS NO REGRETS

TOKYO: Japanese figure skater Mao Asada, an Olympic silver medalist and three-time world champion, said yesterday she had given her all to her competitive career and had no regrets about retiring from the sport. The 26-year-old, known for being the only woman to land the complicated triple Axel jump three times in competition, said on Monday she had lost the will to compete. Asada, who took a year off from skating before resuming training in 2015, told a packed news conference yesterday that while the decision had been difficult, she gradually came to feel it was time.

"Up to now in my skate career, I've given everything I had, and I have no regrets," said the calm and mostly smiling Asada, at one point brushing away tears.

Asada is a household name in Japan, known by the affectionate nickname "Mao-chan," and the news of her retire-

ment was plastered across newspaper front pages on Tuesday. Her retirement news conference was carried live by nearly all television stations, and several newspapers ran editorials with one calling her a "national heroine".

Plagued by knee pain this past season, Asada finished 12th at the national championship in December, the lowest finish of her career in a competition she had won six times – a situation she said was key to her decision. "The first season after returning to competition went all right, but by the second I really had to keep telling myself over and over to just keep going," said Asada, who described feeling as if she could not keep up with advances in the sport. "After the nationals I thought, 'well, that's it.'" Asada began skating at the age of five, lured into the sport by her older sister Mai, and began to draw attention while still a junior, sharing the limelight with

South Korea's Kim Yuna at the start of a long rivalry. Kim and Asada's rivalry reached a head at the 2010 Winter Games in Vancouver, when Asada had to settle for silver while Kim claimed gold. Asada was tipped as a leading medal contender at the 2014 Sochi Olympics but had a disastrous short programme, although she rebounded with a strong free skate to finish sixth overall. "After the short programme, I thought I wouldn't be able to return to Japan, and the morning of the free skate I woke still feeling that way," she said. "But the moment I stepped out on the rink I just thought I'd have to do it, and give it everything I had." Asked about her future plans, Asada said she's taking part in an ice show this summer but is still thinking about the rest. "I've been skating since I was five and have gained so much from it," she said. "So I want to do something, in some form, to give back to the sport." — Reuters



SOCHI: In this combination of six file photos, Japan's figure skater Mao Asada performs, clockwise from top left to right, at the ISU figure skating Grand Prix Final in Sochi, Russia, Dec. 7, 2012, at the Japan National Figure Skating Championships in Osaka, Japan, Dec. 27, 2009, at the Japan National Figure Skating Championships in Osaka, Dec. 26, 2009, at the Eric Bompard Trophy Figure Skating Grand Prix in Paris, Nov. 15, 2008, at the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Feb. 20, 2014, and at the World Figure Skating Championships in Turin, Italy, March 26, 2010. The 26-year-old Asada, the three-time world champion announced her retirement yesterday in a press conference. — AP

NHL

DALLAS STARS BRING BACK HITCHCOCK AS COACH

DALLAS: Ken Hitchcock is returning to coach the Dallas Stars, a person with direct knowledge of the situation tells The Associated Press. The Stars are expected to announce the hire today, but the person confirmed the move on condition of anonymity yesterday.

Hitchcock won the Stanley Cup with Dallas in 1999, coaching there for parts of seven seasons from 1995-96 through 2001-02. He has since coached the Philadelphia Flyers, Columbus Blue

Jackets and St. Louis Blues. "Congrats Ken Hitchcock on the (Stars) head coach job," 1999 Cup winner and Stars legend Mike Modano tweeted. "My schedule is pretty open."

The 65-year-old was fired as Blues coach in February and replaced by Mike Yeo. Even before that, St. Louis had announced it was Hitchcock's final season there and that Yeo would take over. Hitchcock replaces Lindy Ruff, who was fired Monday after four sea-

sons in Dallas. The Stars missed the playoffs this year after winning the Central Division last season.

The Edmonton native is fourth on the NHL's all-time wins list with 781, one shy of legendary New York Islanders coach Al Arbour for third. Hitchcock can now pass Arbour back with the team that he led to its only title in franchise history.

Dallas considered former Florida Panthers coach Gerard Gallant and others

for its vacancy but went with the affable Hitchcock, whose recipe for success has worked through several eras of hockey. Good friend and Washington Capitals coach Barry Trotz said he believes Hitchcock will be inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame one day.

"He's a guy that tries to teach the game," Trotz said. "He's a little bit old-school sometimes because he's demanding and it's funny. When you're

demanding with players, they don't like it at the time, but when you go away or there's a change and they come back 10 years later and they go, 'You had it right. I was all wrong.'" Hitchcock made the playoffs in all five full seasons he coached the Blues, leading them to the Western Conference final last spring. He won the Jack Adams Award as NHL coach of the year in 2011-12 when St. Louis won its first of two division titles during his tenure. — AP

BASEBALL

CESPEDES HITS 3 HOME RUNS AS METS DEFEAT PHILLIES

PHILADELPHIA: Yoenis Cespedes hit three of New York's seven homers to back Matt Harvey, and the Mets beat the Philadelphia Phillies 14-4 Tuesday night. Harvey (2-0) left with tightness in his left hamstring after allowing two runs and five hits and striking out six in 5 2/3 innings. Phillies starter Clay Buchholz (0-1) also exited because of an injury, a strained right forearm. He gave up six runs and eight hits in 2 1/3 innings. Lucas Duda hit two homers and Asdrubal Cabrera and Travis D'Arnaud also went deep for New York, which has 46 homers in its last 21 games at Citizens Bank Park. Cespedes fell down on a wild swing on the first pitch he saw, then hit a three-run homer to straight-away center field off Buchholz in the first inning. He connected to deep left in the fourth off Adam Morgan and drove another one way out to left in the fifth against Morgan.

INDIANS 2, WHITE SOX 1, 10 INNINGS

Michael Brantley doubled home Francisco Lindor with two outs in the 10th inning as Cleveland celebrated its 2016 AL championship and then beat Chicago in its home opener. Brantley could only watch and cheer for his teammates last October during their postseason run after undergoing two surgeries on his right shoulder. But he's healthy now, and after playing in just 11 games last season, Brantley made the most of his first home game since May 10 with his game-winning hit. Lindor walked with two outs off Tommy Kahnle (0-1) before Brantley sliced a 3-2 pitch down the left-field line. Lindor was running on the pitch and scored easily while Brantley danced around second base before being mobbed by his teammates. It was the dramatic ending the Indians didn't get in their last home game, a 10-inning loss to the Chicago Cubs in Game 7 of the World Series. Cleveland led the majors with 11 walk-off wins last season. Bryan Shaw (1-0), who took the loss when the Cubs won their first title in 108 years, got the win.

MARLINS 8, BRAVES 4

A gray cat went scrambling for cover in the Marlins Park outfield midway through Miami's home opener, and no wonder, given the barrage off Marcell Ozuna's bat. Ozuna homered twice and had a career-high six RBIs to help Miami beat Atlanta. Announced attendance was 36,519, and that didn't include a cat that ran onto the field midway through the game. It scurried along the outfield warning track, ran away from right fielder Giancarlo Stanton, crawled up the center field wall and then appeared to get stuck in the animatronic home run sculpture. Marlins president David Samson said if Ozuna had hit a third homer, the sculpture would not have been activated for fear of harming the cat. Dan Straily (1-1) allowed three runs, two earned, in five innings for his first victory since joining Miami. Bartolo Colon (0-1) allowed six runs in four innings.

ANGELS 6, RANGERS 5, 10 INNINGS

Carlos Perez's squeeze bunt in the 10th inning capped another comeback for Los Angeles, which scored three times in the ninth before going on to beat Texas. The Rangers led 5-0 through six innings. With runners on the corners and one out, Perez set down a perfect bunt that hugged the inside grass and died without going foul. The Angels had rallied to score seven runs in the ninth in the previous game on Sunday to beat the Mariners. The Angels' ninth-inning comeback Tuesday came off Rangers' closer Sam Dyson. Down 5-2 going into the inning, the Angels got a solo home run from Danny Espinosa, back-to-back doubles by Yonel Escobar and Mike Trout, and a run-scoring single from Albert Pujols to tie it.

Trout then robbed Mike Napoli of a home run to lead off the 10th. Cam Bedrosian (1-0) got the win with an inning of relief and Jeremy Jeffress (0-1) was stuck with the loss.



PHILADELPHIA: New York Mets' Yoenis Cespedes follows through on a three-run home run off Philadelphia Phillies starting pitcher Clay Buchholz during the first inning of a baseball game, Tuesday, in Philadelphia. — AP

RED SOX 8, ORIOLES 1

Drew Pomeranz struck out six in his season debut, Dustin Pedroia drove in four runs and Boston beat Baltimore. Christian Vazquez added a two-run triple in the eighth, capping off a 4-for-4 game, as the Red Sox tagged Baltimore pitchers for 15 hits and had back-to-back three-run innings in the seventh and eighth to blow the game open. Pomeranz, who opened the season on the disabled list with a strained left forearm, took a shutout into the seventh inning. He held Baltimore to four hits and one run in six innings and picked up his first win at Fenway Park.

TIGERS 2, TWINS 1

Matthew Boyd allowed one hit in six outstanding innings and James McCann homered in the fifth to lift Detroit over Minnesota. Boyd (1-1) took a no-hitter into the sixth before Robbie Grossman broke it up by lining a clean single to left field with two out. The Detroit left-hander struck out six and walked two before turning the game over to the bullpen. Tigers relievers have struggled so far this season, but they were able to close this game out. Francisco Rodriguez allowed a run in the ninth but recovered for his third save in four chances. Pinch-hitter Max Kepler hit a popout with two on to end it. Hector Santiago (1-1) allowed only three hits in 6 1/3 innings, but one of them was a two-run shot by McCann.

NATIONALS 8, CARDINALS 3

Daniel Murphy homered, doubled twice and tied career highs with five RBIs and four hits and Washington defeated St. Louis. Matt Wieters and Jayson Werth also hit solo shots to help Washington earn a second home series victory. Nationals left-hander Gio Gonzalez (1-0) allowed two runs - one earned - over seven innings. He allowed six hits before retiring his last 11 batters. Lance Lynn (0-1) allowed six runs - four earned - and five hits and four walks over five innings.

ROCKIES 3, PADRES 2

Nolan Arenado hit a go-ahead homer in the seventh, Antonio Senzatela threw seven sharp innings for his first major league win and Colorado beat San Diego. Arenado lined a fastball from reliever Miguel Diaz (1-1) to right for his third homer. Carlos Gonzalez and Charlie Blackmon also hit solo shots to help Colorado knot the three-game series with San Diego at a game apiece. Senzatela (1-0) and his blazing fastball made things difficult for the Padres. He allowed two runs while striking out five. The Rockies' reliable bullpen took it from there, with Greg Holland working his way around a leadoff walk in the ninth to earn his fifth save.

DIAMONDBACKS 4, GIANTS 3

Robbie Ray pitched shutout ball into the seventh inning despite some control issues, Jake Lamb hit a bases-loaded triple and Arizona beat San Francisco. Chris Iannetta added an RBI single, and A.J. Pollock singled, scored and made a stellar play in center field to rob Aaron Hill of extra bases in the third. Arizona improved to 7-2, matching its best start in franchise history. Ray (1-0) settled in after pitching out of a pair of early jams and overcame matching his career high of five walks. The lefty struck out eight and allowed four hits over 6 2/3 innings. Jeff Samardzija (0-2) allowed three runs in 6 2/3 innings.

ASTROS 7, MARINERS 5

George Springer hit his fourth leadoff home run of the season, Evan Gattis had a bases-loaded pinch-hit double and Houston beat Seattle. Seattle reliever James Pazos gave up hits to all four Houston batters he faced in the sixth inning - including Gattis' double and a run-scoring single by Alex Bregman - as the Astros scored four runs to take the lead for good. Joe Musgrove (1-0) pitched into the sixth inning, giving up three runs and seven hits for Houston. Ariel Miranda (0-1) allowed four runs and seven hits.—AP



HONG KONG: From left, New Zealand's Sam Webster, Ethan Mitchell and Edward Dawkins, celebrate on the podium after winning the gold medal in the Men's Team Sprint at the World Track Cycling championships in Hong Kong, yesterday. — AP

CYCLING

OLYMPIC DREAMS AS KIWIS SHOOT TO SPRINT SUPREMACY

HONG KONG: New Zealand's team sprint trio allowed themselves to dream of an elusive Olympic gold medal after they underlined their dominance at the Track Cycling World Championships yesterday.

Ethan Mitchell, Sam Webster and Ed Dawkins made it two world titles in a row and three in four years with a flawless performance at the Hong Kong Velodrome.

The Kiwis were denied Olympic glory last year in Rio by a British team which is now on hiatus, but they were worthy champions in Hong Kong as they qualified fastest for the final and beat the Netherlands by 0.333sec.

"We just want it more than everyone else," said a jubilant Dawkins. "We've been the same three guys in the same order for the last eight years. We know each other so well we can fight as hard as we can and still have perfect technique. That's what we have over the rest of the world. We are not physically better riders. We have the same bikes thereabout.

But as a team as a unit we perform better."

After world titles in 2014, 2016 and 2017, as well as Olympic silver last year, one goal is now amount for the team-victory at the Tokyo Olympics in 2020. "(Tokyo) is in the back of our minds all the time, every race," Dawkins said.

"We race every race as if we were there, putting ourselves under the same amount of pressure so when it comes down to racing on that day we're not overwhelmed by it."

He added: "(Olympic gold) is the only thing that we haven't won... Winning in Tokyo would be icing on an awesome career."

VICTORY IN 'LAST TWO METRES'

France took bronze with victory over Poland while in the women's race, Russia's Daria Shmeleva and Anastasia Voynova also won their second straight title when they beat Australia.

For the Russian pair, it was a redemptive win after they only won last year's title when the Chinese team were disqualified on a technicality. "This final was very important for us because this time we beat the team," Voynova said.

"Last time in the world championships, the Chinese riders were relegated and that's why we became the world champions. But this year, it's our own victory."

Earlier, Italy's Rachele Barbieri grabbed her maiden world trophy and the first gold medal of the championships with a furious final sprint to win the women's 10km scratch race.

The 20-year-old left it ultra-late before she caught Elinor Barker on the line following a last-lap break for victory by the British Olympic team pursuit gold-medallist.

Barbieri, the European under-23 champion, was left to celebrate her first major title, while Belgium's Jolien D'Hoore took bronze.

Barbieri, Barker and D'Hoore had been among a group of six, also including 2015 champion Kirsten Wild and America's Sarah Hammer, who surged forward after the halfway point.

"I can't even believe it," Barbieri said. "My coaches said to me to follow the strongest riders... I don't believe it. In the last two metres I won." Canada's men were an early casualty in the team pursuit when all four riders crashed heavily and limped from the track during their qualifying heat against New Zealand.

Australia, who flirted with the world record in qualifying, were fastest into Today's final where they will face New Zealand. — AFP



HONG KONG: Gold medalist Rachele Barbieri, center, of Italy, silver medalist Elinor Barker, left, of Great Britain and Bronze medalist Jolien D'Hoore of Belgium pose with their medals on the podium after winning the women's scratch race at the World Track Cycling championships in Hong Kong, yesterday. — AP

NEW AUSTRALIA BOSS PLEDGES 'COMPASSIONATE' APPROACH

HONG KONG: Cycling Australia's new high-performance director Simon Jones has pledged to put riders first rather than obsess about medals as he sets about taking the country to the very top of the sport.

The Briton, a veteran of British Cycling and Team Sky-both highly successful but recently controversial-said a "compassionate" approach was ultimately more effective than treating riders like "robots". "We have to treat each other with respect but we need to be honest and challenge each other," Jones told AFP ahead of the Track Cycling World Championships in Hong Kong. "High-performance environments are an uncomfortable place to be, because it's not about the status quo, we're constantly looking for improvement. "But I think there's a way we can do that in which we put the person first. We're all human beings-we're not machines, we're not robots... we (can't) just think mechanistically around the medals, and forget there's a human being.

"They're on a journey, we're all on journeys here and ultimately they've got to love what they do." Jones said his approach had been indelibly shaped by his experiences in Britain, whose riders won six gold medals-three times more than any other country-at last year's Olympics. However, British Cycling has been in turmoil after claims of sexism and bullying, while Team Sky, where Jones has spent the last two years, has hit trouble over the drugs records of 2012 Tour de France winner Bradley Wiggins.

Jones said he would implement a refined form of the "marginal gains" philosophy made famous by Team Sky's ex-British Cycling supremo Dave Brailsford, where small advantages

in a wide range of areas are said to make a big difference in competition.

Somewhat surprisingly Wiggins, a five-time Olympic gold medalist and a long-time collaborator with Brailsford, recently rounded on marginal gains, calling it "a load of rubbish". "Marginal gains is about continuous improvement. I think marginal gains can be applied to quite a mechanistic (way)... but this game is about people," Jones said.

He added: "It's about each and every person understanding their role and how they can improve, and most importantly we need to improve in the biggest gain areas.

"As opposed to looking at marginal gains across the board, we've got to be quite clever about where we focus on improvement. The trick is often leaving things out on purpose... and it will be different for different people at different times." Jones, who only started his new job last week, began his career as a sports scientist with British Cycling in 1995 before rising to head coach by the 2004 Olympics. He also worked at the Western Australia Institute of Sport from 2007-2013.

He is taking charge at the start of a new chapter for Australia after the retirement of two-time Olympic champion Anna Meares, and following a disappointing Rio campaign where the team failed to win any gold medals. "This to me is the best job in the world. And I want the athletes to feel that when they're in training and it's difficult and they have a bad day, they still can step back and think, 'I just love this,'" Jones said. "Unless you love what you do, I don't think you can be the best in the world... Unless you engage, you're not going to value-add, you're not going to go the extra mile, and that's what you need to do in high performance.—AFP

MARGINAL GAINS

Jones said he would implement a refined form of the "marginal gains" philosophy made famous by Team Sky's ex-British Cycling supremo Dave Brailsford, where small advantages

BANGLADESHI TEAM IN PROTEST CONCEDES 92 OFF 4 BALLS

DHAKA: A Bangladeshi cricket team conceded 92 runs in just four balls to deliberately lose a match in what they called a protest over biased umpiring in their league. In the 50-over match of Dhaka Second Division League on Tuesday, Lalmatia Club were dismissed for just 88 off 14 overs before opponents Axiom Cricketers reached 92-0 off just four balls.

Lalmatia's opening bowler Sujon Mahmud sent down 13 wides and three no-balls in the first over and all of them raced to the boundary, costing his side a further 80 runs. Axiom opener Mustafizur Rahman struck three fours in four legitimate boundaries to take his side home in

just 0.4 overs to complete a 10-wicket win in the capital's City Club ground. Lalmatia Club secretary Adnan Rahman said his player bowled the wides and no-balls deliberately as a mark of protest for poor umpiring. "Throughout the league we were subjected to poor umpiring," Adnan said.

The secretary alleged the umpires did not even allow the team captain to see the coin after toss. "They tossed the coin and said: Okay you bat. Very soon we found our team had lost five wickets for just 11 runs inside seven overs," he said.

Another club official claimed to AFP on condition of anonymity that umpires were biased against Lalmatia throughout

the season, as at least one of its leading lights is linked to the main opposition party. The match angered the Bangladesh Cricket Board, which organises club cricket in Dhaka. The president of the BCB is a lawmaker in the ruling party and is close to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. "This is very unusual ... so many wides and no-balls," BCB spokesman Jalal Yunus told AFP. "We have asked match officials to submit a report in this regard. Once we've received the report, we will launch a formal investigation."

Meanwhile, cricket umpires have been given the power to eject disobedient players while tethered balls will be permitted to protect wicketkeepers from

eye injuries as part of a series of law changes coming into effect from Oct. 1.

The new 'Players conduct' rule will allow on-field officials to remove a misbehaving competitor temporarily or permanently and award five penalty runs to the opposition, the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) has said.

If a captain refuses to remove his offending player, the umpire can award the match to the opposition. If both captains refuse to comply, the contest can be abandoned.

The MCC, the custodians of the game's laws, also merged "handled the ball" offence with "obstructing the field," thus reducing the number of possible dis-

missals from 10 to nine. It also ratified the proposal of tethered balls to protect wicketkeepers from the type of injuries that ended South African Mark Boucher's career in 2012. Boucher was hit in the eye by flying balls in a tour match in England, which forced him into retirement.

"Law 8.4 has been changed, to help prevent injuries, to allow specially designed mechanisms which tether the balls to the stumps, thereby restricting the distance that they can fly off the stumps but without limiting their ability to be dislodged," the MCC said.

The MCC also approved bat restrictions and allowed substitutes to keep wicket. — Agencies

GOLF

LPGA FACING QUESTIONS OVER THOMPSON PENALTY

KAPOLEI: The Lotte Championship is set to begin later, 10 days and 2,500 miles from the stunning end of the ANA Inspiration, won by So Yeon Ryu in a sudden-death playoff with Lexi Thompson at the LPGA's first major of the year.

Enough time and space, apparently, for some LPGA players to move on from any outrage over the four-stroke penalty given to Thompson coming off the 12th green on the final day.

Thompson was punished for mis-marking her ball on No. 17 the day before, a foul noticed by a TV viewer who emailed the LPGA about it Sunday. Six golfers were asked about the incident Tuesday at a press conference ahead of the \$2 million event at Ko Olina Golf Club, and all dodged the question. Later, away from the group, 2014 Lotte champion Michelle Wie opened up a bit, saying it all hit close to home.

She was disqualified from her first tournament as a professional, the 2005 Samsung World Championship, when she was 15. She took a drop and one-stroke penalty on the seventh hole of the third round and ended up fourth on Sunday. Then a writer said he thought Wie had dropped closer to the hole on Saturday. LPGA officials agreed and she was disqualified. "I got DQ'd a couple times," Wie said. "My first reaction was at least she (Thompson) wasn't DQ'd."

"It was a shock when it happened to me because they told me in the middle of the golf course. A rules official came up to me and I was 10 under at the time. I had been seven shots behind and thinking it was kind of impossible, but all of a sudden I was three shots behind and thinking I had a chance. At that moment I was dumbfounded. I said, 'I did what?'"

That was pretty much Thompson's reaction. And Dustin Johnson's at last year's U.S. Open, when he was told on the 12th tee that he might be penalized for causing his ball to move on the fifth green. He was assessed two strokes after his round was over, but won anyway.

A few weeks after that, Anna Nordqvist got a two-shot penalty for inadvertently touching the sand with her club in a bunker during a playoff with Brittany Lang. The violation was also proven by TV replay. Nordqvist lost by two shots.

"I just want to know what number people are calling," Wie said. "What is this mysterious number people are calling?"

Incredulity over the call even spilled over to The Masters, with Jack Nicklaus saying he believes penalties should not be assessed after a round is done.

No tour officials were available for comment Tuesday, but LPGA Commissioner Mike Whan said on Fairways of Life with Matt Adams that the situation was "frustrating and embarrassing, it's one of those situations where the penalty just doesn't match the crime." But, Whan concluded, "for 67 years the LPGA has been following the rules as written" and he didn't want to rush into changes simply because of the "anxiety and pain" after the ANA.

The field this week features 80 of the world's Top 100 female golfers, including defending champion Minjee Lee. The 2012 US Girls champion from Australia fired a bogey-free 64 in the final round last year to win by a shot. She played the final eight holes in 6-under par.

Wie, who is from Hawaii, is the only American to win Lotte in its first five years. Her last win came at the 2014 US Women's Open. — AP

MOTOR RACING

ALONSO TO MISS MONACO GP TO RACE AT INDY 500

MONACO: Two-time Formula One champion Fernando Alonso will race for McLaren at the Indianapolis 500 on May 28 in a surprise switch that will see the Spanish driver miss the Monaco Grand Prix on the same day. It will be Alonso's first drive in the biggest car race in the United States as he steps up his bid to win what he regards as the "Triple Crown" of motor sport: the Monaco GP, the Indianapolis 500 and the Le Mans 24 Hours race.

"It's a tough challenge," said the 35-year-old Alonso, who has twice won in Monaco and hasn't competed at Le Mans. "But I'm up for it."

McLaren made the announcement yesterday, saying the Monaco GP will be the only Formula One race that Alonso will miss. The British-based team hasn't announced who will replace Alonso for the most glitzy race on the F1 calendar.

McLaren will be racing in the Indianapolis 500 for the first time in 38 years. Its entry will be a Dallara DW12 chassis, run by the Andretti Autosport team headed by Michael Andretti — a former IndyCar champion who raced in Formula One for McLaren in 1993.

Alonso will fly to Indianapolis immediately after the Spanish Grand Prix on May 14 to get in two weeks of IndyCar practice. "I've never raced an IndyCar before, and neither have I ever driven on a super-speedway, but I'm confident that I'll get to grips with it fast," he said.

"I've watched a lot of IndyCar action on TV and online, and it's clear that great pre-

cision is required to race in close proximity with other cars on the far side of 220 mph (354 kph). I realize I'll be on a steep learning curve."

Andretti will have six cars in the Indianapolis 500, including Alexander Rossi, the former F1 test driver who was the surprise winner of last year's 100th running of the classic. The Andretti team has shown much improvement from last year, when Honda was dominated all season by Chevrolet. But Honda drivers have won the first two races of the season, and the Andretti cars have been competitive.

There had been rumblings in the paddock in Long Beach that IndyCar officials were trying to bring in a "showstopper" for this year's race, but nothing could be confirmed. Alonso was one of the names being floated, and the pairing makes sense now that McLaren is run by Zak Brown.

Brown ran an Indianapolis-based marketing firm for years before his gradual move into Formula One. He's often been consulted by IndyCar management on a variety of issues, and was even in talks for an official role with the series.

"Could Fernando win this year's Indy 500?" Brown said. "Well, I wouldn't be so silly as to make any such rash prediction, but I expect him to be in the mix."

In 1966, F1 champion Graham Hill won the Indianapolis 500 as a rookie. The most celebrated F1 driver to take part in the race in recent years was Nigel Mansell, the then-defending champion, in 1993. Mansell finished third. — AP



PROVIDENCE: Sarfraz Ahmed of Pakistan celebrates winning the 3rd and final ODI match between West Indies and Pakistan at Guyana National Stadium, Providence, Guyana, on Tuesday. — AFP

CRICKET

MALIK TON AS PAKISTAN DOWN WEST INDIES TO TAKE SERIES

PROVIDENCE: Shoaib Malik scored an unbeaten century as Pakistan beat West Indies by six wickets to clinch victory in their one day international series in Guyana on Tuesday. Malik sealed the win and his ton-in spectacular fashion, smashing a six off West Indies captain Jason Holder to wrap up victory with nearly seven overs to spare.

Malik's 101, which included two sixes and ten fours, was matched by an assured 81 from Mohammad Hafeez as Pakistan finished on 236 for four in reply to the home side's 233 for nine. "I can't thank Hafeez enough for the way he played because he took all the pressure off me," said Malik after collecting both the "Man of the Match" and "Man of the Series" awards.

"West Indies fought hard and credit to them but this really gives us encouragement going into the Champions Trophy," Hafeez completely dominated their partnership, his innings coming off 86 balls with two sixes and eight fours before a miscued sweep off Ashley Nurse found Veerasammy Permaul on the backward square-leg boundary. Permaul, the left-arm spinner brought into the match at the expense of fast bowler Alzarri Joseph on a turning track, proved expensive while leg-spinner Devendra Bishoo also lacked potency in helpful conditions. "I felt we had a decent enough total but we just couldn't put enough pressure on Malik and Hafeez after the early breakthroughs," said Holder. "I've got no regrets about the decision to bat first because I think we recovered well and should have made a better effort of defending that total." West Indies were indebted to Shai Hope (71) and Jason Mohammed (59) after their top-order once again crumbled.

Mohammed's excellent run of form in this Caribbean season continued with a fluent 59 off 64 balls with two sixes and five fours, his fourth half-century in six ODI innings. The pair put on 101 for the fourth wicket and lifted the home side from early discomfort to a degree of competitiveness. However they lost vital wickets in the quest for quick runs over the final overs of the innings, managing just 29 over the last five in which Ahmed resorted to his faster bowlers to good effect.

Junaid Khan, who had accounted for Evin Lewis at the start of the innings, returned to separate the pair of Hope and Mohammed, having the latter caught at the wicket. Hope fell to Shadab Khan via a catch at long-on, although the leg-spinner endured the most expensive effort of his young international career, conceding 57 runs off eight overs.

Not surprisingly on a worn, turgid track used for the third consecutive match, finger spinners Imad Wasim and Hafeez were difficult for the West Indies to get away, Wasim conceding only 24 runs from his full allotment of ten overs for the wicket of Kieran Powell, who was deceived and stumped. — AFP

SCOREBOARD

PROVIDENCE, Guyana: Scoreboard of final fixture of a three-match One-Day International series between the West Indies and Pakistan at the National Stadium in Guyana yesterday.

West Indies Innings

E. Lewis c Hafeez b Junaid Khan 16
C. Walton b Ali 19
K. Powell st Ahmed b Wasim 23
S. Hope c Malik b Shadab Khan 71
J. Mohammed c Ahmed b Junaid Khan 59
J. Carter b Shadab Khan 11
J. Holder c Shadab Khan b Amir 12
A. Nurse not out 10
V. Permaul c Hafeez b Aamir 8
D. Bishoo run out 0
Extras (lb-1, w-3) 4
Total (9 wkts, 50 overs) 233

Fall of wickets: 1-31 (Lewis), 2-40 (Walton), 3-68 (Powell), 4-169 (Mohammed), 5-192 (Carter), 6-211 (Hope), 7-219 (Holder), 8-231 (Permaul), 9-233 (Bishoo)
Did not bat: S. Gabriel
Bowling: M. Aamir 9-0-41-2, J. Khan 10-0-60-2 (1w), H. Ali 6-1-29-1, M. Hafeez 7-0-21-0 (1w), I. Wasim 10-1-24-1, S.

Khan 8-0-57-2 (1w).

Pakistan Innings

K. Akmal c Powell b Gabriel 0
B. Azam b Gabriel 16
M. Hafeez c Permaul b Nurse 81
S. Malik not out 101
S. Ahmed not out 24
Extras (b-3, lb-4, w-3, nb-1) 11
Total (4 wkts, 43.1 overs) 236
Fall of wickets: 1-0 (Akmal), 2-16 (Shehzad), 3-36 (Azam), 4-149 (Hafeez)

Did not bat: I. Wasim, S. Khan, M. Aamir, J. Khan, H. Ali
Bowling: S. Gabriel 10-0-60-2 (1nb, 1w), J. Holder 8.1-1-37-1 (1w), D. Bishoo 10-1-42-0 (1w), V. Permaul 4-0-31-0, A. Nurse 10-0-49-1, J. Mohammed 1-0-10-0.
Result: Pakistan won by six wickets

HAMILTON WANTS REAL BATTLE IN BAHRAIN WITH RIVAL VETTEL

MANAMA: Lewis Hamilton is keeping his fingers crossed that he and Ferrari rival Sebastian Vettel can have a proper battle in Bahrain on Sunday after last year's race did neither of them any favours.

Vettel, now joint leader of the Formula One championship with Mercedes's Hamilton after two races, was unable to start the 2016 grand prix at Sakhir due to an engine failure on the formation lap.

The German, who had qualified third behind the then-dominant Mercedes drivers, has been alongside Hamilton on the front row so far this year. "It (the title battle) is going to go right down to the end of the season, and I hope there's nothing mechanical that will come in between our sheer battle through ability," said Hamilton after winning in China last weekend.

"I really, really hope it's just an out and out fight through stubbornness, through mental stability, through fitness, composure...," he added. Vettel, a four times world champion with Red Bull, and triple champion Hamilton have 43 points apiece after one victory and second place each. Unless both draw a blank, the deadlock must be broken on Sunday at a desert circuit where both are two times winners and returning in rather better mood than they left last year. There is a real sense of anticipation about the emerging scrap between two great rivals with a huge determination to win and no less mutual respect of each other's talents and achievements. "He is at his best and he is phenomenally quick," Hamilton said of Australian Grand Prix winner Vettel. "Ferrari are at their best in years. We're at our best as a team, and I feel like I'm at my best." The ultimate fighter always wants to

go up against the best battle he can have because then when you come out on top, it's so much more satisfying. I love this fight."

Last year's race in Bahrain does not hold great memories for either of the current Mercedes drivers, either. Hamilton made a slow start from pole and collided on the first lap with the Williams of Valtteri Bottas, his new team mate this season, who was punished by stewards for his move.

Bottas, who has replaced last year's winner and retired world champion Nico Rosberg, will not want reminding of that as he seeks to move on from a spin behind the safety car that cost him points in China.

Mercedes should be favourites, after winning the last three races at Sakhir, but Ferrari are sharp on strategy and have shown they flourish in hotter conditions.

"I think they will be very, very quick in the next race but there's a lot of straights there as well and we've obviously got, I think, still the strongest power unit on the grid," commented Hamilton.

"So I think that will come into play, for sure." The race will also see the return of Sauber's Pascal Wehrlein, who has missed two races due to fitness issues, and of former commercial supreme Bernie Ecclestone, attending a race for the first time since his ouster by Liberty Media.

The 86-year-old Briton told Reuters that a Vettel v Hamilton battle was win-win for the sport. "They are both good friends of mine so I don't care who wins. It would be nice to see Ferrari win... I'd like to see Sebastian win, but it would also be nice to see Lewis put another notch on his gun," he said. — Reuters



MONACO: This file photo taken on May 22, 2015 shows McLaren's Spanish driver Fernando Alonso in the pit lane of the Monaco Formula One street circuit during the Monaco F1 Grand Prix. McLaren's former two-time world champion Fernando Alonso will miss next month's Monaco Grand Prix to race for them in the Indianapolis 500, the British-based team said yesterday. — AFP

UFC RETURN TO ASIA COULD SPARK TURF WAR WITH REGIONAL PROMOTIONS

HONG KONG: The world's largest mixed martial arts organisation is looking to knuckle its way into Asia amid warnings the move could spark a brawl with regional promotions over a slice of the lucrative market.

The Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC), which has made cage fighters such as Conor McGregor and Ronda Rousey into household names, earlier this year announced five events beginning with a card in Singapore on June 17 after a 19-month hiatus from Asia.

The Las Vegas-based UFC's return to Asia represents the organisation's latest crack at expanding its foothold in the birthplace of martial arts. UFC have held shows in Asia from Tokyo to Manila but analysts say the efforts have yielded mixed returns on their investment compared to record-breaking triumphs in North America.

"Dana White (the UFC president) has come out here before and that's kind of his style to come out and say amazing things: 'We're so focused on Asia. China's going to be our next big things for us,'" Matt Eaton, editor of the Hong Kong-based Rough Magazine, told AFP. "But it never really played out."

The UFC made a concerted push to enter the Chinese market throughout 2014.

They held two shows in the southern Chinese city of Macau and produced a season of its signature reality TV series "The Ultimate Fighter" that aired in the mainland featuring Chinese contenders battling for a UFC contract.

But less than a year after the show hit the airwaves the company shuttered its Beijing office and relocated operations to Singapore. "They have not penetrated the market in Asia as they think they

may have thought they would five, six, seven years ago," said Marc Raimondi, assistant editor at MMAFighting.com.

During a press conference in Singapore in February the UFC's top brass promised their sights were firmly fixed on Asia. "We're aware of the need for an Asian champion as we've never had one, said Joe Carr, UFC Head of International and Content. "That's really the last piece of the puzzle for us."—AFP

SOCCER

POLICE HUNT SUSPECT OF DORTMUND BUS BLAST

DORTMUND: German investigators were hunting yesterday for possible suspects responsible for three explosions that rocked the Borussia Dortmund football team's bus, injuring a player and a policeman. The assault, described by Dortmund city's police chief as a "targeted attack" against the team, shook German football ahead of crucial Champions League ties.

Investigations will focus on a letter claiming responsibility for the attack that was found close to the site of the blasts. "The letter claims responsibility for what happened," prosecutor Sandra Luecke said late Tuesday, telling journalists that "its authenticity is being verified".

German authorities have held off from describing it as a terror attack, saying it is too early to determine a motive.

But Germany has been on high alert since a series of jihadist attacks last year, including the Christmas market truck assault in Berlin in December that killed 12 people. The explosives detonated minutes after the Dortmund team bus pulled away from the squad's hotel and headed for their quarter-final, first-leg, tie against Monaco.

Spanish international Marc Bartra underwent surgery on a broken wrist after he was hit by flying glass. The injured policeman, who was on a motorcycle and had been escorting the team bus, suffered trauma from the noise of the blasts. Dortmund's quarter-final match will now be played on Wednesday evening, just hours before another Champions League clash in Germany between Bayern Munich and Real Madrid.

"We are assuming that they were a targeted attack against the Dortmund team," said the western German city's police chief Gregor Lange, adding however that it did not amount to an organised terror assault.

SHOCKED PLAYERS

The bus had set off from the Borussia stadium about 10 kilometres (six miles) away when "three explosive charges detonated" police said. The explosives, which went off shortly after 7:00 pm (1700 GMT), were hidden in a hedge and were detonated as the bus passed. The blast shattered the bus windows and the vehicle was burned on the right hand side.

"The bus turned onto the main road, when there was a huge noise—a big explo-

sion," Dortmund's Swiss goalkeeper Roman Bürki told Swiss media. "After the bang, we all crouched down in the bus. Anyone who could, threw himself on the floor."

"We did not know if more would come." Bürki said Bartra was "hit by splinters of broken glass". Dortmund's press spokesman said the 26-year-old had broken the radius bone in his right wrist. The club said other players were safe and there was no danger inside the Signal Iduna Park stadium. "The whole team is in a state of shock, you can't get pictures like that out of your head," Dortmund CEO Hans-Joachim Watzke said. "I hope the team will be in a position to be able to compete tomorrow on the pitch." In a crisis situation like this, Borussia pulls together.

'HARD TO ABSORB'

Germany's best-selling Bild daily quoted anonymous sources saying that investigators were hunting for a likely getaway car used by the attacker. The vehicle had foreign car plates, said the newspaper, which also added that police believed the explosives were a particular type of pipe-bomb. The announcement that the game was postponed was only made to the stunned stadium about 15 minutes before Tuesday's match was due to start. Dortmund's president Reinhard Rauball said he believed the team would be ready for Wednesday's game. "The players will be able to push this out of their minds and be in a position to put in their usual performances," he said.

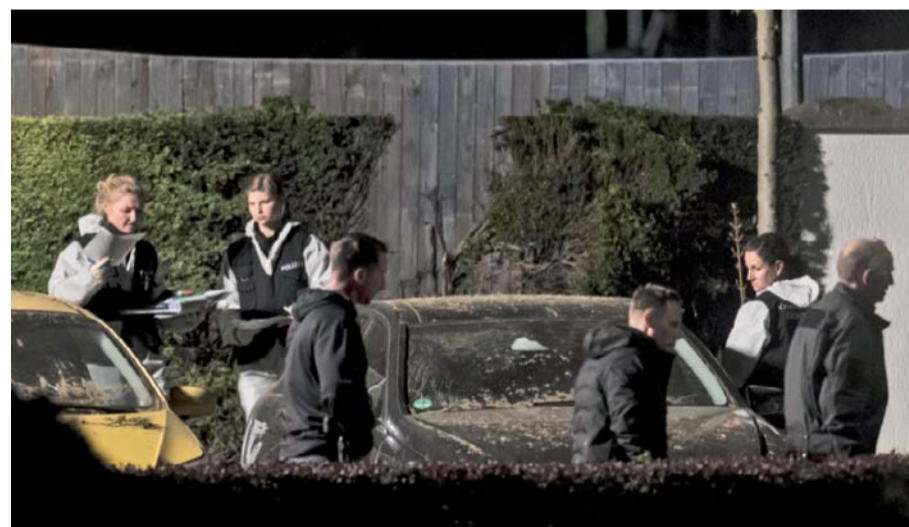
"The worst thing would be if whoever committed this attack was now able to get to affect them through it."

But ex-Dortmund player Steffen Freund, who won the Champions League with Borussia in 1997, said there would be scars.

"When there has been a direct attack on the team bus, then it's not just forgotten by Wednesday," said the 47-year-old. "Mentally and psychologically that is hard to absorb, it's a lot to deal with."

Dortmund police said security would be tightened at Wednesday's match, with a major deployment of officers to "ensure that the game is played safely". Separately, security was also being tightened at the Bayern-Real tie in Munich.

Bild said both teams' hotels were under heavy police guard, and the squads' buses driven to a safe location. — AFP



DORTMUND: Police officers continue investigations at the scene following an explosion near a bus carrying the Borussia Dortmund soccer team, in Dortmund, Germany, Tuesday. The first leg of the Champions League quarter final soccer match between Borussia Dortmund and AS Monaco had been postponed after the bus carrying the Dortmund squad was damaged in an explosion, and team player Marc Bartra was hospitalised.— AP

SEVILLA THREATEN ARGENTINA FA OVER SAMPAOLI MOVE

MADRID: La Liga side Sevilla said yesterday they are prepared to take legal action against the Argentine Football Association (AFA) over their plans to poach coach Jorge Sampaoli.

Edgardo Bauza was sacked as national team boss on Monday as the two-time world champions risk missing out on the World Cup next year as they sit fifth in the 10-team South American qualifying group.

New AFA president Claudio Tapia announced his intention to travel to Spain to meet with potential candidates for the job including Sampaoli and Atletico Madrid coach Diego Simeone, as well as gauging the opinion of senior players like Barcelona duo Lionel Messi and Javier Mascherano.

"Sevilla FC has today sent a letter to the AFA in which it states that, in the case of these comments being true, Sevilla FC would consider it a lack of respect," Sevilla said in a statement.

"And, at the same time, unacceptable any meeting or contact with the coach leading to a breaking of contract with the club, and thus will not think twice about considering their legal options."

Sampaoli is under contract with Sevilla until 2018. However, he has not hidden his

desire to coach Messi either at club level with Barcelona or with the national team.

"I want to manage Messi to be able to watch him from the sideline every day," Sampaoli told Argentine newspaper Ole recently. "It is a unique dream to be able to see the best in the world up close."

Sampaoli's stock has fallen in recent weeks after an excellent start to his debut season coaching in Europe as Sevilla suffered a six-game winless streak prior to Saturday's 4-2 win over Deportivo la Coruna. The 57-year-old is expected to miss out on the Barca job when Luis Enrique steps down at the end of the season, but has proved his credentials at international level. His Chile side beat Argentina on penalties to win the Copa America in 2015.

Simeone has masterminded a huge turnaround in Atletico's fortunes since taking over in December 2011 and has not hidden his ambitions to one day coach Argentina. However, he too is under contract until the end of next season. Whoever takes charge will likely have to do without Messi for three of Argentina's remaining four qualifiers as he was slapped with a four-game ban for insulting an assistant referee in last month's 1-0 win over Chile.—AFP



ATLANTA: Charlotte Hornets guard Treveon Graham (12) and Atlanta Hawks forward Paul Millsap (4) vie for a loose ball during the first half of an NBA basketball game, Tuesday, in Atlanta. — AFP

BASKETBALL

HAWKS STING HORNETS, SET PLAYOFF DATE WITH WIZARDS

ATLANTA: Dwight Howard had 19 points and 12 rebounds as the resurgent Atlanta Hawks won their fourth straight game, routing the listless Charlotte Hornets 103-76 on Tuesday night to wrap up the No. 5 seed in the Eastern Conference. The Hawks will face the Washington Wizards in the opening round of the playoffs. A week ago, Atlanta's playoff hopes were in jeopardy after a dismal stretch that included two losses to Brooklyn, the worst team in the NBA. Then, in a sudden turnaround that epitomized the team's maddening inconsistency this season, the Hawks knocked off East-leading Boston and recorded two straight stunning victories over the defending NBA champion Cleveland Cavaliers, including Sunday's comeback from a 26-point deficit. This one was never in doubt. Charlotte played its regular-season finale already eliminated from the playoffs and without its best player, Kemba Walker.

NUGGETS 109, MAVERICKS 91

Gary Harris scored 20 points and Denver beat Dallas with the Mavericks honoring retiring Cowboys quarterback Tony Romo as a ceremonial player. With nothing at stake in a lost season that will be the worst for Dallas (32-49) since going 20-62 in 1997-98, the Mavericks followed through with an idea hatched in part by star Dirk Nowitzki weeks ago when it was clear Romo wasn't returning to the Cowboys. Romo was honored exactly a week after announcing he was leaving football to become the No. 1 NFL analyst at CBS. The soon-to-be 37-year-old had the crowd on its feet in the final minute hoping he could play, but Romo wasn't on the roster or under contract. After breaking a bone in his back last preseason, the career passing leader for the storied Cowboys franchise lost the starting job he held for 10 years to rookie Dak Prescott and decided not to play for another team. Mason Plumlee and Malik Beasley scored 16 apiece in the first game for the Nuggets (39-42) since getting eliminated from the postseason. Nowitzki scored 21 for Dallas.

THUNDER 100, TIMBERWOLVES 98

Victor Oladipo scored 20 points and hit a jumper with 6.3 seconds to play to lift Russell Westbrook-less Oklahoma City over Minnesota. With Westbrook resting for the first time this season, Oladipo also had nine rebounds and six assists, and the Thunder outrebounded Minnesota 54-35. Starters Taj Gibson and Andre Roberson also sat out as the Thunder prepare for a first-round series against Houston. Domantas Sabonis added 19 points and nine rebounds. Karl-Anthony Towns had 26 points and 12 rebounds, while Andrew Wiggins overcame a 1-for-11 start to finish with 18 points for the Minnesota. But the Timberwolves again struggled to get stops down the stretch and Wiggins missed a 3-pointer at the buzzer as they lost their fifth straight game.

LAKERS 108, PELICANS 96

Metta World Peace scored a team-leading 18 points during what might have been his final home game for the Lakers, and Los Angeles

NBA results/standings

LA Lakers 108, New Orleans 96; Sacramento 129, Phoenix 104; Denver 109, Dallas 91; Oklahoma City 100, Minnesota 98; Atlanta 103, Charlotte 76.

Eastern Conference				Western Conference					
Atlantic Division				Northwest Division					
W	L	PCT	GB						
Boston	52	29	.642	-	Utah	50	31	.617	-
Toronto	50	31	.617	2	Oklahoma City	47	34	.580	3
NY Knicks	30	51	.370	22	Portland	41	40	.506	9
Philadelphia	28	53	.346	24	Denver	39	42	.481	11
Brooklyn	20	61	.247	32	Minnesota	31	50	.383	19
Central Division				Pacific Division					
Cleveland	51	30	.630	-	Golden State	66	15	.815	-
Milwaukee	42	39	.519	9	LA Clippers	50	31	.617	16
Indiana	41	40	.506	10	Sacramento	32	49	.395	34
Chicago	40	41	.494	11	LA Lakers	26	55	.321	40
Detroit	37	44	.457	14	Phoenix	24	58	.293	42.5
Southeast Division				Southwest Division					
Washington	49	32	.605	-	San Antonio	61	20	.753	-
Atlanta	43	38	.531	6	Houston	54	27	.667	7
Miami	40	41	.494	9	Memphis	43	38	.531	18
Charlotte	36	46	.439	13.5	New Orleans	33	48	.407	28
Orlando	28	53	.346	21	Dallas	32	49	.395	29

extended its late-season winning streak to five games with a victory over New Orleans.

World Peace made his 840th career NBA start and hit four 3-pointers while scoring all of his points in the second half, thrilling his younger teammates and setting off chants of his name from the Staples Center crowd. Although he hasn't announced his retirement, the 37-year-old veteran of 17 NBA seasons got several standing ovations down the stretch. Cheick Diallo scored 19 points for the Pelicans, who lost their fifth straight while playing without big men Anthony Davis and DeMarcus Cousins.

KINGS 129, SUNS 104

Buddy Hield scored a career-high 30 points

and Ty Lawson had his first career triple-double, getting 22 points, 12 assists and 11 rebounds as Sacramento beat Phoenix. The Kings never trailed, scoring the game's first nine points, leading by 19 at halftime and keeping a double-digit lead the entire second half. Ben McLemore, Willie Cauley-Stein and Georgios Papagiannis all had 13 points for the Kings. Skal Labissiere and Anthony Tolliver had 12 points apiece. The Kings snapped a two-game losing streak, beating the Suns for the third time in four games this season. Tyler Ulis had 27 points and Marquese Chris scored 22 for Phoenix. Leading scorer Devin Booker was given the night off as the Suns finished 24-58. — AP

BRISBANE UPSET KASHIMA, SUWON TAKE POLE POSITION

BRISBANE: Australia's Brisbane Roar kept their Asian Champions League hopes flickering with a 2-1 win over Japanese champions Kashima Antlers in Brisbane yesterday.

Goals from striker Jamie Maclaren and midfielder Brett Holman gave Brisbane a 2-0 lead before Kashima pulled a goal back near the end. It was Brisbane's first win of the campaign and took their points tally to four, just two behind Group E leaders Kashima. "That's a huge win for us," Roar's Danish midfielder Thomas Kristensen said.

"I saw them on television not long ago playing against Real Madrid and they probably should have won that game, so we know it was a quality squad. 'But we also believe in our team and we have some good players, so we deserved to win.'"

Maclaren lashed home with his left foot after a defensive error from Naomichi Ueda to

put the Roar ahead after 18 minutes.

It was Brisbane's first goal in four ACL group games this season. Former Socceroo Holman doubled Brisbane's lead four minutes after the resumption, with an instinctive shot off a set-piece. Kashima pulled one back 11 minutes from the end when substitute Ryota Nagaki blasted home as the Roar defence failed to clear their lines. It was only Brisbane's third win in 16 games in the AFC Champions League and it gave them renewed hope of qualifying for the knockout rounds if they can get a result against Muangthong United in Thailand in two weeks' time.

Kashima face Ulsan Hyundai Motors in South Korea in their next match. In Group G, Suwon Bluewings of South Korea took pole position to qualify as they all but eliminated Hong Kong side Eastern with a 5-0 home hammering in the Suwon World Cup Stadium.—AFP

JUVENTUS MAKES IT WORTH THE WAIT AGAINST BARCELONA

TURIN: Juventus had to wait two years for another chance against Barcelona. It was worth it. "It's certainly a great night," Juventus defender Giorgio Chiellini said after his team beat Barcelona 3-0 in the first leg of the Champions League quarter-finals. "In comparison with two years ago, we wanted to prove to ourselves we had grown technically and tactically." In 2015, Barcelona beat Juventus 3-1 in the final, winning the European Cup for the fifth time. "We would pay to play that final in Berlin again with this conviction," said Chiellini, who missed that

match because of injury. "Now we have to get to another final, the one in Cardiff, hoping it will finish in another way." Juventus has brought in several players over the last two seasons, including Argentina internationals Gonzalo Higuain and Paulo Dybala. It was the latter who made the difference on Tuesday by scoring two goals. The core of the Juventus team remains the same, with the ever-present BBC of Leonardo Bonucci, Andrea Barzagli and Chiellini in front of veteran goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon.

And it's that mix of experience and youth that could see Juventus win European soccer's greatest club prize for the first time since 1996. The reliance on both was typified when the 39-year-old Buffon made a crucial stop to deny Andres Iniesta. Moments later, the 23-year-old Dybala scored his second to give Juventus a 2-0 lead. "I'm there to make saves," Buffon said. "It was an important and difficult save because it's a question of thousandths of a second. If I have the ambition of being considered still a great

goalkeeper, I need to do these things." The Spanish press was more effusive about Buffon, calling the 2006 World Cup winner a "legend" and using the word "divine" to describe his save as they raved about him and Dybala being the orchestrators of Barcelona's downfall. Dybala has been adamant that he does not want to be compared to Lionel Messi, but that seems inevitable - especially after Tuesday's match. One Italian sports newspaper ran the headline "The New Messi" above a picture of Dybala, while another went with "Messi who?

The alien is Dybala." Another simply said "Immense Joya," playing off Dybala's nickname "La Joya" (jewel) and the word joy. Dybala has improved by tremendously since joining from Palermo for 32 million euros (then \$36 million) in June 2015. "Paulo is a world class talent, more than anything because he has taken really quick steps," Chiellini said. "He came to Juventus at 22 after one really great season at Palermo. In one and half years, almost two, we are talking of a player of international level.—AP

FIRED-UP MOURINHO RENEWS BATTLE WITH CONTE'S CHELSEA

LONDON: By the time Chelsea walk out at Old Trafford on Sunday their Premier League lead may again have been cut to a slender four points.

For the second weekend running, Antonio Conte's side kick off after their main pursuers Tottenham Hotspur but, unlike last Saturday when they were always odds-on to restore their advantage by beating Bournemouth, real danger lurks in the form of Manchester United - and ex-manager Jose Mourinho.

When the teams last met the Portuguese appeared unusually relaxed, eschewing the regulation collar and tie he always wore as Blues manager for gilet and trainers. But he still ended up squaring up with Conte on the Stamford Bridge touchline during a fractious FA Cup quarter-final that saw Ander Herrera sent off.

Chelsea's 1-0 win was their second over United this season and although the result was much closer than the 4-0 league drubbing, the chasm that has opened between the teams was clear.

Sunday marks the start of a testing period for United with fixtures against City, Arsenal and Spurs looming, alongside their continuing Europa League campaign.

Mourinho will respond to the workload by rotating his squad. In the process he will highlight one of the big differences between United and Chelsea this season: while the Portuguese has made 85 team changes in his Premier League line-ups, Conte has switched personnel just 31 times, an average of one per game and the fewest in the league.

That consistency has provided the bedrock of their title challenge and Conte can approach Sunday's game knowing it is Mourinho's United who must take the initiative on a ground where they have already drawn nine times this season.

Even their wins have often been scratchily unimpressive and Chelsea will set up to play on the counter-attack with N'golo Kante prowling and ready to pounce in midfield.

Much has been made of Kante's impact this season, when he has perfected the art of perfect tackling at a time when referees punish the slightest aberration.

He is expected to be named on the PFA player of the season shortlist along with Eden Hazard later this week.

You can probably bet Paul Pogba's transfer fee on United's midfielder not joining them on the six-man shortlist because despite costing 59 million pounds (\$73.77 million) more than Kante, he has made a fraction of the impact.

Sunday provides Pogba with the perfect opportunity to make the big-match statement that has been lacking for United, who are unbeaten in 21 league games but still 18 points adrift of the leaders in fifth place.

Nothing irks Mourinho more than suggestions that Conte represents the future while he encapsulates the past, a once great manager out of tune with current sensitivities. But his recent public criticism of Luke Shaw and David de Gea has added to the narrative and he too has something to prove on Sunday. If his brain is really big enough to do Shaw's thinking for him, as he bizarrely claimed recently, then surely it can come up with a plan to outwit Conte?

Success would hand a huge boost for Spurs, who entertain Bournemouth in Saturday's early kickoff knowing they can again pile the pressure on Chelsea. Third-placed Liverpool travel to West Bromwich Albion on Sunday while Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger must wait until Monday's match against Middlesbrough for the chance to silence his detractors and check a disastrous run of four away defeats. — Reuters



DORTMUND: Monaco's Bernardo Silva is surrounded by, from left, Dortmund's Raphael Guerreiro, Nuri Sahin and Shinji Kagawa during the Champions League quarterfinal first leg soccer match between Borussia Dortmund and AS Monaco in Dortmund, Germany, yesterday. — AP

SOCCER

MBAPPE STUNS DORTMUND DAY AFTER BUS ATTACK

DORTMUND: Kylian Mbappe struck twice as Monaco claimed a thrilling 3-2 win at Borussia Dortmund in yesterday's rescheduled Champions League quarter-final first leg to seize the advantage in the tie.

Police ramped up security in the city as German investigators detained an Islamist suspect over three explosions that rocked Dortmund's team bus on Tuesday and left Spain international Marc Bartra with a broken wrist.

Dortmund coach Thomas Tuchel had criticised the decision to go-ahead with the game. "We would have liked to have had more time to work through it," he said. "There are players who easily brushed it off, but there are also players who really took it to heart. They are more thoughtful." Dortmund defiantly vowed not to "give in to terror" after the harrowing events from 24 hours earlier, but the home side struggled early and fell behind on 19 minutes-although only after Fabinho missed a rare penalty. Mbappe bundled in the opening goal from an offside position before Sven Bender, filling in for Bartra in defence, headed into his own net to compound Dortmund's problems. Ousmane Dembele pulled one back for Dortmund on 57 minutes, but Mbappe fired in his second of the game to leave Monaco as favourites to reach the last four despite Shinji Kagawa's late strike. Extra forces were deployed around team hotels and their buses took designated safe routes to the stadium.

Dortmund players wore t-shirts bearing a message of support for Bartra prior to kick-off, while goalkeeper Roman Burki warmed up in the defender's number five jersey.

The 26-year-old was replaced in the line-up by Bender, although Tuchel elected against rushing Marco Reus back into the side having been sidelined since March 4 with a hamstring injury.

Monaco were without midfielder Tiemoue Bakayoko, their last-16 hero against Manchester City, due to suspension, while full-backs Djibril Sidibe (appendicitis) and Benjamin Mendy (groin) were both ruled out. Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang, scorer of a hat-trick when Dortmund brushed aside Benfica in the previous round, rifled a snap shot just over as the hosts fired an early warning.

But Monaco were awarded a penalty when Mbappe was tugged back by Sokratis Papastathopoulos, only for Brazilian Fabinho who had converted all 16 previous career spot-kicks to drag wide of the left-hand post.

PENALTY PAIN SHORT-LIVED

Their anguish lasted just two minutes, although there was a huge element of fortune involved as Monaco took the lead through Mbappe.

Bernardo Silva found Thomas Lemar on the edge of the area, with the Frenchman's miscued effort forced in by Mbappe at the far post despite the forward straying offside.

Kagawa then scuffed wide from an inviting low cross from Matthias Ginter, and that miss proved increasingly costly when Bender headed Andrea Raggi's delivery into his own net on 35 minutes.

Tuchel rolled the dice at half-time by introducing American teenager Christian Pulisic and Nuri Sahin in place of the hapless Bender and Schmelzer, and the changes immediately reaped rewards. Pulisic tormented Raggi on the right wing, but it was a cross from Raphael Guerreiro on the left that led to Dembele reviving Dortmund's hopes. Aubameyang acrobatically flicked the Portugal international's cross into the path of Kagawa who squared for Dembele to slide into an

empty net just before the hour. Guerreiro drilled a dangerous low ball across the face of goal as Dortmund pressed for an equaliser, while Falcao nearly landed a sucker punch only to blaze over on the stretch after rounding Burki following a superb pass from Lemar. But Mbappe was less forgiving, intercept-

ing a risky pass from Lukasz Piszczek and sprinting towards the Dortmund goal before finishing superbly past Swiss international Burki.

Kagawa grabbed a lifeline for Dortmund with six minutes left, expertly controlling a Sahin cross and wriggling past Jemerson to slot beyond Monaco goalkeeper Danijel Subasic.—AFP

WORK STARTS ON QATAR W CUP FINAL STADIUM

DOHA: Work has begun on Lusail Stadium, the 80,000-seater venue which will host the Qatar 2022 World Cup final, tournament organisers in the Gulf have said.

Allowing cameras onto the site for the very first time, officials said they hope the stadium would be completed by 2020. Lusail, which is some 20 kilometres north of the capital Doha, will also host the opening game of the 2022 tournament. Ground is currently being cleared on the one million square metres site, but would soon begin to resemble the stadium which the whole world will see in five years' time, said project manager Tamim Loutfi Elabed. "Foundations will go in later this year," he said.

"If you dropped by to visit us the same time next year, you would be happy." Despite the early stages, the pitch's centre circle-where the \$200bn (187 billion euros) tournament will kick off-has already been identified and marked out with barriers.

Elabed said it was "symbolic" as well as "a surveying point". Eventually, up to 7,000 workers will be employed on site. "At the moment we're still in the early mobilisation stages so we haven't hit the first thousand. We're at about 500 workers," he added. Since being chosen as the 2022 host, Qatar has come under heavy criticism for the treatment of its migrant workforce, claims which it has largely denied. As well as being built from scratch, Lusail Stadium is itself part of a completely new \$45 billion city taking shape in the desert outside Doha. There was nothing on the site prior to it being selected as the venue for the World Cup final, though it is apparently close to one of Qatar's first recorded settlements.

The stadium is being developed in a joint venture between a Qatari and Chinese compa-

ny. The design, likely to be revealed later this year, is being undertaken by renowned British architects, Foster and Partners. As well as the stadium, construction work has also begun on a nearby metro station, part of an ongoing \$18 billion light railway project, which fans will use during the tournament.

Although FIFA has not yet made a final decision on how many stadiums will be used during 2022, there will be at least eight venues. Up to \$10 billion will be spent on stadium infrastructure costs, Qatar's senior World Cup organiser Hassan Al-Thawadi, has said. Qatar is spending almost \$500 million every week on major infrastructure projects for football's biggest tournament, Doha's government said earlier this year.

Lusail Stadium could potentially be used in 2021 as a venue for the Club World Cup. Qatar is currently in talks with FIFA about hosting the tournament in four years' time, as a rehearsal event for the World Cup. — AFP

Live Matches on TV (Local Timings)

UEFA EUROPA LEAGUE	
Anderlecht v Manchester United	22:05
beIN SPORTS HD 2	
Celta de Vigo v KRK Genk	22:05
beIN SPORTS HD 3	
Ajax Amsterdam v Schalke	22:05
beIN SPORTS HD	
Olympique Lyonnais v Besiktas	22:05
beIN SPORTS HD 4	



DOHA: Tamim Loutfi Elabed, project manager of the construction of Lusail stadium, the 80,000-seater venue which will host the opening and final of the Qatar 2022 World Cup, holds the football to be used in the starting match at the site in Lusail, some 20 kilometres north of the capital Doha, on April 11, 2017. — AFP



Dele Alli

Sports

Olympic dreams as
Kiwis shoot to
sprint supremacyHawks sting Hornets
103-76, set playoff
date with Wizards

THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 2017

HAMILTON WANTS REAL BATTLE IN BAHRAIN WITH RIVAL VETTEL Page 17



MUNICH: Bayern Munich's Chilean midfielder Arturo Vidal (23) scores the first goal during the UEFA Champions League 1st leg quarter-final football match FC Bayern Munich v Real Madrid in Munich, southern Germany yesterday. — AFP

RONALDO HITS 100TH GOAL AS REAL WIN AT BAYERN

MUNICH: Cristiano Ronaldo netted his 100th European goal yesterday to give holders Real Madrid a 2-1 comeback win at 10-man Bayern Munich in the Champions League quarter-final, first-leg. Arturo Vidal headed Bayern into a first-half lead, but then skied a penalty attempt on the stroke of half-time before Ronaldo volleyed the defending champions' level.

Bayern played the last half an hour a man down after centre-back Javi Martinez was sent off for two fouls on Ronaldo within three minutes of each other.

Four-time world player of the year Ronaldo then slotted in the winner between goalkeeper Manuel Neuer's legs for the winner 13 minutes from time. Security was tight at the Allianz Arena in the wake of Tuesday's attacks on the Borussia Dortmund team bus and both

teams arrived with a heavy police escort.

There was a large police presence and inside the stadium there was polite applause before kick-off when the announcer made reference to Dortmund's ordeal in the preceding 24 hours.

Bayern suffered a blow before kick-off when top-scorer Robert Lewandowski, who has netted 38 goals this season, dropped out with a bruised shoulder and Thomas Muller deputised as striker.

Bayern were also missing injured Germany defender Mats Hummels against Real's formidable BBC attack - Gareth Bale, Karim Benzema and Ronaldo. Bayern went ahead on 25 minutes when playmaker Thiago Alcantara swung in a corner from the right which Vidal powered through Real goalkeeper Kaylor Navas's hands.

The Chile midfielder could have added a second when he headed Arjen Robben's cross wide of the post soon after.

Real made a poor start, rarely threatening Germany's goalkeeper Neuer, back after minor foot surgery a fortnight ago. A strong drive from Ronaldo on 41 minutes which Neuer blocked having palmed a Benzema header onto the woodwork with 18 minutes played were their best first-half chances.

Vidal could have finished with a first-half hat-trick when he stepped up to take a penalty after Dani Carvajal's handball from a Franck Ribery shot. However, the Chilean smashed the spot-kick high over the crossbar. It was a miss Bayern were soon to regret.

Real were level two minutes after the break when

Carvajal found space on the right and fired in a cross which Ronaldo volleyed past Neuer. Bale, who has laboured with an ankle injury recently, came off on 58 minutes and Real raised the tempo after he trudged off. Having already picked up a yellow card for pulling Ronaldo back on 58 minutes, Martinez was shown a red for again fouling the Portugal captain just three minutes later.

Real's superstar then hit the winner as substitute Marco Asensio, on for Bale, put in a low pass for Ronaldo to tap the ball home between Neuer's legs.

Real defender Sergio Ramos had the ball in the Bayern net with time running out, but the goal was ruled offside but the Spaniards have the upper hand for the second leg at home next Tuesday. — AFP

GRIEZMANN GIVES ATLETICO
SLENDER LEICESTER LEAD

MADRID: Antoine Griezmann's penalty handed Atletico Madrid a slender 1-0 advantage over Leicester City in the first leg of their Champions League quarter-final yesterday. In a game of very few chances, Griezmann proved decisive as it was he who also won the penalty with a lung-busting run from well inside his own half before being brought down by Marc Albrighton midway through the first half. The French international put his previous penalty demons behind him to convert from the spot and put Atletico in the driving seat for a third semi-final in four seasons.

However, Leicester still have reason to believe their dream run on their first appearance in the Champions League can continue when the sides meet again on April 18. The behaviour of Leicester's travelling fans was in the spotlight after 10 were arrested in violent clashes with police on Tuesday night and yesterday before kick-off.

However, the 3,000 travelling supporters high in the rafters of the Calderon were largely silenced by Atletico's dominance of the match. Unusually for Diego Simeone's men they were in almost complete control of possession, but largely limited to shots from long range. Koke came closest from distance when he drilled an effort off the outside of the post after just five minutes.

Yannick Carrasco then slashed wildly at a volley when well-placed at the back post. Griezmann and Saul Niguez were next to take aim from outside the box, but both failed to find the target with powerful drives that flew over Kasper Schmeichel's goal.

Leicester had been enjoying their best spell of the half when suddenly they were caught short-handed at

the back on 27 minutes. Griezmann collected the ball outside his own area and ran to just inside the Leicester box before being crudely barged over by Albrighton. Schmeichel had saved a penalty in each of Leicester's two legs against Sevilla in the last 16 and Griezmann had missed his last four for Atletico, including in last season's Champions League final. However, Griezmann sent the Dane the wrong way from the spot to register his 24th goal of the season.

Both sides seemed content to settle the tie at the King Power in six days' time with Atletico holding a 1-0 advantage after the break. Atletico still had the better of what few chances there were. Fernando Torres slipped at the vital moment as he prepared to unleash a shot from the edge of the area.

Leicester were without captain Wes Morgan due to a back injury and his return to health will be even more important for the second leg as Robert Huth will be suspended after being booked for chopping down Griezmann. Griezmann was the standout performer and nearly added an assist to the only goal but Angel Correa couldn't quite stretch to reach his dangerous low cross 17 minutes from time.

Leicester boss Craig Shakespeare protected Jamie Vardy from the threat of picking up a yellow card that would also have seen him miss the return as he was replaced by Islam Slimani. But even with a different focal point to their attack, Leicester didn't threaten an away goal as Atletico held out for their 18th clean sheet in 22 home Champions League games since Simeone took charge. — AFP



MADRID: Atletico's Yannick Carrasco leaps to head the ball during the Champions League quarterfinal first leg soccer match between Atletico Madrid and Leicester City at the Vicente Calderon stadium in Madrid, Spain, yesterday. — AP

Kuwait Times ^{ANNIVERSARY} 55 _{YEARS}

BUSINESS

THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 2017

Oil drops on crude stocks, US shale output

Page 22

China Q1 economic growth seen steady at 6.8% in Q1

Page 25

ALARGAN COMPLETES BOND REPURCHASE

Page 26



Mabane continues expansion on success of The Avenues Kuwait

Page 23



LONDON: Governor of the Bank of England, Mark Carney (L) and Britain's Chancellor of the Exchequer, Philip Hammond gesture during the International Fintech Conference in London yesterday. — AFP

WTO EYES FEEBLE GLOBAL TRADE RECOVERY IN 2017

THREAT OF PROTECTIONISM, OTHER UNCERTAINTIES HAMPER TRADE ACTIVITY

GENEVA: The World Trade Organization said yesterday it expected global trade to rebound slightly in 2017 but warned the threat of protectionism and other uncertainties risked hampering the recovery. The organization forecast that global trade would expand by 2.4 percent in 2017, up from just 1.3 percent last year.

But it cautioned that "the unpredictable direction of the global economy in the near term and the lack of clarity about government action on monetary, fiscal and trade policies raises the risk that trade activity will be stifled", acknowledging that trade growth this year could fall anywhere between 1.8 and 3.6 percent. Among the "policy shocks" that could easily send trade growth to the lower end of that range, it said, was the potential effect of Britain's decision to leave the European Union, and a growing trend towards protectionist policies, including in the United States.

"Trade has the potential to strengthen global growth if the movement of goods and supply of services across borders remains largely unfettered," WTO chief Roberto Azevedo said in the statement. But he warned: "If policymakers attempt to address job losses at home with severe restrictions on imports, trade cannot help boost growth and may even constitute a drag on the

recovery." The WTO, which sets the rules of global commerce, has long been sounding the alarm over the "threat of creeping protectionism", exemplified in a steady flow of protectionist rhetoric from US President Donald Trump's administration.

Trump, who kicked off his presidency in January vowing to put "America First" and has blamed globalized trade for US economic woes and lost industrial jobs, has promised a more aggressive approach to open up foreign markets to US companies and has threatened to slap import duties on certain goods. The US also refused at a G20 meeting in March to renew a long-standing anti-protectionist pledge, to the dismay of the group of top developed and developing nations.

'Be patient'

Azevedo declined yesterday to comment directly on the US position, saying he was waiting for Washington to appoint a new representative to the WTO to launch a dialogue.

"We have to be patient and wait," he told reporters. The WTO chief did acknowledge that "trade does cause some economic dislocation in certain communities." But he stressed that "its adverse effects should not be overstated, nor



GENEVA: Director General of the World Trade Organization, WTO, Brazilian Roberto Azevedo speaks during a press conference at the headquarters of the WTO in Geneva yesterday. — AP

should they obscure its benefits in terms of growth, development and job creation." "We should see trade as part of the solution to economic difficulties, not part of the problem," he said.

The sluggish trade growth last year—the weakest since the financial crisis—was in part due to

slower economic activity overall, "but it also reflected deeper structural changes in the relationship between trade and economic output," the WTO report said.

It pointed out that slumping investment spending in the United States and China's shifting focus from investment to consumption had significantly dampened import demand. WTO's trade growth forecast for this year meanwhile looks more promising, even better for next year, when the Geneva-based body forecasts growth of between 2.1 and 4.0 percent. But WTO stressed that its more promising forecasts were predicated on a number of assumptions, including on anticipated economic growth this year of 2.7 percent and next year of 2.8 percent, up from 2.3 percent GDP growth in 2016. Trade is a key measure of the health of the global economy, which it both stimulates and reflects. Historically, the volume of world merchandise trade has tended to grow about 1.5 times faster than global economic growth, but since the 2008 financial crisis the ratio of trade growth to GDP growth has fallen to around 1:1, WTO said.

Last year marked the first time since 2001 that trade grew at a slower pace than the economy, with the ratio dipping to 0.6:1, it said. — AFP

LAGARDE: 'HALFWAY' THERE ON GREEK BAILOUT TALKS

BRUSSELS: International Monetary Fund chief Christine Lagarde said yesterday Greece was heading in the right direction on reforms, but talks on its bailout review and the IMF's potential role in it were "only halfway through". Last week, eurozone finance ministers agreed on the key elements of reforms that Greece needs to implement in exchange for a new loan under its 86 billion-euro bailout program, the third since 2010.

The loan is needed to pay debt due in July, but talks continue and the IMF has not yet decided whether to join the bailout. The fund's participation is seen as a condition for Germany to unblock new funds to Greece. "What I have seen in the last couple of weeks is heading in the right direction," Lagarde told a conference in Brussels, but "we are only halfway through in the discussions." She reiterated Greece's debt - now 178 percent of gross domestic product - will need



BRUSSELS: International Monetary Fund (IMF) Managing Director, French Christine Lagarde, gives a talk about the global outlook and policy priorities ahead of the upcoming 2017 IMF spring meetings yesterday. — AFP

to be restructured to guarantee the stability of the country's finances.

The scope of any restructuring "will be decided at the end of the program," but "the modalities have to be decided upfront," Lagarde said. Germany, the largest European

Union economy, opposes debt relief, believing that agreed reforms are enough to sustain financial stability. But Berlin still wants the IMF to join the bailout, now provided by eurozone governments alone, to make it more effective and less expensive

for euro zone countries. Talks between Greece and its lenders are continuing and no date is fixed yet for negotiators to return to Athens. The Greek government believes talks may resume in Athens after the IMF spring meetings on April 21-23.

"We are still elaborating under what terms we could possibly give some lending to the country. We are not there yet," Lagarde said, adding any IMF loan to Greece would have to abide by strict conditions and no special treatment can be expected for Athens.

The IMF wants pension costs to be cut and the threshold for tax exemptions to be lowered. Athens has accepted the reforms, worth 2 percent of its gross domestic product, but it wants to link their application to a reduction of its public debt burden. Lagarde said the additional belt-tightening measures could be implemented "as soon as the conditions of growth are consolidated." — Reuters

OPEC SAYS OIL DEAL BEARING FRUIT, BUT US PUMPING MORE

PARIS: World oil production fell in March thanks to a deal to cut output, OPEC said yesterday but the cartel's efforts to fight a global glut are threatened by American firms pumping oil with gusto.

The world produced a total of 95.82 million barrels per day (mb/d) last month, a fall of 230,000 barrels from February, the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries said in its monthly report.

The production by OPEC itself, which accounts for about a third of the world's output, fell by 153,000 barrels per day to 31.93 mb/d, according to secondary sources cited in the report. This takes it below a target included in an output reduction deal by OPEC and some non-OPEC producers including Russia which came into force on January 1 for an initial run of six months. The initiative has prompted a recovery in global oil prices, in turn attracting many American higher-cost producers back into the market as they can operate profitably again.

This means that the combined output of

non-OPEC producers, which fell to 57.32 mb/d last year, is now likely to recover to 57.89 mb/d this year, which would represent a rise of 580,000 barrels per day, OPEC said. Of the total rise, 540,000 barrels per day would be produced by the US, a higher level than previously predicted.

Reports have suggested that the cartel, prompted by kingpin Saudi Arabia, may extend the output cut deal by another six months when its members meet at the end of May. The Wall Street Journal, citing people familiar with the matter, said yesterday that Saudi Arabia has told its fellow OPEC members that it wants the deal renewed.

Hopes for an extended period of cuts helped the oil price recover yesterday, with US benchmark WTI up 0.4 percent on the day at \$53.62 and Brent 0.5 percent higher at \$6.51 in the early European afternoon. Meanwhile, global demand for oil is likely to rise by 1.27 mb/d this year, a slight upward revision from OPEC's previous estimate, the cartel said in its report. — AFP

OIL DROPS ON CRUDE STOCKS, US SHALE OUTPUT

NBK ECONOMIC REPORT

KUWAIT: Oil prices fell to their lowest level in more than 3 months in March amid swelling global crude stocks and rising US shale production.

Triggering the decline were doubts about OPEC's capacity to materially reduce the still sizeable overhang of crude inventories, especially in the US, where crude stocks were hitting record highs for 9 consecutive weeks amid a resurgence in light tight oil (LTO, or shale) production.

Markets were especially alarmed when Saudi Arabia disclosed that it had officially increased crude production in February to 10 million barrels per day (mb/d).

Saudi burden of OPEC production

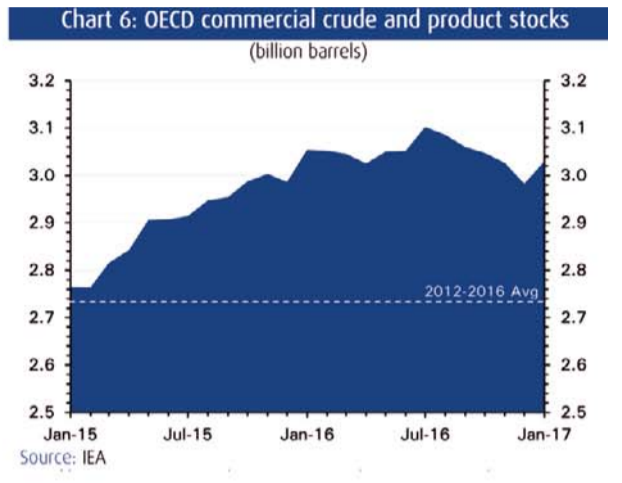
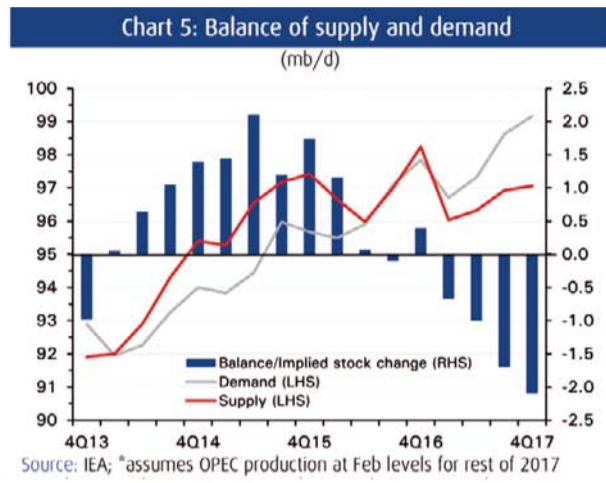
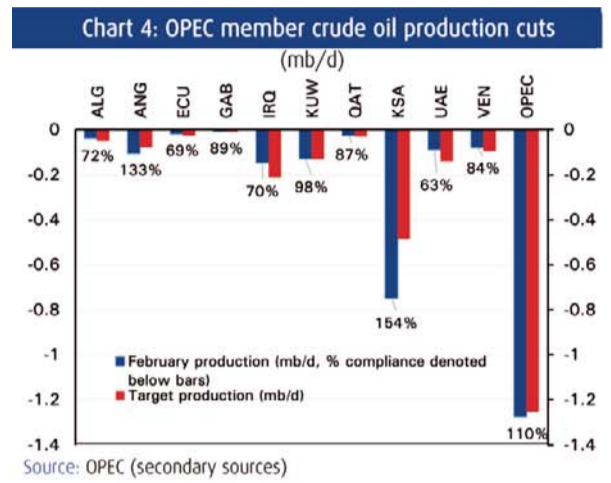
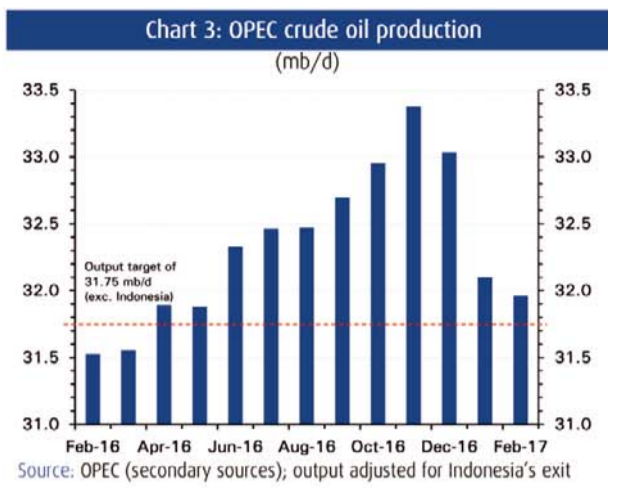
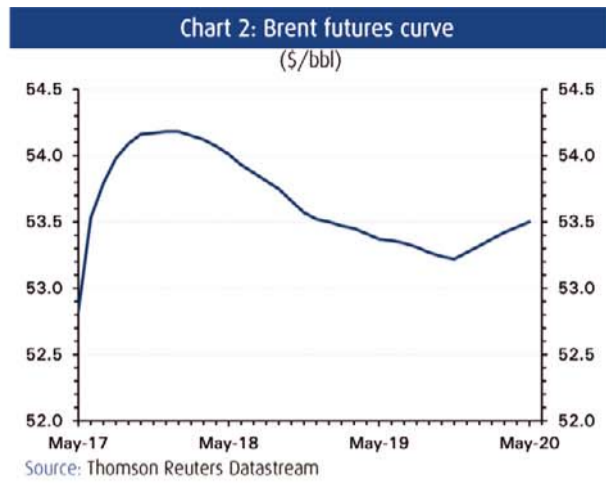
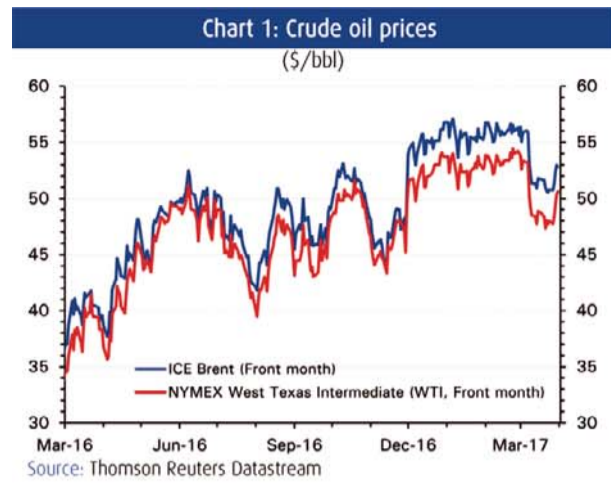
Saudi Arabia, which had, as of February, overachieved by cutting 150 percent of its target amount, according to OPEC secondary source data, has effectively been shouldering the burden for all but one of its members (Angola).

Meanwhile, among the 11 non-OPEC producers party to the agreement, compliance was at 44 percent in February, according to International Energy Agency (IEA) figures.

OPEC output cut deal

Were OPEC and non-OPEC producers to make good on their promises by the time the agreement expires in June, then around 1.8 mb/d of crude could be withdrawn from the oil markets.

Such a prospect is looking increasingly likely given the



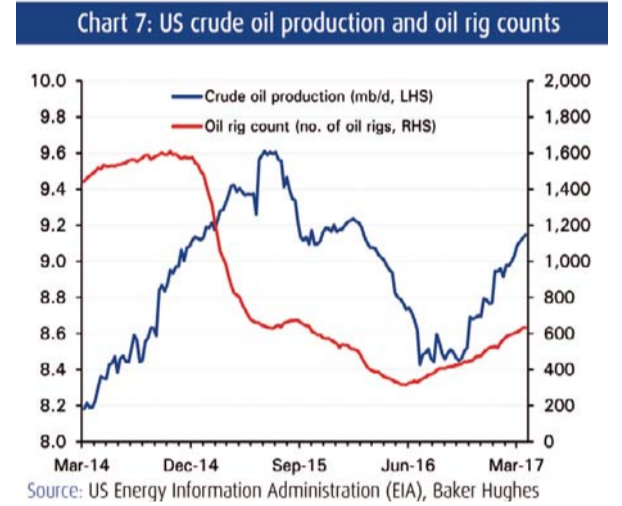
- Oil prices fell by at least 5% in March on concerns that OPEC/non-OPEC supply cuts were not effectively reducing crude stocks amid rising US shale output.
Despite commendable OPEC production cut compliance in Feb, total output is still 200 kb/d above the group's target of 31.7 mb/d.

slower-than-expected unwinding of global crude stocks. The drawdown in commercial crude and petroleum product stocks, which had been gaining momentum in the second half of 2016, abruptly ended in January with a 48 million barrel inventory build.

for an extension to the 6-month agreement, Saudi Arabia and several others including non-OPEC Oman are likely to wait until the next OPEC committee meeting before making a decision.

US shale growth

Meanwhile, US production continues its remarkable shale-led resurgence, catalyzed by higher oil prices and efficiency gains. Crude output was back up to 9.1 mb/d by the end of March, a gain of 4.3 percent in 2017.



ALGERIA EDGES TOWARDS ISLAMIC FINANCE AS ENERGY INCOME DIPS

ISLAMIC FINANCE MAY HELP TAP HUGE INFORMAL ECONOMY

ALGIERS: When experts in Islamic banking gathered earlier this year at a state-run hotel in Algiers to share their experiences on sharia-compliant finance, no one from the government showed up.

The object is to attract funds from a huge pool of cash held outside the formal banking system as Algeria looks for more ways to offset the sharp fall in oil prices and its energy revenues.

Now six state-run banks plan to start Islamic financial services by the end of the year or in early 2018, and a national sharia board that would over-

see Islamic banking is also planned by the end of 2017, banking and government sources told Reuters. Algeria's Islamic finance plan still faces huge barriers. It lacks a legal framework and technical expertise, and officials must navigate sensitivities over any perceived revival of political Islam after a 1990s war with armed Islamist militants in which 200,000 people died.

On top of such concerns, any kind of reform is often delayed in Algeria by heavy bureaucracy and inertia, but bankers are keen to push ahead with the idea. "Financial institutions must be more dynamic and aggressive in the market by allowing Islamic products to grow," said Nasser Haider, head of Bahrain-owned Al-Salam Bank Algeria.

With the economy emerging from decades of centralized control, Algeria badly needs alternatives to the energy revenues that have traditionally financed 60 percent of the budget.

The plunge in global crude prices from mid-2014 halved earnings from exports of oil and gas. In 2015 the budget deficit shot up to 16 percent of Algeria's annual gross domestic product (GDP) and the government is estimated to have narrowed the gap only to 15 percent last year.

A state fund intended to cover such deficits plunged 59.5 percent over the course of last year while foreign exchange reserves are estimated to have dropped to \$114 billion by the end of 2016 from \$178 billion in 2014.

Algeria issued a conventional, interest-bearing bond on the domestic market last year. But the amount raised, \$5.86 billion, fell short of expectations after religious leaders - and even the government's own ministry of religious affairs - gave the operation a chilly reception.

BURGAN BANK TO ANNOUNCE WINNER OF ITS VALUE ACCOUNT DRAW FOR EXPATRIATES

KUWAIT: Burgan Bank will soon be announcing the winner of its Value Account Draw, who will be taking home a cash prize of KD 4000. The draw rewards customers who transfer their salary to Burgan Bank for a chance to win KD4,000 every quarter.

The Value account provides attractive features and benefits that have been designed for expatriates living in Kuwait. Value account customers can benefit from a wide range of merchant discounts and enjoy an automatic entry into a quarterly draw for KD 4,000, whereby each KD 10 shall give the account holders one chance to enter the draw.

For more information on opening a Value account or about the quarterly draw, customers are urged to visit their nearest Burgan Bank branch and receive all the details, or simply by calling the bank's call center on 1804080 where customer service representative will be delighted to assist with any questions on the Value account or any of the bank's products or services.

Established in 1977, Burgan Bank is the youngest commercial Bank and second largest by assets in Kuwait, with a significant focus on the cor-

porate and financial institutions sectors, as well as having a growing retail, and private bank customer base. Burgan Bank has majority owned subsidiaries in the MENAT region supported by one of the largest regional branch networks.

Shale's remarkable resurgence is proving especially awkward for OPEC and its efforts to manage global supply. The group is well aware that firmer oil prices, thanks to supply cuts, are an incentive for further US shale gains which ultimately undermines oil prices.

Shale's remarkable resurgence is proving especially awkward for OPEC and its efforts to manage global supply. The group is well aware that firmer oil prices, thanks to supply cuts, are an incentive for further US shale gains which ultimately undermines oil prices.

It is a new reality that oil producers, traditional and unconventional alike, must come to terms with.

EXCHANGE RATES

AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

Table with columns for Asian Countries, GCC Countries, Arab Countries, and European & American Countries, listing currencies and their respective rates.

Table listing Canadian dollar, Turkish lira, Swiss Franc, Australian Dollar, and US Dollar Buying rates.

Table listing Gold rates for 20 Gram, 10 Gram, and 5 Gram.

DOLLAR EXCHANGE CO. LTD

Table with columns for Rate for Transfer and Selling Rate, listing various currencies and their rates.

Table listing Nepalese Rupees, Malaysian Ringgit, Chinese Yuan Renminbi, Thai Bhat, and Turkish Lira rates.

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY

Table with columns for Currency, Buy, and Sell rates, listing currencies from British Pound to Chinese Yuan.

Table listing Hong Kong Dollar, Indian Rupee, Indonesian Rupiah, Japanese Yen, Kenyan Shilling, Korean Won, Malaysian Ringgit, Nepalese Rupee, Pakistan Rupee, Philippine Peso, Sierra Leone, Singapore Dollar, South African Rand, Sri Lankan Rupee, Taiwan, and Thai Baht rates.

Table listing Bahraini Dinar, Egyptian Pound, Iranian Riyal, Iraqi Dinar, Jordanian Dinar, Kuwaiti Dinar, Lebanese Pound, Moroccan Dirhams, Nigerian Naira, Omani Riyal, Qatar Riyal, Saudi Riyal, Syrian Pound, Tunisian Dinar, Turkish Lira, UAE Dirhams, and Yemeni Riyal rates.



KUWAIT: Mohammed Abdulaziz Alshaya, Chairman of Mabaneer, addresses the annual general body meeting yesterday at the Avenues Mall, Kuwait.



The Avenues Bahrain, the water view

MABANEE CONTINUES EXPANSION ON SUCCESS OF THE AVENUES KUWAIT

COMPANY HOLDS AGM, OUTLINES REGIONAL GROWTH STRATEGY

KUWAIT: Mabaneer Company held an Ordinary General meeting yesterday at the Avenues Mall. Majority of the shareholders attended the meeting with an attendance of 68 percent. "It is my pleasure to present to you the 2016 Annual Report for Mabaneer Co. The Annual report reflects the company's financial results over the past year and highlights the company's achievements, as well as the progress made on the company's projects in Kuwait and the region," Mohammed Abdulaziz Alshaya, Chairman of Mabaneer, said.

He added that by maintaining the stability of its performance despite the fluctuating market conditions, the company has succeeded in strengthening its status in the local real estate market. It has also attracted a number of well-established GCC companies that seek to become a part of the company's expansion through partnerships that will enhance the ability of The Avenues to expand in the region and create similar success stories.

The investors' confidence in Mabaneer is based on the company's financial results. The company is considered the largest real estate company in Kuwait in terms of market value, representing 32 percent of the Kuwaiti real estate sector's capital at KD2.4 billion (\$7.8 billion). The investment in construction and expansion of The Avenues and its different phases served to increase Mabaneer's assets. Asset investment fair value stands at KD1.1 billion as of December 31, 2016.

In terms of projects being executed by Mabaneer and its subsidiaries abroad, they stand at 140 million Bahraini dinars (\$370 million) for the first and second phases of The Avenues Bahrain, as well as 14 billion Saudi Riyals (\$3.7 billion) for all phases of The Avenues Riyadh, and 6 billion Saudi Riyals (\$1.6 billion) for The Avenues Khobar.

"Our confidence in the progress of this expansion stems from the success of The Avenues Kuwait, which has become one of the leading malls worldwide. Furthermore, the

GCC retail industry's annual growth is expected to be at 7 percent at 6-7 million square meters up to 2018. The local market growth is expected to reach 6.7 percent. To further support this, and due to weather conditions and consumption habits, malls in the region have extended beyond being shopping centers to becoming social destinations. As such, The Avenues was designed to be a place that caters to the whole family.

Financial indicators

In 2016, Mabaneer achieved a net profit of KD48.7 million (around \$160 million) and EPS of 54.84 fils, compared to KD48.5 million in 2015 and EPS of 54.67 fils.

Shareholders' equity was at KD344 million as at December 31, 2016, representing an increase of 13.4 percent over December 2015. Total assets reached KD732 million, reflecting 18.6 percent growth over December 2015.

Recommendations of the Board of Directors

The Board of Directors met on February 15, 2016, and based on these results has made the following recommendations to the Ordinary General Assembly and Extraordinary General Assembly:

- The distribution of 10 percent cash dividends, at 10 fils per share for all shareholders registered in the company's records on the day of the General Assembly Meeting.
- The distribution of 5 percent bonus shares, 5 shares for every 100 shares, for all shareholders registered in the company's records on the business day preceding the day of share price adjustment.
- The approval of Board Members' compensation at KD 200,000 for the financial year ended December 31, 2016.
- The allocation of 10 percent of the net profit of the financial year ended December 31, 2016 for the legal reserves account.
- The allocation of 10 percent of the net profit of the financial year ended December 31,



The Avenues Bahrain

2016 for the general reserves account (optional).

The Avenues Kuwait - Phase IV The region's largest mall, and among the biggest in the world

Construction of Phase IV of The Avenues is proceeding successfully as per the plan. The last phase of the project will complete The Avenues, making it the largest mall in Kuwait, and one of the biggest in the region and the world. It houses a leasable area of 370,000 sqm, stretching over 1.5 km, with close to 1200 stores, restaurants, cafes and entertainment outlets.

The expansion comes at a time when Kuwait's retail sector is forecast to continue to grow. This is linked to the high consumption levels compared to the rest of the world, as well as the population increase, especially numbers of youth, the stable incomes provided by the government, and the continuing local infrastructure projects. "We have begun leasing to several brands, where the new expansion will include 400 stores across new districts: Electra, The Forum, Grand Plaza, The Gardens, The Arcades, as well as the extensions of Prestige, The Grand Avenue and The Souk," he said.

Given the size of The Avenues and the increasing number of visitors, and with the opening of two hotels - The five-star Waldorf Astoria Hotel with 240 rooms, and the four-star Hilton Garden Inn Hotel with 430 rooms - we have added 5000 new parking spaces and created new entrances to ease traffic flow.

The Avenues - Bahrain The first commercial and entertainment mall at a strategic location on the sea front

The Avenues Bahrain is the first commercial and entertainment mall of its kind in the Kingdom of Bahrain, with a unique seafront location extending 1.5 km. It is strategically located in the heart of Manama, adjacent to the King Faisal Road. The development brings a new

concept to the Kingdom, with a design inspired by The Avenues Kuwait and giving visitors an outdoor feeling while remaining indoors, protected from the heat by a ceiling that allows sunlight in.

More than 80 percent of the construction work is now complete. Most of the stores have been leased to different local and international brands, including brands that are being introduced to the Bahraini retail market for the first time, including Urban Decay, The Cheesecake Factory, Bateel, and others. The stores will be welcoming their visitors with the opening of the mall, scheduled for October 2017.

The project's leasing space is around 40,000 sqm and includes 130 stores of which 50 percent are allocated for restaurants and cafes which will overlook Bahrain Bay. It also includes a large family entertainment area such as a special play hall, 12 cinemas, public parks, walkways and parking spaces. Official approval has been obtained for the construction of Phase II of the project. This will add another 30,000 sqm in leasing space, as well as new districts and a five-star hotel of 200 rooms. This will make The Avenues an attractive destination for citizens, as well as for tourists from the GCC and other countries who come for shopping, leisure and a good stay.

The Avenues - Riyadh The development that will change the face of the city

One of our large-scale projects is The Avenues Riyadh, which will be the number one destination for visitors and shoppers from across the Kingdom, GCC and the world. It is considered a development of unique aesthetic design and architecture, with a prime location overlooking the intersection between King Salman Road and King Fahad Road. The Avenues Riyadh, expected to be inaugurated in 2021, will be a comprehensive destination with 1300 stores, as well as five towers offering office

space, apartments, halls for exhibitions, conferences and celebrations, as well as hotels ranging from three to five stars with 2200 rooms.

The immense size of the project will reflect on Saudi Arabia's national economy, directly and indirectly supporting a number of sectors. This will boost retail, services, tourism, hospitality, transportation, construction material, industrial activities and logistical services. It will also impact human resources, as it will create thousands of job opportunities, in line with the Kingdom's 2030 vision.

The Avenues - Khobar

We are currently in the approval stage of the final designs of the mall, which we intend to inaugurate in Q4 2022. The Avenues Khobar has been modeled around The Avenues Kuwait in terms of design and components in a manner that suits the requirements of residents of the Eastern Province. The project is located at the northwestern corner of the intersection of King Saud Road with Prince Sultan Road. It extends over an area of 209,000 sqm and includes a leasable area of 180,000 sqm. This includes commercial and entertainment areas, residential apartments, hotels, offices and medical facilities.

Thanks and appreciation

To conclude, and on behalf of the Members of the Board of Directors and all Mabaneer employees, I would like to express my deepest appreciation to H.H. the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and H.H. the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. We pray that Almighty Allah continue to guide our leaders on the path of advancement of our homeland, Kuwait. On behalf of the Board Member I would also like to thank all employees for their efforts, and our shareholders for placing their trust in us, which has motivated us to exert all efforts to achieve the goals, aspirations and strategies of the company.



Grand Plaza - The Avenues Riyadh

GREECE COMPLETES SALE OF 14 AIRPORTS

ATHENS: Greece said it has finalized the sale of 14 regional airports to Germany's Fraport agreed in 2015 within the framework of a huge international bailout to prevent the country from crashing out of the eurozone. In what had been the first major privatization drive for the government under Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras, a deal was reached at the end of 2015 to sell 14 regional airports-including Thessaloniki, and those of island tourist hotspots Mykonos, Santorini and Corfu-to a consortium comprising Fraport and Slentel Ltd for 1.2 billion euros (\$1.3 billion).

That deal has now been finalised, with the signature of Greece's ministers of finance, transport and defence-Euclides Tsakalotos, Christos Spritzis and Panos Kammenos-the Greek privatization agency said in a statement late Tuesday. Under the terms of the concession, the Fraport consortium "will use, operate and develop the airports over a period of 40 years." The investors are obliged to upgrade the airports within the first four years of the concession and "maintain and preserve service levels for the whole duration."

The Greek state will retain ownership of all infrastructure and facilities built by the consortium. It was a "milestone agreement... with overall multiple benefits expected for the Greek economy," said agency chief Antonis Leousis. On top of the lump sum of 1.2 billion euros, the consortium will also pay an annual lease of 22.9 million euros, the statement said.

Prime Minister Tsipras is scheduled to meet the head of Fraport Greece, Stephan Schulte, yesterday. The airport privatization was agreed within the framework of a massive 86-billion-euro EU bailout in July 2015 to prevent Greece from crashing out of the eurozone. As well as the 14 airports, the program also included the privatization of ports and other state assets. —AFP

N KOREA REFORMING ECONOMY WHILE DENYING CHANGE

PYONGYANG: On the side streets of Pyongyang, small traders sell vegetables from impromptu stalls. At markets, dealers offer imported household goods-even Coca-Cola-and in state-owned department stores hard currency is openly exchanged at black-market rates. Officially, North Korea denies it is reforming and declares it remains guided by the Juche, or self-reliance, philosophy of founder Kim Il-Sung whose 105th birth anniversary is being marked this weekend. But under his grandson Kim Jong-Un-the third generation of the dynasty economic change is quietly happening in the impoverished, nuclear-armed country, analysts say.

The North was once better off than the South, but decades of mismanagement saw it descend into stagnation and food shortages, while its neighbor propelled itself into the OECD group of leading economies. Pyongyang remains almost entirely devoid of commercial advertising, its wide avenues instead lined with propaganda posters of heroic soldiers and striving workers, or slogans such as "Let us follow the decisions of the 7th Congress of the

Workers' Party of Korea." "We are a socialist country so we stick to our socialist principle economically," said Ri Sun-Chol, chief of the economic research institute of the North's Academy of Social Sciences. "We do not push for national reforms adopting a market economy."

But a series of rulings under Kim Jong-Un is taking the North in exactly that direction, say diplomats and researchers. Many agricultural collectives have been effectively dismantled and farmland management distributed between individual households referred to as "family-based work units," sending food production climbing. Beyond what they must produce for the state, under what Pyongyang calls the Socialist Corporate Responsible Management System, factory managers have been given freedoms to find suppliers and customers of their own.

Kwon Yong-Chol, chief engineer of the Song Do Won General Foodstuffs Factory in Wonsan, explained that as well as manufacturing goods according to government instructions, "there is also a commercial network of vendors we use to sign our own contracts."

'Filthy wind'

Officials have been told not to interfere with private businesses, even while many remain technically illegal. Enterprises are often still set up under state entities to ensure political protection, but analysts estimate that the private sector, broadly defined, could be

responsible for anything from a quarter to half of the North's gross domestic product. All such figures are riven with uncertainty, as Pyongyang does not publish meaningful economic statistics. Last year, major South Korean think tanks were unable even to agree whether its economy grew or shrank in 2015. —AFP



This file photo taken on July 11, 2016 shows street vendors waiting for customers on the showcase 'Mirae Scientists Street' in Pyongyang. Economic change is quietly taking place in impoverished North Korea, even as authorities insist the philosophy of founder Kim Il-Sung remains their guide. —AFP

INVESTORS CAUTIOUS AS GEOPOLITICAL STRAINS PERSIST

LONDON: Investors edged back into European stocks on higher oil prices and hopes of positive earnings yesterday, but gold, the yen and low-risk bonds all held at multi-month highs as geopolitical tensions from the Middle East to the Korean peninsula simmered.

The unease tarnished an otherwise brightening outlook for global economic growth and meant oil's best run since August went almost under the radar. Wall Street's main S&P 500 and Dow Jones markets started fractionally lower and Europe's STOXX 600 halved its 0.5 percent morning gain to dash hopes of its best day of the month. "It is a modest rebound," said Rabobank strategist Philip Marey. "We have discounted much of the news like the conflict between the Americans and the Russian on

Syria and Trump's tweets on North Korea, so maybe it's time to move on."

It was by no means quiet though. Russian President Vladimir Putin said trust had eroded between the United States and Russia under President Donald Trump, as Moscow delivered an unusually hostile reception to US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson in a face-off over Syria. Wall Street's slow start was compounded by a lack of top tier economic data and as they kept moves tight ahead of the start of first quarter earnings season today. While much of Europe was still in positive territory, London's FTSE was back in the red. Japan's Nikkei had also slid 1 percent overnight as a rising yen weighed on exporters' shares. Shanghai had also closed down 0.4 percent as China reported a slight slowdown in pro-

ducer price inflation. In contrast, gold climbed as far as \$1,280.30 at one stage, its highest since Nov. 10, as was only a touch lower at \$1,274.61 as US trading loomed.

"A degree of uncertainty has found its way into previously seemingly bulletproof financial markets," wrote analysts at ANZ. "There is clearly some nervousness out there, with tensions around North Korea ratcheting higher and adding to an already heightened geopolitical environment. Global cyclical assets have not yet responded, but that can't last."

Chinese President Xi Jinping yesterday stressed the need for a peaceful solution for the Korean peninsula on a call with Trump. North Korea has warned of a nuclear attack on the United States at any sign of aggression as a US

Navy strike group steamed toward the Korean peninsula - a force Trump described as an "armada". Japan's navy also plans joint drills with the US force, sources told Reuters. Trump said in a tweet that North Korea was "looking for trouble" and the United States would "solve the problem" with or without China's help. The bellicose language has dragged South Korean stocks and the won to four-week lows and caused jitters across Asia.

At the same time, Tillerson was in Moscow to denounce Russian support for Syria's Bashar al-Assad, raising the stakes in the Middle East. A joint news conference by Trump and NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg was also likely to generate headlines.

Yen yields
The yen, a favored harbor in times of stress due to Japan's position as the world's largest creditor nation, also consolidated its recent gains having surged over 1.2 percent against the dollar on Tuesday.

The dollar huddled at 109.56 yen, having been as low as 109.35 at one stage. Dealers warned there was little in the way of chart support until the 200-day moving average at 108.72. The euro remained soft too having dropped to its lowest in five months at 115.91 yen overnight. It had staged a brief rally but that gave way and it was back on track for its 12 straight session of losses, a record for the single currency. It was steadier against the dollar at \$1.0602. — Reuters

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report					
Index	Change	Closing	Last Closing	High	Low
Price index	▲ 12.30	7,042.12	7,029.82	7,044.13	7,016.54
Weighted Index	▼ -1.70	420.28	421.98	422.53	419.16
KSX 15	▼ -6.00	953.32	959.32	961.06	950.85

Trades						
Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Change
MARIN	59	59	59	5	129,000	59 ▲ 64.0
IFG	405	420	405	3	210,000	420 ▲ 64.0
NAPESCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 1,240.0
ENERGYH	50	51	49	131	4,182,767	51 ▲ 51.0
GPI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 0.0
ABAR	90	94	89	31	196,609	93 ▲ 94.0
Oil & Gas	602	170	4,718,376	990.15	▲ 8.10	
KFOUC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 325.0
BPCC	580	580	570	2	6,000	570 ▲ 680.0
ALKOUT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 700.0
ALQURAIN	340	340	335	14	560,062	335 ▲ 340.0
Basic Materials	905	16	566,062	1317.44	▼ -4.80	
KCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 530.0
CABLE	490	490	475	6	26,700	475 ▲ 490.0
SHIP	228	228	228	1	30	228 ▲ 225.0
PCEM	980	980	980	1	50	980 ▲ 990.0
PAPER	440	445	440	2	10,000	445 ▲ 435.0
MRC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 78.0
ACICO	290	295	290	4	19,196	295 ▲ 295.0
HCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 0.0
KBMMC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 0.0
NICBM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 214.0
EQUIPMENT	61	62	60	43	1,096,543	61 ▲ 61.0
NCCI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 92.0
GYPSUM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 0.0
SALBOOKH	70	70	70	1	10,000	70 ▲ 71.0
AGLTY	640	650	640	21	625,719	650 ▲ 650.0
EDU	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 290.0
CLEANING	52	53	51	18	412,000	52 ▲ 53.0
KGFL	66	66	63	24	569,000	65 ▲ 66.0
KPCP	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 174.0
HUMANSOFT	3,240	3,320	3,240	74	469,489	3,320 ▲ 0.0
NAFAIS	160	160	160	1	5,000	160 ▲ 0.0
GFC	62	63	62	3	4,500	63 ▲ 63.0
MAYADEEN	31.0	31.0	31	64	3,422,623	31.0 ▲ 31.0
CGC	500	510	500	5	82,500	510 ▲ 510.0
MTCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 0.0
UPAC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 760.0
ALAFCO	250	250	250	3	110,000	250 ▲ 255.0
MUBARRAD	83	84	82	20	661,900	83 ▲ 84.0
LOGISTICS	69	71	69	55	2,068,481	70 ▲ 71.0
SCEM	91	92	89	6	100,125	92 ▲ 92.0
GCEM	89	90	89	21	881,000	89 ▲ 91.0
QIC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 0.0
FCEM	91	91	91	4	317,500	91 ▲ 93.0
RKWC	100	100	100	1	100	100 ▲ 100.0
SPEC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 91.0
Industrials	8,060	378	10,902,456	1736.65	▲ 11.70	
KSH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 188.0
NSH	42.5	42.5	43	4	31,000	42.5 ▲ 188.0
PAPCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 110.0
CATTL	216	216	216	2	1,600	216 ▲ 216.0
DANAH	91	92	90	43	1,075,400	91 ▲ 92.0
FOOD	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 2,460.0
Consumer Goods	349	49	1,108,000	1134.17	▼ -5.40	
MHC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 385
ATC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 1,100
YIACO	230	230	230	3	10,100	230 ▲ 0.0
Health Care	230	3	10,100	1533.63	▼ -10.10	
KCIN	1,420	1,560	1,400	13	153,107	1,400 ▲ 1,500
KHOT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 246
SULTAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 0.0
CABLETV	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 0.0
EYAS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 400
IFAHR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 192
OULAFUEL	126	126	124	19	273,122	126 ▲ 128
MUNTAAZAHAT	85	86	83	12	236,964	86 ▲ 86
JAZEERA	560	580	560	9	33,764	580 ▲ 590
SOOR	128	130	126	5	5,347	130 ▲ 130
FUTUREKID	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 124
ALRAI	172	176	172	7	82,381	176 ▲ 176
ZIMAH	58	59	58	11	148,300	58 ▲ 59
Mezzan	1,000	1,000	1,000	12	324,131	1,000 ▲ 1,000
Consumer Services	3,523	88	1,287,116	936.50	▼ -1.60	
ZAIN	465	480	465	136	4,845,701	475 ▲ 475
OOREDOO	1,200	1,200	1,180	3	75,000	1,180 ▲ 1,200
HITSTELEC	50	52	50	187	19,633,216	51 ▲ 51
VIVA	900	910	890	43	69,043	910 ▲ 920
Telecommunications	2,585	369	24,622,860	669.16	▲ 4.70	
NBK	690	700	690	51	2,266,522	690 ▲ 700
GBK	255	260	255	40	2,922,074	260 ▲ 260
CBK	435	435	435	2	22,129	435 ▲ 435
ABK	320	320	315	5	79,466	320 ▲ 320
ALMUTAHED	460	460	455	4	23,000	455 ▲ 455
KIB	260	260	260	41	2,304,755	260 ▲ 265
BURG	345	345	345	7	165,000	345 ▲ 345
KFIN	540	550	540	59	1,389,299	540 ▲ 550
BOUBRYAN	420	420	415	17	153,763	415 ▲ 420
AUB	226	226	224	50	2,401,682	226 ▲ 226
ITHMR	51	52	51	92	5,754,059	52 ▲ 52
WARBABANK	260	265	260	58	193,224	260 ▲ 265
Banks	4,245	426	17,674,973	976.11	▼ -5.20	
KINS	265	265	265	1	100	265 ▲ 265
GINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 0.0
AINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 530.0
WINS	98	99	95	8	75,225	95 ▲ 98.0
KUWAITRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 194.0
FTI	58	60	58	11	43,505	60 ▲ 62.0
WETHAQ	60	60	60	1	1,000	60 ▲ 60.0
BKIKWT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 0.0
Insurance	478	21	119,830	1105.95	▲ 6.20	

Trades						
Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Change
SOKOUK	48.0	49.0	47.5	74	3,258,510	49.0 ▲ 49.0
KRE	65	67	65	37	3,541,100	66 ▲ 66.0
URC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 100.0
NRE	104	106	102	19	211,331	106 ▲ 106.0
SRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 390.0
TAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 445.0
AREEC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 170.0
MASSALEH	48.0	55	48	25	529,204	54 ▲ 55.0
ARABREC	42.0	42.0	42	38	1,856,707	42.0 ▲ 42.0
ERESCO	46.5	48.0	47	54	2,880,093	48.0 ▲ 48.0
MABANEE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 830.0
INJAZZAT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 94.0
INVESTORS	29.0	29.5	29	32	1,266,575	29.0 ▲ 29.5
IRC	39.5	40.0	39	67	3,520,994	39.0 ▲ 39.0
ALTUJARIA	78	79	78	2	13,500	79 ▲ 79.0
SANAM	52	57	52	3	25,868	57 ▲ 57.0
AAYANRE	87	88	87	14	298,000	88 ▲ 89.0
AQAR	81	81	81	1	5,002	81 ▲ 82.0
ALAQARIA	45.5	46.5	45	122	5,194,429	46.0 ▲ 46.5
MAZAYA	120	122	120	29	1,559,787	120 ▲ 122.0
ADNC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 0.0
THEMAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 0.0
TIJARA	63	63	63	1	1,397	63 ▲ 63.0
TAAMEER	47.0	50	46	426	31,867,691	50 ▲ 0.0
ARKAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 85.0
ARGAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 190.0
ABYAAR	30.5	31.0	30	92	7,900,900	30.5 ▲ 30.5
MUNSHAAT	60	60	59	48	2,195,038	60 ▲ 60.0
FIRSTDUBAI	61	65	61	80	2,645,638	64 ▲ 65.0
KBT	58	58	55	41	1,920,596	57 ▲ 58.0
REAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 0.0
MENA	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 0.0
ALMUDON	47.0	49.0	47	146	6,801,628	48.5 ▲ 48.5
MARAKEZ	47.5	47.5	47	29	1,957,718	47.5 ▲ 0.0
REMAL	85	90	85	321	23,541,004	87 ▲ 88.0
AWJ	92	93	92	39	1,778,000	93 ▲ 94.0
Real Estate	1,465	1,740	194,769,710	1068.85	▲ 7.80	
KINV	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 102.0
FACIL	186	188	186	45	1,541,148	186 ▲ 188.0
IFA	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 0.0
NINV	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 0.0
KPROJ	450	450	435	58	2,144,935	435 ▲ 440.0
COAST	52	54	52	80	6,126,775	52 ▲ 53.0
SECH	52	52	51	10	880,000	51 ▲ 52.0
SGC	99	99	99	1	50	99 ▲ 99.0
ARZAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 0.0
MARKAZ	98	98	98	1	5,250	98 ▲ 100.0
KMEFIC	34.0	34.5	33	52	1,602,111	32.5 ▲ 33.0
ALAMAN	52	52	51	15	415,001	52 ▲ 53.0
ALOLA	50	50	50	37	938,950	50 ▲ 51.0
ALMAL	22.0	22.5	22	38	1,654,480	21.5 ▲ 22.0
GIH	47.0	47.5	47	31	1,461,115	47.5 ▲ 47.5
AAYAN	50	51	49	150	13,978,437	50 ▲ 51.0
BAYANINV	54	57	54	110	5,207,871	56 ▲ 56.0
OSOUL	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0	▲ 65.0
K						

XI APPROVAL FUELS FRENZIED HOPES FOR NEW CHINA ECONOMIC ZONE

XIONGXIAN, China/BEIJING: Like many residents of Xiongxian county, a polluted corner of Hebei province, 17-year-old Liu Zipeng has been giddy with excitement since China announced plans this month for a vast new economic zone backed by President Xi Jinping himself.

"I am so happy - I don't need to move to Beijing or worry about getting a wife anymore," Liu said with a laugh. Such are the hopes for the area, about 100 km (60 miles) southwest of Beijing, that authorities quickly banned property sales to quash a speculative frenzy.

While China has set high expectations by touting the Xiongan New Area as a successor to zones in Shenzhen and Shanghai that helped make China an economic powerhouse, the force of Xi's endorsement could help it flourish where other new development areas failed to match the hype.

In a sign of Beijing's intent, Xu Qin, the former mayor and Communist party boss for Shenzhen, was named acting governor of Hebei province on Friday, with analysts saying it is likely he will be tapped to lead development of Xiongan. Once a sleepy fishing village, Shenzhen, bordering Hong

Kong, became an economic juggernaut after being declared a special economic zone in 1980.

Details for Xiongan, planned eventually to stretch across 2,000 square kilometres, an area almost as big as Tokyo, remain sketchy. It is pitched as an environmentally friendly city housing some of Beijing's relocated "non-capital functions", with hopes to attract high-tech industries. Nearly 30 large state enterprises including PetroChina and China Shipbuilding Industry Corp have expressed interest, though no specific relocation plans have been announced.

The three counties that make up the area, Xiongxian, Anxin and Rongcheng, are home to about a million people as well as wheat fields, light manufacturing and heavy pollution - endemic in much of Hebei. But unlike Shenzhen and Shanghai's Pudong, the development of Xiongan is not expected to be accompanied by major economic reforms, and its landlocked setting is a transportation disadvantage.

"Natural market forces would probably not have chosen this place. But if the central government backs it with unlimited resources, it could become

whatever it wants to be," said Steven McCord, head of research for North China at real estate consultancy Jones Lang LaSalle.

The plan fits into a broader regional integration push for the cities of Beijing and Tianjin and Hebei province, dubbed Jing-Jin-Ji, which has been spearheaded by Xi since 2015 to tackle the "big city disease" plaguing Beijing, a crowded and polluted city of 22 million.

But Jing-Jin-Ji's progress has been slower than hoped. "It's been hard to get traction getting Beijing, Tianjin, and Hebei to work together seamlessly," McCord said.

Xiongan could be a political and geographical "clean slate" to generate more jobs and economic stimulus for North China, he said.

Xi himself visited Anxin county in late February, which only became public when China announced plans for Xiongan on April 1. Morgan Stanley's base scenario foresees 133 billion yuan (\$19.3 billion) in additional fixed asset investment annually over 15 years to build Xiongan, equivalent to just 0.24 percent of China's \$6.2 trillion yuan of nationwide fixed asset investment last year.

Mixed record

While the Shenzhen and Shanghai economic zones thrived, some similar schemes in China have fallen short of expectations. Caofeidian, also in Hebei, was promoted by former President Hu Jintao as a new industrial zone in 2008, but development floundered as debt accumulated.

Authorities have been trying to give Caofeidian another push to upgrade its industries to become a driver of Jing-Jin-Ji's integration, but competition among provinces has been a drag on progress.

"Caofeidian had central government support, but it was a long way from being a national-level special economic zone. Its importance was definitely not at the same level that Xiongan is seeing now," said He Jun, head of macroeconomic research at Anbound Consulting.

"Xiongan's biggest advantage is that it has strong support from the central government." He remains doubtful that Xiongan will emulate Shanghai or Shenzhen due to its geography and the greater openness of China's economy now, but the political leadership seems intent on making it succeed. — Reuters

EU WELCOMES ITALY'S DEFICIT-CUTTING PLANS

ROME: Italy's latest plans to rein in its deficit are a "step in the right direction," EU Commission chief Jean-Claude Juncker said yesterday. Rome gave the green light to a package of reforms aimed at lopping 3.4 billion euros off the budget shortfall this year.

"The Italian government's pledge is a step in the right direction... Italy is making enormous efforts to rein in its public deficit," Juncker told the daily La Repubblica. "Nevertheless, in the medium and long term, in order to save ourselves and the monetary union, the Italians must clean up their public finances in a decisive manner," Juncker said. On Tuesday, Prime Minister Paolo Gentiloni announced that his cabinet had approved a package of economic reforms that would knock 0.2 percentage points off Italy's deficit ratio this year. The reforms include measures to fight tax evasion and reduce public spending, but do not entail any tax increases.

At the same time, Rome upgraded its forecast for economic growth this year to 1.1 percent from 1.0 percent previously, following growth in 2016 of 0.9 percent. The European Commission had written to Rome in mid-January demanding that it revisit its 2017 budget plans and shave off 3.4 billion euros (\$3.6 billion) or face penalties. Italy's 2017 budget adopted last autumn had pencilled in a deficit equivalent to 2.3 percent of GDP—significantly higher than the 1.8 percent initially demanded by Brussels.

"The deficit-to-GDP ratio will be

reduced to 2.1 percent this year," Gentiloni said Tuesday.

"Our forecasts are cautious and it has often turned out in recent years that they are corrected positively afterwards." Italy has the second highest public debt of any EU country, equivalent to 133 percent of its GDP in 2016.

It was one of eight eurozone countries warned in November that they could face fines and restricted access to funds from Brussels over their failure to stick to the EU's Stability Pact rules.

"Italy has all the instruments available to be a driving force within the EU," Juncker said in the newspaper interview yesterday. "That said, I'm saddened to see the country losing competitiveness day by day, year by year," he continued, suggesting that its growth rate was currently "too weak."

Turning to the migrant crisis, in which Italy is very much on the front line, Juncker suggested that the country "receive the Nobel Peace Prize given all it has done to save lives in the Mediterranean."

But he rejected accusations that Europe had left Italy on its own to tackle the migrant crisis.

"That's not true. From the beginning, I've said that the tragedy of immigration cannot only be the problem of Greece or Italy, but must be treated as a European problem," Juncker continued. That was why the EU had drawn up a system for sharing the numbers of asylum-seekers and taking in and registering the refugees, he added. — AFP



HANGZHOU: Customers select mangos at a supermarket in Hangzhou, east China's Zhejiang province yesterday. Prices for goods at the factory gate in China jumped in March, the government said. — AFP

CHINA Q1 ECONOMIC GROWTH SEEN STEADY AT 6.8% IN Q1 CONSTRUCTION BOOMING, SERVICES SECTOR RESILIENT

BEIJING: China's economy likely grew by a solid 6.8 percent in the first quarter, the same pace as the previous quarter, due to sustained government infrastructure spending and a gravity-defying housing market, according to a Reuters poll of 60 economists.

But the world's second-largest economy is widely expected to lose steam later in the year as the impact of earlier stimulus measures starts to fade and as local authorities step up a battle to rein in red-hot housing prices. A tighter monetary policy stance by the central bank and intensifying efforts by regulators to contain debt risks and asset bubbles could also weigh on growth in the world's second-largest economy if not handled well, economists said.

"Growth is still driven by infrastructure investment and the property sector, but property investment is likely to slow in the second half due to curbs on home buying and mortgages," said Tang Jianwei, economist at Bank of Communications in Shanghai.

"The economy is stabilizing and warming up, but there are still downside risks in the medium term." A surprisingly upbeat reading would likely boost stocks and global commodity prices, but a weak outcome could fuel the risk of more capital outflows, putting fresh pressure on the yuan currency.

The government is aiming for 2017 growth of around 6.5 percent, slightly lower than last year's

target of 6.5-7 percent and the actual 6.7 percent, which was the weakest pace in 26 years. Top leaders have signaled tolerance for more modest growth this year to help defuse financial risks created by an explosive growth in debt. Economists in the poll estimated GDP grew 1.6 percent quarter-on-quarter, versus 1.7 percent in the fourth quarter, though only 25 analysts gave sequential forecasts.

Property, debt key risks

Most analysts agree the property market may pose the single biggest immediate risk to growth. In March and early April, more than a dozen local governments imposed or tightened restrictions on home purchases and tightened mortgage down payment rules, after data showed housing prices, sales and investment remained strong, defying earlier cooling measures.

Increasingly tough measures are expected to slow activity in the property market eventually, but at the risk of a nasty crash that would damage the economy and consumer confidence. At the same time, China's central bank has shifted to a tightening bias and is using more targeted measures to contain risks in the financial system, after years of ultra-loose settings.

The People's Bank of China (PBOC) has raised short-term interest rates modestly several times already this year and some market watch-

ers expect one or two more hikes by year-end. But it is considered unlikely to tighten policy abruptly ahead of a major leadership transition later this year.

Indeed, some analysts believe the government could simply unwind tightening measures and revert to traditional pump-priming if growth slows too sharply, despite official warnings about the dangers of prolonged debt-fueled stimulus. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) says China's total private and public debt has exceeded 250 percent of GDP, up from 150 percent before the global financial crisis.

Steady expansion

China will release first-quarter gross domestic product (GDP) on April 17 (Monday), along with March industrial output, retail sales and fixed asset investment. Industrial output likely grew at a steady 6.3 percent pace in March, aided by a continuing construction boom and a pickup in export orders as global demand improves.

Fixed asset investment was expected to grow 8.8 percent in the first quarter, easing marginally from 8.9 percent in the first two months of the year. Investors and policymakers will be watching for any further signs of improvement in private investment, which quickened in January and February after a sharp loss of momentum in the last few years. — Reuters



LONDON: Fruit and vegetables are displayed for sale at a food stall at Whitechapel Market in east London yesterday. — AFP

BRITISH WAGE GROWTH AFTER INFLATION ALMOST VANISHES

LONDON: Inflation almost completely gnawed away the growth in pay of British workers during the three months to February, the clearest evidence yet that households are feeling the strain of rising prices as Brexit negotiations begin. Inflation-adjusted pay growth inched up just 0.2 percent over the period, the weakest increase since mid-2014, official data showed yesterday.

The figures drove home how households are grappling with rising prices in shops, exacerbated by the pound's plunge that followed last year's vote to leave the European Union and by rising global oil prices. The unemployment rate in the period between December and February held steady at an almost 12-year low of 4.7 percent, in line with the median forecast in a Reuters poll of economists.

"Big picture remains a labor market with very strong employment plateauing at record highs ... combined with a pay disaster," Torsten Bell, director of the Resolution Foundation think tank, said on Twitter. Sterling hit its highest level in over a week against the U.S. dollar after the figures as investors focused on a slightly stronger-than-expected rate of nominal pay growth.

Earnings including bonuses rose by an annual 2.3 percent in the three months to February, unchanged from the previous period, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) said on Wednesday.

Economists taking part in a Reuters poll

had expected further rise in inflation is raising the prospect that wages, in real terms, will soon start to contract, as they did in most of the years since the 2008/09 recession. Consumer price inflation stood at 2.3 percent in the 12 months to March and the Bank of England expects it to approach 2.7 percent by the end of this year. Many private economists expect inflation will surpass 3 percent this year.

After Britain's economy withstood the initial shock of the Brexit vote last year, economists have reined in their forecasts for how much unemployment is likely to rise. But the ONS said the number of unemployment benefit claimants - which is a potential early warning sign of an economic downturn - rose by 25,500 to 765,400 in March, the largest increase since July 2011.

Economists taking part in the Reuters poll had expected the number of benefit claimants to fall by 3,000. The number of people in work increased only modestly by 39,000 although the employment rate of 74.6 percent was a joint record high. Job vacancies in the three-month period to the end of March rose by 16,000 to a record high 767,000. British workers are becoming more reticent about moving jobs as the process of leaving the European Union gets underway, exacerbating long-standing skill shortages, a survey of recruiters showed on Friday. — Reuters

TESCO DIVES INTO RED ON ACCOUNTING SCANDAL

LONDON: Supermarket giant Tesco revealed yesterday that it fell into an annual net loss of £40 million due to a costly accounting scandal at Britain's biggest retailer.

The after-tax loss, equivalent to \$50 million or 47 million euros, was skewed by a £235-million hit in costs arising from the three-year-old scandal. The company's performance contrasted with a net profit of £138 million in the previous financial year, Tesco added in a statement.

However, operating or underlying profits before one-off items rallied almost a third to £1.28 billion in its 2016/2017 financial year, which ran until the end of February. That beat market expectations. And annual sales grew for the first time in seven years by 3.7 percent to £55.9 billion, despite fierce domestic competition. The news comes two weeks after Tesco agreed to a fine and compensation costs in Serious Fraud Office deal, under which the firm will not face prosecution. Charges have previously been brought against three former Tesco executives, who will face trial over alleged fraud and false accounting. Tesco also said yesterday that it

expected its vast £3.7-billion takeover of British wholesaling giant Booker to be submitted for shareholder approval by either late 2017 or early 2018.

"We are confident that we can build on this strong performance in the year ahead," said chief executive

Dave Lewis in the statement. "On top of this, our proposed merger with Booker will bring together two complementary businesses, driving additional value for shareholders by realising substantial synergies and enabling us to access the faster growing 'out of home' food market."



LONDON: A customer pushes a shopping trolley as he walks through the car park of a Tesco store in Sevenoaks, south-east of London yesterday. Supermarket giant Tesco revealed yesterday that it fell into an annual net loss of £40 million due to a costly accounting scandal at Britain's biggest retailer. — AFP

Share price slides

The results were badly received on the London stock market. Shares fell 3.14 percent to 189.45 pence in mid-morning deals, topping the fallers' board on the FTSE 100 index, which was 0.25 percent lower. "Tesco's historic troubles have left a lingering mark on its current results," noted David Alexander, retail analyst at GlobalData. "Past indiscretions aside, there is plenty for executives to crow about in today's numbers."

Tesco is the world's third-biggest supermarket chain after France's Carrefour and global leader Walmart. The group had slumped into an enormous record loss of £5.7 billion in 2014/2015 after a vast property writedown and challenging home trade. However, it rebounded into slender profit last year.

Tesco had been accused of overstating profits by £326 million between February and September 2014 in an accounting error. Following the incident, the company appointed outsider and former Unilever executive Lewis in July 2014 to replace long-standing chief executive Philip Clarke and oversee a drastic restructuring of the group. — AFP

SAMSUNG LAUNCHES GALAXY TAB S3 IN KUWAIT

KUWAIT: Samsung Gulf Electronics announced yesterday the launch of the Samsung Galaxy Tab S3, a stylish tablet with advanced computing technology offering a premium mobile experience. Digital content enthusiasts experienced the Galaxy Tab S3's superior video and gaming capabilities along with versatile usage as a productivity tool.

The tablet delivers on Samsung's legacy of innovative Galaxy technology including a 13-megapixel rear camera which includes auto focus and a 5-megapixel front camera for high-quality photos. The tablet also includes expandable storage and more power efficiency with fast-charge capabilities, supporting up to 12 hours of video playback, as well as Pogo keyboards with no separate charging or pairing required.

"We endeavor to expand the boundaries of mobile experiences by delivering state-of-the-art products that address consumer needs," said Tarek Sabbagh, Head of IT & Mobile (IM) Division at Samsung Gulf Electronics. "The all-new Galaxy Tab S3 is built with premium technology that delivers a productive and versatile experience to consumers, designed for users at home, work or on the go."

The Samsung Galaxy Tab S3 is optimized



for entertainment, while offering versatile usage and taking the mobile experience the next level. It offers a cinema-like experience with 4K video playback and a stunning Super AMOLED display. In addition, the Galaxy Tab S3 is the first Samsung tablet to feature quad-stereo speakers tuned by AKG by HARMAN for premium visual and listening experiences.

Optimized for gaming, the Galaxy Tab S3 includes Vulkan API for superior graphics and Game Launcher for an enhanced user

interface and personalized gaming experience, as well as modes like Do Not Disturb for uninterrupted gameplay.

With an enhanced S Pen, the Galaxy Tab S3 allows users to be more productive, creative, and do multiple things at once. The Galaxy Tab S3 is designed to keep users always connected with faster charging and longer battery life.

The Galaxy Tab S3 comes with a 9.7-inch Super AMOLED display, and provides premium Galaxy technology including:



HDR (High Dynamic Range) Video Content: Galaxy Tab S3 supports videos in HDR (10bit colored) for true-to-life colors and vivid digital content.

Samsung Flow: Samsung Flow makes working on the go seamless. For a safe and secure login, Samsung Flow uses biometric authentication to log-in and can wirelessly tether compatible devices to transfer documents from a mobile device to a tablet. It also syncs message notifications so users never miss an important text message



whether they're using a smartphone or their tablet.

Refined S Pen: For a natural writing experience, the S Pen has a smaller 0.7mm tip and increased pressure sensitivity. The S Pen also includes convenient features such as Screen Off Memo to quickly jot down notes, PDF Annotation for easy editing and professional-level drawing with Advanced Drawing Tools.



Finance Club members with KFH representative

KFH TAKES PART IN FINANCE CLUB ANNUAL WEEK ACTIVITIES

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) took part in the activities of Finance Club Annual week held at the College of Business Administration at Kuwait University as part of its social responsibility and strategic partnership with the college.

The activities included competitions and other events that aimed at highlighting the importance of finance to students, in addition to facilitating the effort for selecting the suitable majors that suit the students' capabilities and qualifications.

Faculty members and students applauded KFH's significant role in supporting the youth and the students in particular, not to mention the role in participating and sponsoring the annual events and activities of the college. KFH was established in Kuwait in 1977 and is enlisted in the Kuwait Stock Exchange. KFH Group is a global pioneer in the field of Islamic banking services, where it offers a wide array of Islamic products and services, not to mention a high standard of

innovation and client service. KFH manages its operations in the GCC, Asia, and Europe through over 446 branches, including KFH-Turkey, in order to offer services for the bank's clients in Turkey, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Germany, Jordan, and Dubai.

KFH's mission is to achieve highest levels of excellence and innovation in the field of client service, while developing common interest for all those concerned with the financial institution. KFH's vision is to spearhead the global development in Islamic financial services, and to upgrade the bank into the level of becoming the most sustainable profitable Islamic bank in the world.

KFH's values include cementing leadership through all its businesses, including leadership in the Islamic banking services worldwide, through innovation and in client service and the development of its employees. In addition, KFH is committed to all its procedures, and to setting up long-life partnerships with the concerned authorities.

KUWAIT'S TRIANGLE RESTAURANT EXPANDS ACROSS GULF REGION

CRAFTERS CO INTRODUCES ITS CASUAL DINING CONCEPT TO DOHA

KUWAIT: The Crafters Company, curators of original casual dining experiences such as Ridley's Burger, Bao Steamed Bun, Haute Gourmet Hot Dogs, and Bao Cafe, yesterday announced the Doha opening of its original casual dining concept 'Triangle' restaurant, the company's first of a series of restaurant openings outside of Kuwait.

A Crafters Company spokesperson said: "Following Triangle's great success in Kuwait, we are excited to announce the start of our expansion



into the Gulf market, starting in Qatar with our partners United Trading Group Company, our franchisee. After making our mark in Kuwait's very competitive dine-in sector, we are excited to bring one of our most popular original concepts to the Gulf food community and share with them our love for food."

The restaurant, which opened its doors to the Qatari food community on April 11, is located at The Pearl-Qatar, a man-made island development covering 400 hectares of reclaimed land hosting



DOHA: A full house enjoys Triangle's signature cuisine during the restaurant's new franchise launch at The Pearl-Qatar.

residential accommodation, five star hotels, marina, and retail areas. Crafters plans to continue its expansion across Gulf markets by 2018 through recently inked franchise agreements. Established 2010 in Kuwait City by two Kuwaiti entrepreneurs on a journey to create the ultimate concept dining experience in the region, Triangle quickly became a destination for families and friends, and tourists from the Gulf, looking for original dishes in a trendy atmosphere. The restaurant is infused with a modern flair and luxurious design, and specializes in American-cuisine inspired original dishes, savory desserts, and freshly made artisan coffee served with creative flair.

"Very yummy cozy tasty clean and friendly staff," says Saud on the restaurant's TripAdvisor page, while another Triangle fan, Amanda, shared her love for Triangle with a few simple words: "Photo-worthy food."

Triangle is located in Salhiya, Kuwait City and now in Doha's The Pearl-Qatar. Driven by a pas-

sion for elevating the standard of dining in Kuwait, in the spring of 2010 two Kuwaiti entrepreneurs set out to enhance the dine-in restaurant experience. Conveying their passion for food through their unique style and concepts they launched the Crafters Company, a F&B group that serves only the finest foods made from the highest quality ingredients.

Today, Crafters Company, also known as Crafters, have established four restaurant concepts: Triangle, a contemporary restaurant that specializes in American cuisine, savory desserts, and freshly made aromatic coffee served with creative flair. Ridley's Burger, a mid-century modern antique restaurant specializing in burgers inspired by street food in London. Haute Gourmet Hot Dogs, a health-conscious restaurant serving a creative twist on the all-American classic, the hot dog. And Bao, a new fresh take and taste to the local Asian restaurant scene with delectable steamed buns.

ALARGAN COMPLETES BOND REPURCHASE

KUWAIT: Issued in April 2012, ALARGAN International Real Estate Company has today completed the repurchase of its bond after coming to maturity, repurchasing KD17.4 million in bonds.

Khaled Al-Meshaan, CEO and Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors of ALARGAN International Real Estate Company, said: "The Company has today a healthy funding structure with minimal reliance on short-term borrowing and more liquidity, enabling it to continue growing in real estate development operations in our present markets and new ones. The Company's ongoing changes to its business model have contributed to lower the overall risk generated from the sector in which it operates through the proportion of revenues coming from recurring rental income steadily increasing over time."

ALARGAN International Real Estate Company is a leading real estate company based in Kuwait and focused on the development of affordable and middle income housing in the GCC. The company strives to integrate its motto, 'Life... As You Love It', across its projects by creating "live, work, play and savor" environments that present a unique lifestyle experience. The company also endeavors to pass on its sustainability values to the community by including green and energy efficient initiatives in its projects. ALARGAN is the only company in Kuwait to obtain the Platinum ranking for the Leadership in Energy



Khaled Al-Meshaan, ALARGAN International Real Estate

& Environmental Design (LEED) program, which is awarded by the US Green Building Council (USGBC). ALARGAN follows a balanced investment strategy, and tries to seize opportunities with stable and superior returns based on the market's investment cycle. Its projects are diverse and located across the Gulf region, including the State of Kuwait, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Kingdom of Bahrain and the Sultanate of Oman, delivering popular hotels resorts, widely visited shopping and food destinations, large development communities, and middle income level residential housing.



AL-ENEZI WINS A GLA MERCEDES CAR IN CBK CAMPAIGN

KUWAIT: The Commercial Bank of Kuwait recently awarded its client Fatima Farraj Al-Enezi, the winner of the first prize a GLA Mercedes in the 'Transfer Your Salary and Win Instant and Quarterly Prizes' campaign dedicated for Kuwaiti employees in the public and private sectors.

In this regard, CBK's corporate banking assistant manager, Lina Darweesh handed over the car at the Mercedes agent Al-Baisher & Al-Kazmi's showroom.

Darweesh explained that the offer was exclusive for Kuwaiti customers above the age of 18 working for the public and the private sector with a

monthly salary over KD 500 including both new recruits and those already in service and decide to transfer their salary to CBK. She added that the offer gives clients an instant cash prize starting with KD 200 or an interest less loan of up to KD 7,500, entering the remaining three quarterly draws for three Mercedes cars and many other privileges and banking solutions.

In addition, Darweesh stressed that the campaign would continue till the end of the year and that CBK would have a booth at the Avenues in the period of April 13-15 to introduce and promote the campaign.

WOULD-BE INTERNET STARS BOOST BILLION-DOLLAR CHINA MARKET

BEIJING: Jing Qi, a part-time presenter on the live streaming platform Huajiao, underwent cosmetic surgery in March to improve her chances of becoming an internet celebrity. After five hours of rhinoplasty and facial fat injections that left her with gauze covering her nose, eyes, forehead and cheeks, the 27-year-old said she felt "even worse than dead". But the suffering was worth it.

Jing is among tens of thousands hoping to find online stardom as an anchor on the live video streaming phenomenon sweeping China's media. The fastest-emerging internet sector barely existed in China three years ago but last year produced revenues of more than 30 billion yuan (\$4.3 billion) and according to an estimate by investment bank China Renaissance Securities, is set to more than triple that by 2020. That puts it on track to overtake cinema box office receipts in a few year's time.

"I want more people to watch me, to spend Huajiao coins on me," Jing explained, referring to the virtual gifts her online followers buy that she can later redeem in part for cash. "In the end, I'll be

able to marry a tall, handsome and rich man," Jing said. The rapid growth of live streaming in China has attracted a rush of investment, led by China's tech heavyweights, Tencent Holdings, Alibaba Group Holding and Baidu Inc. They hope live streaming can boost existing services in e-commerce, social networking and gaming.

Tencent, the country's biggest online gaming and social networking company, is backing a slew of streaming and interactive entertainment firms, including gaming platform Douyu. Alibaba's Taobao marketplace launched a live-streaming platform early last year, allowing sellers to promote products directly to online viewers in real time.

The lure is some 344 million Chinese netizens - more than the population of every country on the planet bar China and India - who were watching live streaming sites in December. And that is only about 47 percent of all Chinese Internet users. There are about 150 live streaming platforms, most producing entertainment shows. The importance of live streaming in lower-tier cities is greater than

elsewhere in China. Access to the internet via a mobile phone is the major, if not the only, gateway to shopping and entertainment, said Karen Chan, equities analyst at Jefferies Hong Kong.

Live streaming has also bolstered the growth of ancillary businesses, including agencies looking to find the next live streaming star, consumer loans, and even cosmetic surgery.

Deng Jian, chairman of Three Minute TV, an agency that provides 1,000 trained anchors to more than three dozen platforms, said his business operates a "militarised" production machine to feed the live streaming industry.

At an office building in a suburb of Beijing, dozens of Deng's female anchors work each day around the clock in three shifts. Each anchor sits in a small booth, decorated to appear like a girl's bedroom, facing a computer.

They sing and flirt with fans, encouraging them to buy virtual gifts, like a rose, sportscar or villa. The cash for the gifts is split by the platforms, agencies and the anchor. — Reuters

EHOSTING DATAFORT ACHIEVES THE ACCLAIMED PCI-DSS CERTIFICATION

DUBAI: eHosting DataFort (eHDF) pioneers in Managed Hosting and Cloud Infrastructure services in the UAE recently attained the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI-DSS) compliance certification. Besides, the company is also accredited with ISO 9001, 20000, 22301, 27001 and CSA STAR security certifications.

This will allow e-commerce, Banking and Financial Services, Insurance (BFSI) and other clients dealing with card storing and processing environments, access to eHDF's physical, environmental, network and infrastructure security needed to protect sensitive cardholder data and meet PCI DSS compliance standards for their business. eHDF can now extend PCI compliant services for customers and help them meet the compliance standards too. eHDF managed to complete the stringent certification process in a record time of

four months due to the existing compliance with several other industry standards. This places the company high on its maturity in security mandates and governance. The procedure required thorough assessments to identify the assets, systems and processes that govern the infrastructure and applications and to ensure that the standards are met.

Additional measures were incorporated with new systems and infrastructure mechanisms to meet the required controls. The company also considered other enhancements to achieve the PCI-DSS certification. "We see clients struggle with PCI compliance adherence which made us realize there exists a genuine market concern that needed a feasible solution. eHDF's clients can now leverage our PCI DSS compliance and easily empower themselves to get PCI compliant. This adds yet another layer of security to the customer's data," said

Yasser Zeineldin, CEO, eHosting DataFort. "Today, more and more organizations want to engage with hosting partners who meet data security and other regulatory requirements even if they are not bound by them. Being able to demonstrate PCI compliance is what sets us apart from our competition.

It is evident that when customers invest in time and expenses to achieve compliance, they expect the same of their service providers. They also need us to demonstrate high levels of controls implemented to safeguard their data in a secure and consistent manner and abide by regulatory mandates," added Yasser Zeineldin. The PCI security standard dictates a set of comprehensive requirements for "enhancing payment account data security" such as



Yasser Zeineldin

credit card numbers, names, addresses, email, etc. It was developed by the founding members of the PCI Security Standards Council, including American Express, Discover Financial Services, JCB International, MasterCard Worldwide, and Visa Inc., to help facilitate the broad adoption of consistent data security measures on a global basis.

eHDF places professional training very high in its strategic goals. The new certification which demanded specialized skills was met with the team undergoing comprehensive training programmes. The company is focused on its strong security credentials and is committed to raise the bar and meet the ever-growing customer requirements.



GEORGIA: This file photo shows the ASUS All-in-One PC ET2322 desktop computer, in Decatur, Georgia, which has a touch-sensitive, 23-inch display. — AP

SLUMPING PC MARKET SHOWS A GLIMMER OF HOPE IN 1ST QUARTER

SAN FRANCISCO: The long-suffering personal computer market may be finally recovering from the damage inflicted by the shift to smartphones and tablets, according to a report released Tuesday. PC shipments in the first quarter rose by about 1 percent from last year, based on calculations from the research firm International Data Corp. The modest gain marks the first quarterly increase in five years, a stretch that has seen people increasingly turn to mobile devices for their computing needs.

Another breakdown released by Gartner Inc. painted a gloomier picture. That research firm estimated PC shipments fell by 2 percent in the first quarter. The rival reports measure the market in different ways, accounting for their contrasting conclusions. Both IDC and Gartner concurred on this point: About the only signs of life are in the corporate market, where PCs remain an essential tool. Businesses have recently been replacing larger numbers of outdated machines.

"Winners in the business segment will ultimately be the survivors in this shrinking market," predicted Gartner analyst Mikako

Kitagawa. As has been the case for the past few years, HP Inc. and China's Lenovo remain the world's two largest PC makers. Each company holds about 20 percent of the market, according to both IDC and Gartner. Consumers, though, remain reluctant to spend more money on new desktop or laptop computers when smartphones have become an additional appendage, giving people access to email, map, search engines and social networks wherever they are.

Smartphone proliferation is the main reason PC sales are unlikely to ever return to pre-slump levels. For instance, IDC's more upbeat analysis of the market pegged worldwide PC shipments at 60 million during the first quarter - about 30 percent below the 85 million shipped in the same period in 2011 before the industry downturn took hold. Now, even tablets are losing their luster as consumers hold on to those devices for longer as well. Even Apple's iPad, the market leader, is mired in a three-year sales slump. Although smartphone demand also is easing, sales of those devices remain on the upswing.—AP

TOYOTA SHOWS ROBOTIC LEG BRACE TO HELP PARALYZED PEOPLE WALK

SENSORS IN THE DEVICE MONITOR, ADJUST TO HELP OUT

TOKYO: Toyota is introducing a wearable robotic leg brace designed to help partially paralyzed people walk. The Welwalk WW-1000 system is made up of a motorized mechanical frame that fits on a person's leg from the knee down. The patients can practice walking wearing the robotic device on a special treadmill that can support their weight. Toyota Motor Corp. demonstrated the equipment for reporters at its Tokyo headquarters yesterday.

One hundred such systems will be rented to medical facilities in Japan later this year, Toyota said. The service entails a one-time initial charge of 1 million yen (\$9,000) and a 350,000 yen (\$3,200) monthly fee. The gadget is designed to be worn on one leg at a time for patients severely paralyzed on one side of the body due to a stroke or other ailments, Eiichi Saito, a medical doctor and executive vice president at Fujita Health University, explained. The university joined with Toyota in developing the device.

A person demonstrating it strapped the brace to her thigh, knee, ankle and foot and then showed how it is used to practice walking on the treadmill. Her body was supported from above by a harness and the motor helped to bend and straighten her knee. Sensors in the device can monitor the walking and adjust quickly to help out. Medical staff controls the system through a touch panel screen. Japanese automakers have been developing robotics both for manufacturing and other uses.

Robotics in medicine

Honda Motor Co.'s Asimo humanoid can run and dance, pour a drink and carry on simple conversations, while Welwalk is more of a system that uses robotics than a stand-alone robot. Given how common paralysis due to strokes is in fast-aging Japan, Toyota's device could be very helpful, Saito said. He said patients using it can recover more quickly as the sensitive robotic sensor in Welwalk fine-tunes the level of support better than a human therapist can.



TOKYO: A model demonstrates how the rehabilitation-assist robot Welwalk WW-1000, developed by Japan's Toyota Motor Corporation, helps to assist in flexing and extending the knee while walking on a treadmill during a press preview in Tokyo yesterday. — AFP

"This helps just barely enough," said Saito, explaining that helping too much can slow progress in rehabilitation. The field of robotic aids for walking and rehabilitation is growing quickly. A battery-powered wearable exoskeleton made by Israeli manufacturer ReWalk Robotics enables people relying on a wheelchair to stand upright and walk. Such systems also can aid therapists in monitoring a patient's progress, Luke Hares, chief technology officer at Cambridge Medical Robotics in Britain, said in a phone interview. "They can be so much more precise," he said. Previously, Toyota has shown robots that play the violin and trumpet. It plans to start sales in Japan of a tiny boy-like robot for conversational com-

panionship. It is also investing in artificial intelligence and developing self-driving vehicles. Toshiyuki Isoke, Toyota's chief officer for research, said Welwalk reflects the company's desire to apply robotics in medicine and other social welfare areas, not just entertainment.

The company also has an R2-D2-like machine, called the Human Support Robot, whose mechanical arm can help bed-ridden people pick things up. "Our vision is about trying to deliver mobility for everybody," said Isoke. "We have been developing industrial robotics for auto manufacturing, and we are trying to figure out how we can use that technology to fill social needs and help people more." — AP

CANON ME SUPPORTS DUBAI AUTISM CENTRE

KUWAIT: Canon Middle East (CME), a leader in imaging solutions, has partnered with Dubai Autism Centre to celebrate World Autism Awareness Day 2017. Held under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Hamdan Bin Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai, the annual



autism awareness campaign was launched on the 2nd of April 2017 and will run through the month.

Participating for the sixth-year, Canon Middle East will support the Dubai Autism Centre through awareness campaign. The campaign includes many presentations in schools, hospitals and public departments aimed at increasing public awareness and promoting a better understanding about

the various challenges of autism and how early intervention is important for individuals with this disorder.

Anurag Agrawal, Managing Director, Canon Middle East, said, "We are delighted to partner with Dubai Autism Centre and support the campaign to create awareness about autism. Giving back to the community is a principle aligned with our global philosophy Kyosei - the purpose of living and working together for the common good. It also comes in an ideal period as 2017 has been recognized as the 'Year of Giving' by our President His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

"Autism is a complex neuro-developmental disorder and proper education and understanding by society will help individuals with autism and prevent their discrimination." The event marks the tenth annual year for the World Autism Awareness Day, in which autism organizations around the world celebrate this day every year with unique fundraising and awareness-raising events.

YAHOO ACCUSED OF MISMANAGING FUND FOR DISSIDENTS IN CHINA

SAN FRANCISCO: A lawsuit accused Yahoo of breaking a financial promise it made to Chinese dissidents almost a decade ago as penance for helping the Chinese government find and jail other activists. The complaint, filed Tuesday in a Washington, DC, federal court by a group of Chinese dissidents, contends that Yahoo mismanaged a \$17 million fund set up to provide financial aid to activists.

Embroided in china

Yahoo created the human rights fund in 2007, days after US legislators roasted the company for providing authorities with information that led to the imprisonment of two Chinese dissidents, Wang Xiaoning and Shi Tao. The complaint alleges that Yahoo allowed Harry Wu, a now-deceased dissident from China, to spend about \$13 million of the fund enriching himself and pursuing other projects tied to his interests.

Only \$700,000 has been doled out to Chinese dissidents who had been imprisoned for expressing their opinions online, the reason Yahoo bankrolled the fund, according to the lawsuit. Yahoo declined to comment. The plaintiffs want Yahoo to replenish the fund and to pay unspecified damages. The suit arrives at a delicate time for Yahoo, which is preparing to sell its online operations to Verizon Communications for \$4.5 billion.

Lectured by congress

The unflattering portrait drawn in the law-

Two days later, Yahoo announced the \$17 million fund as part of a settlement that ended lawsuits related to its role in the imprisonment of Wang and Shi.

"We are committed to making sure our actions match our values around the world," Yahoo vowed in a November 2017 statement announcing the fund.

Alleged mismanagement

The new lawsuit argues Yahoo instead used the fund as "window dressing" to help shield the company from further ridicule and resolve other lawsuits. Meanwhile, Yahoo turned a "blind eye" to Wu's reckless spending, even though company executives had been warned about the abuses as far back as 2010, according to the complaint. Among other things, the complaint alleges that Wu paid himself and his wife more than \$1 million, spent about \$4 million buying real estate in Washington and more than \$800,000 on his own legal bills, including a case alleging sexual harassment. Wu, who spent 19 years in Chinese labor camps, died last year. — AP

WHEN IMITATION IS NOT THE SINCEREST FORM OF FLATTERY

By Alastair Paterson
CEO and Co-Founder,
Digital Shadows

The huge cost of cybercrime was once again graphically illustrated a few weeks ago by a story on the BBC of a hacker who allegedly used phishing techniques and fake websites to steal over \$100m from two major US companies. According to the US Department of Justice, the Lithuanian man allegedly set up a bogus company, which bore the same name as a legitimate Asian-based computer hardware manufacturer, and used the front to siphon off money from two major US companies between 2013 and 2015.

The attacker allegedly registered the bogus company in Latvia and opened various accounts in its name at several banks around the world. He then is reported to have sent fraudulent phishing emails to employees and agents of the victim companies, which regularly conducted multimillion-dollar transactions with the cloned company, and got them to send money to bank accounts set up around the world for goods and services.

If you wanted a graphic illustration of why there is such an active and motivated cybercrime underworld, it's here - \$100million worth of illustration. Malicious actors have a range of motivations, including geopolitical, ideological and espionage purposes. However, it is the financially-motivated cybercriminals we commonly see targeting the organizations we work with. These actors will go wherever the money is. Pure and simple.

It also ably demonstrates the threat posed by fake websites, companies and brands to legitimate businesses around the world. The trouble is it is easy to set up these resources, but it's not always easy to identify them and act against them quickly and before they can have an impact. Intelligence is critical in these cases; the sooner you know about the threat, the sooner can you do something about it and protect your business.

But knowing the risk posed by your digital footprint is critical in today's business environment. Companies need to be aware of the risks posed by malicious typo squatting and impersonation in support of targeted attacks. This is where attackers use domain names that are like a legitimate company to launch a wide variety of online fraud including phishing campaigns. Early detection of these domains is critical to helping organizations identify threats specific to their business so that they can quickly act to remove or neutralize them.

In one case, I have worked with a US based global brand was targeted by another company with 50 typo squat domains, which went undiscovered for some time. In a second instance, we detected 30 active phishing sites targeting a client's brand and detected customer and employees' details being shared and sold on IRC channels. Early detection and effective intelligence is critical in today's digital world to mitigate the risks created by today's connected world. This case yet again shows why this is so important.

Data Analytics

THE BUSINESS IMPERATIVE



By Tarek Heiba
Sales Director, Isilon,
Middle East, Turkey,
and Africa, Dell EMC

Imagine a world in which there were no business reception desks or enquiry counter: When you arrive for your business meeting, the directional signage welcomes you and guides you to your conference room, and when you go for your doctors' appointment, the room, lab, and healthcare professionals are ready for you, and equipped with all your case files.

Data analytics enables a world as intuitive as this. It has moved data from a burden to an asset. The advantages in creating the framework in which data is appreciated and very much becomes the life-blood of an organization's operation are many, but the fact remains that the single biggest benefit is providing a new lease of life to swathes of data that were otherwise stored for regulatory or compliance reasons. And this is not restricted to a purely commercial plane alone: possibly the biggest benefit strategic data analytics can bring is the ability to impact the experience of the end-user. This is today a priority not just for an aggressive and competitive consumer goods company, but also for governments and departments that seek to provide the best possible citizen experience.

Analyzing government data on their interaction with citizenry can be a very illuminating exercise, as the simple act of connecting the dots from seemingly unrelated patterns or instances can provide the authorities with a key to unlock success. In one of our major regional cities, for instance, the authorities could uncover that traffic snarls can be avoided if the traffic authorities have access to data and plans of the municipality, the utilities provider, or even from the planning department.

According to the Worldwide Semiannual Big Data and Analytics Spending Guide from International Data Corporation (IDC), worldwide revenues for big data and business analytics (BDA) will grow more than \$203 billion in 2020. Shedding light on the regional perspective, according to Frost & Sullivan the GCC's Big Data and Analytics market is likely to outpace the global market and reach \$635.5 million in 2020.

The retail sector is possibly one of the early adopters of various new technologies that promise a transformed and memorable customer experience. With success based on foot-fall and walk-ins at high-street or mall outlets, what's to stop digital displays featuring a different range of products based on who is most likely to visit at the time? Tapping in to the larger demographic turn-out at the location, the

retailers can easily alter their offering for the late-morning house-wife visiting, the early-evening college student group passing by, and the families that come by over the weekend.

Building on the hospital experience outlined earlier, there are a number of strong examples of healthcare groups in the GCC region adopting focused data analytics to improve the patient experience. According to Alpen Capital, the GCC healthcare market is projected to grow to \$71.3 billion in 2020, generating an unprecedented amount of data, which will present great opportunity for businesses to develop the market further.

For example, the days of patient history charts clipped to the end of the bed will soon be well in the past, as digital devices in the hands of doctors, nurses, and even lab technicians, allow all to access up-to-date data on patient history, medication, test results, and even share the digital file with specialists or other referral hospitals. This also brings various allied players such as the insurance provider, the pharmaceutical companies, and more into the same 'inner circle', enabling better information-sharing, quicker reactions to trends and even epidemics, and greater transparency for all.

In the travel and tourism industry, the global tourist's digital footprint is possibly the strongest source of actionable data for the entire industry, including hotels and resorts, airlines and other transportation providers, experiential providers like cruises, amusement parks, and even support industries like car rentals and travel insurance.

With typical holiday seasons varying across the world based on weather, school calendars, religious festivals, and many more factors, we can actually look forward to a day when your travel consultant becomes a smart digital travel assistant that is able to find you the best experience and package based on your previous travels, your online reviews and feedback, and even by the number of social posts that you have posted during the holiday or after.

The point behind illustrating the potential of data analytics for organizations of all sizes and shapes is that this can no longer be relegated to a pure IT-led decision. Since the organization will actually benefit from slicing and dicing the data in multiple ways to make it relevant to various groups and divisions, the decision too needs to be a joint one, and with the involvement and oversight of leadership.

After all, when it comes to a valuable asset of the organization, it can't just be a free-for-all. Creating a strong data analytics environment needs to be driven from the top, with multiple stakeholders adding the layers of intelligence that actually make the actionable insights and patterns emerge. Essentially, you are taking the right steps to convert a data dump into a lake of hidden treasures for your organization.



AL-SAYER PARTICIPATES IN MOVE TO IMPROVE THIRD YOUTH FORUM

KUWAIT: As part of the ongoing efforts by Al-Sayer Medical Company and CSR to enhance the healthcare of the Kuwait community, Al-Sayer Group Holding sponsored and participated in the 3rd Move to Improve Youth Forum under the patronage of Sheikha Zain Al-Sabah the Undersecretary to the Minister of State for Youth Affairs.

The event brought to spotlight the talents of disabled individuals and displays their achievements in a creative way through special challenges on stage against their peers of non-disabilities with same talent. Al-Sayer Group Holding participated in the event with a "Life Care" booth, exhibiting latest products and services available for the community with special needs, which attracted of many visitors.

The event was attended by Sheikha Sheikha Al Abdullah Al Sabah Honorary Chairman of Kuwait Sports Club for

Handicapped, Sheikha Intisar Al Sabah, Sharifa Al-Ghanem the Chairperson of The National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanim's Committee for the Disabled along with disabled sports Champions.

Sheikha Sheikha Al Abdullah Al Sabah interacted with the disabled sports Champions and also visited Al-Sayer Medical's booth in the presence of Bader Mused Al-Sayer Business Director Al-Sayer Group Holding, Dr. Hossam Affy General Manager Al-Sayer Medical Company, Bedour Faisal Al-Sayer Deputy Marketing Manager.

The objective of the event was to raise the awareness of the public with the talents of the disabled and to strengthen the integration of the disabled with the community. The Forum included seminars and training courses in addition to an exhibition for small projects of disabled & non-disabled people.

According to Bader Mused Al-Sayer "Al-Sayer has always encouraged to take part in the social well-being of our region. The initiative underlines Group's firm belief in the role of the private sector as a key partner of government towards the implementation of the various aspects of the comprehensive development plan".

Commenting on Al-Sayer's market leading services, Dr. Hossam Affy said "Al-Sayer is known in the GCC region as a leader in its commitment to best-in-class customer service as well as continuous efforts towards enhancing customer satisfaction. Life Care, our premium healthcare outlet provides world class solutions that focus on innovation, functionality and value to incorporate a healthy life style, improve the quality of life and to promote independency for a productive community."

Premium Healthcare Provider in Kuwait

At the LifeCare showroom customers will find effective solutions to meet the medical needs through products that taking care of the person since birth and to make sure growing healthy through several products from globally renowned brands.

Through LifeCare, Al-Sayer Medical Company will renew its commitment and support towards customers to meet their medical needs to ensure improved self-sufficiency and healthy life style to maintain an independent lifestyle for productive community. "After our first Life Care outlet at Dajeej Farwaniya, the opening of our second outlet at KDSC brings us closer to the community of people with special needs, to enhance their convenience as well as to safeguard their interests" added Dr. Hossam.

FOR PALESTINIAN FAMILY, AN UDDER-LY UNIQUE POWER SOURCE: COW DUNG

COW DUNG CAN BE USED TO PRODUCE ELECTRICITY

DAHRIYA, Palestinian Territories: Power comes in many forms, but Kamal al-Jebrini's family looked to where others may fear to tread for a new source of it: Cow dung. The family has begun recycling waste from its cows to produce electricity for one of the largest Palestinian dairy plants and even to provide power to some houses. They discovered the idea during trips abroad and decided cow dung that would otherwise mainly rot in the sun-apart from some used as fertilizer by neighboring farmers-could

be put to better use. "It was a shame to allow all of that manure to be lost and impact the environment when we can produce electricity with it," said Jebrini, who owns a large farm of about 1,000 cows with his brothers. He spoke after inspecting the milking room, where workers looked after lumbering cows. The project in the occupied West Bank is the first of its kind in the Palestinian territories, where renewable energy usually means solar panels.

The family turned to Maher

Magalsay, who specializes in renewable energy at the Polytechnic University of Hebron, the major city located nearby in the south of the West Bank, which has been occupied by Israel for 50 years. Magalsay brought engineers and a large generator from Germany to develop the project that involves using heat to produce methane and biogas from the cow dung, eventually leading to electricity.

He involved his students, including some ex-students who had done

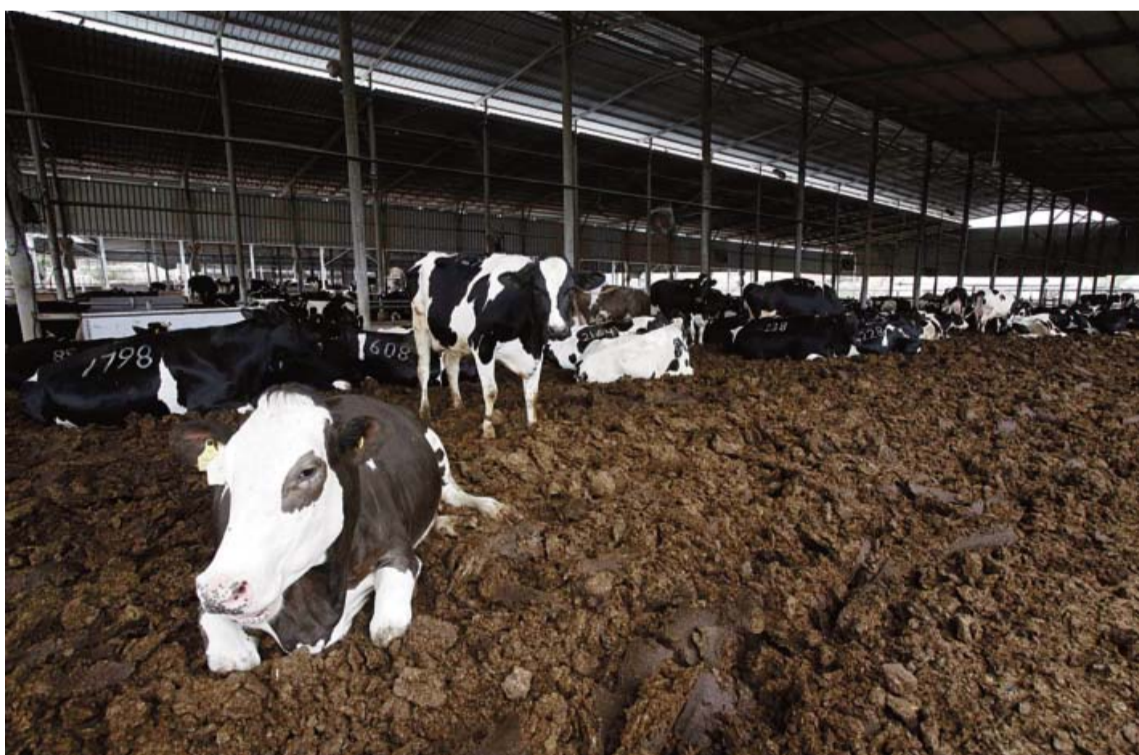
apprenticeships abroad. Now, he proudly shows off two large silos where manure and biogas are stocked to be later cooled and transformed. It allows the 30 tons of dung produced daily by Jebrini's cows to generate 380 kilowatt hours.

Let there be light

That's enough to no longer have to pay electricity bills for his company, which sells milk, yoghurt and other dairy products throughout the West Bank and Jerusalem, said Jebrini. He can even route part of the energy produced to the local electricity company. There is no power plant in the West Bank, and nearly 90 percent of the 5.3 gigawatts of energy consumed are bought from Israel. For certain regions, the bills are taken care of by local authorities or the Palestinian Authority.

When unpaid bills have stacked up, Israel has cut power to cities. Israeli authorities have long called for the payment of debt for electricity provided to the West Bank and east Jerusalem that they estimate to be some \$475 million (450 million euros). At the same time, around four percent of Palestinian villages are not connected to the electricity grid, according to official data. Most of the villages are in the Hebron area-making Jebrini's project even more relevant and an example to be shared.

It certainly doesn't seem to trouble the cows and calves who munch straw under sheet metal roofs. Their owners hope to do even more. "In the next phase, we are going to use another generator to produce 650 kilowatt hours, and over the long-term we will reach one megawatt hour," said Magalsay. With that amount, "we could supply between 200 and 300 houses," he said.—AFP



HEBRON: Cows lie down at the Jebrini dairy farm in the West Bank town of Hebron, where cow dung is used to produce electricity as an alternative power source, on April 10, 2017. Power comes in many forms, but Palestinian cattle farmer Kamal al-Jebrini's family looked to where others may fear to tread for a new source of it: Cow dung. The family has begun recycling waste from its cows to produce electricity for one of the largest Palestinian dairy plants and even to provide power to some houses.—AFP



ANTARCTICA: This file photo shows an Adelie penguin at the New Harbor research station near McMurdo Station in Antarctica.—AFP

ANCIENT SURVEY SHOWS ANTARCTIC GENTOO PENGUINS' VOLCANIC PAST

WELLINGTON: Analysis of ancient penguin guano has revealed that volcanic eruptions, not climate change, almost wiped out an Antarctic sea bird colony three times, researchers have found. There has long been speculation linking fluctuations in penguin populations over recent decades to climate change, but scientists studying a colony of gentoo penguins in Antarctica wanted to look back much further.

The team, led by the British Antarctic Survey, hit upon the idea of drilling core samples from ancient guano deposits, giving them a record going back 7,000 years. The results, published in Nature this week, showed the penguins of the Ardley Island colony had been dramatically impacted by a nearby volcano at Deception Island. Lead researcher Steve Roberts said the millennia-old droppings, collected from the bed of a lake on the island, still had an intense smell.

But more importantly, the sediment cores also contained clear layers of volcanic

ash, while biogeochemical analysis of the droppings provided insights into the colony's population over time. "On at least three occasions during the past 7,000 years, the penguin population... was almost completely wiped out locally after each of three large volcanic eruptions," Roberts said. "It took, on average, between 400 and 800 years for it to re-establish itself sustainably."

The guano analysis found "no consistent relationships" between climate conditions and the penguin population in the Ardley Island colony, which currently has about 5,000 of the birds. British Antarctic Survey penguin ecologist Claire Waluda said the innovative technique could be used to examine how volcanoes had affected other colonies. "Changes in penguin populations on the Antarctic peninsula have been linked to climate variability and sea-ice changes, but the potentially devastating long-term impact of volcanic activity has not previously been considered," she said.—AFP

BETTER DETECTION MAY EXPLAIN HIGHER CHILD CANCER NUMBERS

PARIS: Global childhood cancer rates jumped 13 percent in the decade to 2010 compared to the 1980s, according to a UN-backed study released yesterday that says the increase may be due in part to improved detection. For children under 15, the incidence rate of cancer was 140 per million during the first decade of this century, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC)

reported in The Lancet Oncology. Part of the increase compared to the 1980-1990 period "may be due to better, or earlier, detection or these cancers," the agency said in a statement. Data collected on 300,000 cancer cases diagnosed in 2001-2010 showed that leukemia accounted for nearly a third of childhood cancers, followed by tumors of the central nervous system (20 percent) and lymphomas

(12 percent). In children under five, a third of cases were embryonal tumors, such as neuroblastoma.

Incidence among adolescents 15 to 19 years old over the same decade was 185 per million. "Cancer is a significant cause of death in children and adolescents, in spite of its relatively rare occurrence," compared to adult cancer rates, said IARC Director Christopher Wild. Cancers in chil-

dren are more likely to be triggered by genetic factors. The report makes no attempt to determine what portion of the reported increase in incidence is due to better diagnoses, or other factors such as infections and pollution.

Data for the study came from 153 cancer registries in 62 countries, departments and territories representing about 10 percent of the world's children. But coverage

was very uneven: nearly 100 percent of the child population in the North America and Europe was included, but only five percent or less for children in Africa and Asia. In low-income countries, data collection is difficult due to under-funded health systems and statistical services. "Often focusing on the small proportion of cancers occurring in children is not seen as a priority," the IARC said in a statement.—AFP



QUEENSLAND: An undated handout photo taken by Bette Willis and released ARC Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies shows a bleaching on a coral reef in Great Barrier Reef. —AFP

GREAT BARRIER REEF DAMAGE COULD COST AUSTRALIA A MILLION TOURISTS

SYDNEY: Mass coral bleaching on Australia's Great Barrier Reef could cost the region more than a million tourists a year and up to Aus\$1.0 billion (US\$760 million) in lost revenue, a study warned yesterday. Scientists said this week that coral bleached for two consecutive years at the World Heritage-listed site had "zero prospect" of recovery after researchers detected another round of mass bleaching due to warming sea temperatures.

In a new study, Australia's independent Climate Council said that further damage to the 2,300-kilometre long reef could severely affect tourism prospects and cost around 10,000 jobs. "This isn't just an environmental issue. The Great Barrier Reef is one of Australia's greatest economic assets," said the council's Lesley Hughes. "It's responsible for bringing in more than Aus\$7.0 billion each year to our economy, while also supporting the livelihoods of around 70,000 people."

Even if parts of the reef hurt by bleaching bounce back, scientists say it could take up to a decade for even the fastest growing corals to recover. "If coral bleaching persists, tourism areas adjacent to the Great Barrier Reef risk declines... from 2.8 million visitors (2015 figures) to around 1.7 million per year," the study said, citing analysis by the

Australia Institute think-tank. "This is the equivalent of more than Aus\$1 billion in tourism expenditure, which supports around 10,000 tourism jobs in regional Queensland."

The reef is experiencing its fourth mass bleaching where stressed corals expel the algae that live in their tissue and provide them with food after previous events in 1998, 2002 and 2016. It is also under pressure from farming run-off, development and the crown-of-thorns starfish. And last month the site was hammered by Cyclone Debbie, mostly affecting southern areas around the Whitsunday islands which largely escaped the bleaching.

In another setback, scientist Andrew Brooks of Griffith University yesterday said aerial assessments showed flood plumes from two rivers swelled by the cyclone were now pushing sediment and nitrogen pollution into reef waters. "We know sediment can harm coral and sea grass by restricting light," he said. "Now we're learning that sediment from this area also carries large loads of harmful nitrogen because it sticks to the sediment sourced from these same soils." WWF-Australia's Sean Hoobin said: "We need greater investment in catchment repair so that the next cyclone or flood does less harm to the reef." —AFP

HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF POOR MENACED BY 'SILENT KILLER': HEAT

BHUBANESWAR, India: On a hot, humid afternoon on the outskirts of Bhubaneswar in eastern India, construction worker Sabitri Mahanand frets about increasingly "dangerous" summers. Carrying over a dozen bricks on her head, she fears getting sunstroke while at work, but home offers no respite either. "When the day's work is over, I'm so exhausted that I often don't want to cook food but I have no choice," said Mahanand, 35, wiping the sweat from her face with a cloth wrapped around her waist. "I have to feed myself, my husband and my son."

The ancient city of Bhubaneswar is the capital of Odisha state - one of the few parts of South Asia that has a heat emergency plan. Odisha's government departments have been asked to put in place measures in anticipation of heat waves this summer. The world has already experienced three record-breaking hot years in a row, and the rising global temperature could have profound effects for health, work and staple food supplies for hundreds of

millions of people, climate scientists said. The poor in urban slums in developing nations are particularly at risk, they said, while solutions to cool homes and bodies that do not hike climate-changing emissions remain elusive. Even if the world is able to limit global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels - a goal set by governments in Paris in 2015 - by 2050, around 350 million people in megacities such as Lagos in Nigeria and Shanghai in China could still be exposed to deadly heat each year, according to a recent study by British researchers.

Estimates from the Institute for Social and Environmental Transition-International (ISET-International) and the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR), both based in Colorado, are even higher. By mid-century, some 300 million Indians and Bangladeshis in the lower Ganges Valley alone will lack sufficient power to run electric fans or air conditioning to combat rising temperatures, they predict. —Reuters

KENYA LEARNS TO COOK WITH SOLAR POWER, AFTER SUNSET

BUSIA, Kenya: In this sunny part of Kenya, solar cookers - which trap sunlight to heat food - have surged in popularity in recent years. But a big problem remains: How to cook when the sun doesn't shine? Communities are now starting to sort out solutions, from insulated baskets that hold onto heat after the sun disappears to use of back-up fuel-efficient charcoal and firewood stoves. "Fluctuations in sunshine can hinder cooking using the solar (system) but with the basket we nowadays prepare tea during the day and can drink it after sunset," said Peter Wanga, whose family has been using a solar cooking system since last year.

The insulated basket "conserves enough heat to cook food even when there is no sunshine" - and is affordable and easy to use, he said. In Busia County, in western Kenya, as many as 1,500 households have turned to solar cooking, mostly over the last four years, according to county Ministry of Energy figures. Other families have adopted more efficient charcoal or firewood stoves. The changes in large part have been driven by Farmers with a Vision (FWA), a local community organization based in Bumala Township.

Over the last four years, "we have sold thousands of solar cookers and energy saving charcoal and wood stoves, and also found a platform to promote use of solar energy appliances such as lighting equipment" said Didacus Odhiambo, the organization's chief executive officer. He said the clean energy effort has faced significant challenges, including as many as 60 percent of buyers defaulting on loans for equipment - a problem the organization is still trying to sort out. Many households struggle

to find the upfront money to buy the more efficient cooking technology, he said.

Faster cooking, more trees

The switch to more efficient cooking aims to cut deforestation in Kenya, and health problems related to cooking over smoky fires. Those who have bought the new systems say another attraction is that they require only about a third of the usual time to cook food or heat water - a big savings of women's time. Julius Magero, an official in the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum in Busia County, said that besides protecting increasingly scarce forests, the stoves also are helping women spend less time searching for fuel wood.

Lilian Nyapola, a member of Farmers with a Vision, said the new technologies - most of which cost on average \$25 to \$60 - have led to a decline in use of firewood and paraffin, which are costly and emit smoke. "The uptake of solar cookers and energy saving wood stoves and thermos baskets is high," she said. She sells around 14 clean cooking devices a month, she said - enough that now virtually all of the homes in her neighborhood now use them.

Nyapola said her 32-member organization has worked in schools, churches and homes to train community members on the new technologies, and that men have backed women switching to new cooking technology, not least because food can be cooked faster and rarely burns, and children aren't injured in fires.

Battling cloudy days

To afford the equipment buyers can access credit from Farmers with a Vision, or local

microcredit agencies, Nyapola said, with loans often paid back over half a year or more. Odhiambo said the group is in talks with M-Kopa, a money lending scheme owned by Kenya's leading mobile telephone company, Safaricom, to allow buyers to make payments for equipment via their mobile phones.

Originally the group focused only on selling solar cookers, Odhiambo said, but after complaints about problems using them on rainy or cloudy days, or at night, members broadened their approach. Now the group offers a range of different solar cooking boxes, parabolic reflector cookers, solar thermos systems and other devices, including clean cook stoves.

Box cookers - designed with help from the Free University of Amsterdam - trap sunlight that shines through the box's glass top, using it to heat food placed inside. The device "can cook when the sunshine is low and when not much light is available. It retains heat and can cook for additional three hours," Odhiambo said. He said his organization also has partnered with EcoZoom, a company that builds cast iron improved wood and charcoal stoves.

Daniel Maneno, an official with the national Ministry of Energy and Petroleum in Busia County, called the initiative useful, particularly as training on renewable energy technology is provided free of charge. He said the ministry is also promoting tree planting efforts in collaboration with the Kenya Forestry Research Institute as part of a broader effort to protect trees and reduce deforestation. —Reuters

CATASTROPHIC FAILURE: WHY SHOELACES COME UNDONE

PARIS: A mystery as old as laced shoes was unraveled yesterday by experiments that reveal how shoestrings come undone when we are on the move. "The failure of the knot happens in a matter of seconds, often without warning, and is catastrophic," scientists reported in the journal Proceedings of the Royal Society A. The researchers meant "catastrophic" in a technical sense of complete, or total collapse-once the loosening begins, there's no stopping it.

But while the cost of a straggling shoelace is rarely higher than a scraped knee or the time it takes to bend down and retie a bow, sometimes the consequences can be devastating. Lacerated accidents dot local media around the world: the van driver who killed a motorcyclist when his shoestring-wound tight around the accelerator prevented him from lifting his foot off the gas; the boy whose leg got pulled into the gears of an escalator; the cyclist who went head-over-handlebars into traffic.

Millions of shoelaces surely come unfurled every day, and yet the mechanics of that process had never been thoroughly examined. To tackle the enigma, a trio of mechanical engineers at the University of California at Berkeley filmed a knot-on the shoe of a researcher running on a treadmill-coming undone in extreme slow motion. The images suggested a two-pronged attack on the knot's integrity.

A double whammy

"When running, your foot strikes the ground at seven times the force of gravity," stretching and relaxing the knot, said co-author Christine Gregg, a graduate student. And then-as the knot relaxes-the legs swings into motion, applying additional force. "A double whammy of stomping and whipping forces acts like an invisible hand, loosening the knot and then



MANILA: This file photo shows a member of the Smokey Mountain baseball team tying his shoelace during practice at the former dumpsite in Manila. —AFP

tugging on the free ends of your laces until the whole thing unravels," the researchers explained in a statement.

Follow-up tests with a mechanical foot-and-leg showed that some laces were better than others, but none were impervious to failure. Of the two most commonly used knots to tie shoes, one is "weak" and the other "strong," the study found. The strong version is based on a square knot, which is more symmetrical, while the so-

called "false" knot twists when tightened rather than lying flat. Both fail in the same way, but one takes longer than the other.

"We were able to show that the weak knot will always fail and the strong knot will fail at a certain time scale," said Professor Oliver O'Reilly, whose lab conducted the experiments. "But we still do not understand why there's a fundamental mechanical difference," he added, leaving another knotty mystery to be solved. —AFP

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VIVA RECEIVES GUST'S STUDENTS AT ITS HEADQUARTERS

KUWAIT: VIVA, Kuwait's fastest-growing and most developed telecom operator, extended a warm welcome to the students of the Gulf University for Science and Technology, Department of Computer Sciences (Networks). Under the supervision of Dr. Esraa Omran, who initiated and organized the visit, students were given the opportunity to visit VIVA's Headquarters located in Olympia Tower.

On this occasion, Eng. Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al-Badran, VIVA's CEO said: "We at VIVA are eager to support the education sector and Kuwait's students inside and outside, in different specializations, in line with VIVA's CRS

plan. We believe that those students are the promising future of Kuwait, thus the professionals at the Technology sector at VIVA shared their expertise and skills with GUST's students to help them understand better the industry."

Upon arrival, students were received by VIVA's technology sector team, in presence of Ali Al-Ajmi, Technology Strategy and PMO Director, then taken on a tour of the company's divisions, IT servers, offices and sites. Executives at VIVA explained for students VIVA's exclusive products and services are their prime strategy to support technology and networks.



PAAET SIGNS COOPERATION AGREEMENT WITH PAY



The Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) recently signed a cooperation agreement with the Public Authority for Youth (PAY) at PAAET's headquarters in Adailiya. The agreement involves presenting technical, administrative and scientific consultations on youth concerns, contributing in preparing and organizing youth local and regional conferences and events, developing media messages addressing youth,

developing youth centers' efficiency and doing scientific research.

In this regard, PAAET Director, Dr. Ahmed Al-Athari said that the agreement was the outcome of persistent continued efforts on both sides. PAY Director, Abdul Rahman Al-Mutairi also expressed pleasure for signing the agreement saying that more platforms would be provided to allow youth invest their potentials and time in the best manner.

'WAVES OF BRAZIL' AT DAR AL-ATHAR AL-ISLAMIYYAH



Last Sunday, the audience at Dar al-Athar al-Islamiyyah at Yarmouk Cultural Centre had the chance to enjoy typical Brazilian, Bossa Nova music, (Waves of Brazil), presented by a well known couple; Olivia and Francis Hime. It was sponsored by the Brazilian Embassy to Kuwait and supported by Burgan Bank and Qatar Airways.



AL-NOOR SCHOOL HONORS GIRLS FOR THEIR PERFORMANCE



Under auspices of minister of education and higher education, Dr. Mohammed Al-Fares and with the presence of the school director, Beibi Al-Sayegh, Al-Noor School for Girls recently organized a special ceremony to honor girls with outstanding performance for the school year 2016-2017.



OOREDOO BIKERS CLUB VISITED CHILDREN'S WARD AT RAZI HOSPITAL

Stemming from its corporate social responsibility strategy, and in alignment with its deep-rooted values of caring and connecting, Ooredoo, Kuwait's fastest network, organized a visit to the children's ward at Razi Hospital recently. The visit was organized by the Ooredoo Bikers Club, which consists of employees in the company who share the passion of motorbike riding.

The visit was made possible by the efforts of the Kuwait Association for the Care of Children in Hospital (KACCH), further solidifying Ooredoo's position with the organiza-

tion. The initiative aimed at raising awareness about driving motorbikes in a safe and responsible manner, under the title "Hurt Your Helmet, Not Your Head." It promotes the importance of wearing the necessary safety gear, including helmets and protective vests.

In a statement he made regarding this visit, Ooredoo Kuwait's Corporate Communications Senior Director Mijbil Alayoub said, "We at Ooredoo Kuwait are committed to embodying our values of caring, connecting, and challenging through sustainable projects across Kuwait, and we

have had the honor to work more than once with KACCH, whose noble values are harmonious with ours. This event was organized spontaneously by Ooredoo employees, and we are proud of their initiative and interest in giving back to the community. We intend to hold more events similar to this in the future, as this is part of our social responsibility strategy in Ooredoo."

Alayoub added that Ooredoo works according to a year-long agenda on social responsibility initiatives, in collaboration with different entities, noting that the com-

pany places great importance on involving its employees and giving them an opportunity to participate in embodying the values of caring and giving. Ooredoo Bikers Club includes more than ten Ooredoo employees from across the company's different departments, such as Technology, Sales, Marketing, and Legal Affairs. During their visit, the members of the club distributed gifts to the children staying in Razi Hospital, in addition to donating games for the entertainment corner of the children at the hospital.

LOYAC HONORS ITS TRAINEES AND VOLUNTEERS

LOYAC recently organized a special ceremony to honor its outstanding trainees and volunteers. The honoring ceremony was held at the Eleven Burger restaurant and attended by deputy chairperson, Fadiya Al-Marzouq, executive Fotouh Al-Dalali and professional programs manager, Sali Al-Swaaiti.



GULF BANK TO PARTICIPATE IN THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF THE MIDDLE EAST CAREER FAIR

Gulf Bank is pleased to announce its participation in the American University of the Middle East (AUM) Career Fair, which will be held on April 17 and 18, 2017 at AUM's campus in Egaila. Gulf Bank will be participating in the AUM Career Fair because the Bank is strongly committed to attracting top Kuwaiti talent. The Bank is also dedicated to helping fresh graduates build successful careers in the banking sector.

Salma Al-Hajjaj, General Manager of Human Resources at Gulf Bank said, "We thank the American University of the Middle East for organizing this career fair and invite qualified students and graduates to learn more about working at Gulf Bank. A team from our human resources department will be onsite and available to answer any questions about the nature of work in various departments and divisions of the Bank. At Gulf Bank we know that however good our products and services are, we can't succeed unless we have the very

best in human capital to deliver on these." Al-Hajjaj described the Gulf Bank workplace by saying, "we believe in a workplace where advancement is based on performance and measure on achievement, and we also believe in mentoring and encouraging our young staff to achieve the highest potential. Our Ajyal graduate development program is dedicated to identifying and training young talent and fostering their career development."

Gulf Bank always places the importance of its human capital at the forefront of its business. It remains strongly committed to supporting youth to help empower the next generation of Kuwaitis and to contribute to the enhancement of the country's economy. To find out more about the Bank, please see the Bank's bilingual website at www.e-gulf-bank.com, call the Customer Contact Center on 1805805, visit one of Gulf Bank's 56 branches in Kuwait, or view its social media channels.



LOYAC, INDONESIAN EMBASSY HOLDS INDONESIAN CULTURE DAY



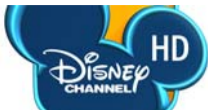
The Indonesian Embassy in collaboration with LOYAC Kuwait held an Indonesian Culture Day on Thursday in order to promote the Indonesian traditional games and culture, the said event was successful and attended by 70 children from various countries.



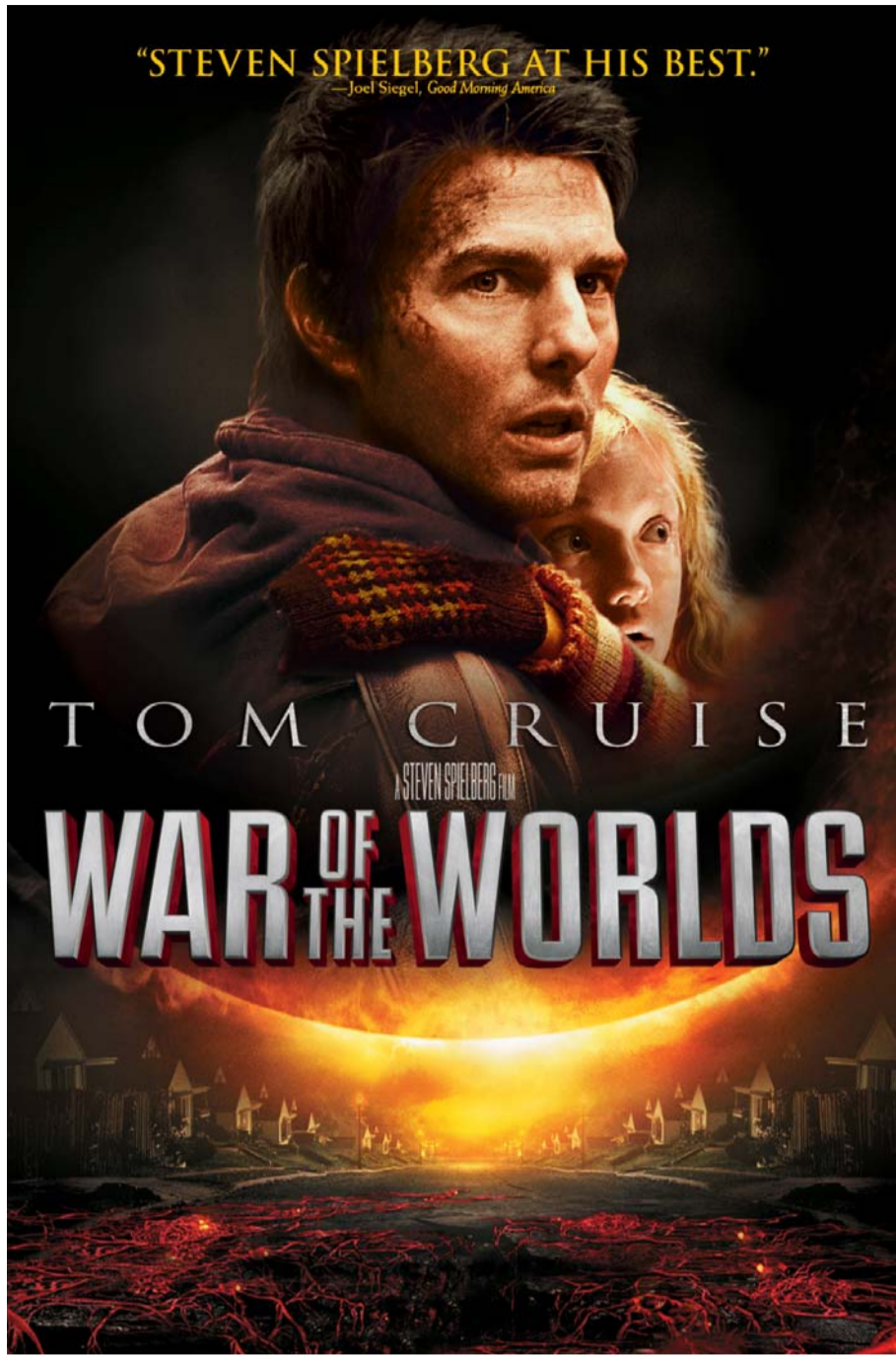
- 00:15 Swamp Brothers
- 00:45 Bondi Vet
- 01:40 Hunt For The Russian Tiger
- 02:35 Tanked
- 03:25 Mekong: Soul Of A River
- 04:15 Gator Boys
- 05:02 Swamp Brothers
- 05:49 The Pool Master
- 06:36 Swamp Brothers
- 07:00 Swamp Brothers
- 07:25 Dogs/Cats/Pets 101
- 08:15 Hunt For The Russian Tiger
- 09:10 Mekong: Soul Of A River
- 10:05 Tanked
- 11:00 Dogs/Cats/Pets 101
- 11:55 Bondi Vet
- 12:50 Hunt For The Russian Tiger
- 13:45 Gator Boys
- 14:40 Mekong: Soul Of A River
- 15:35 Tanked
- 16:30 Swamp Brothers
- 16:55 Swamp Brothers
- 17:25 Treetop Cat Rescue
- 17:50 Treetop Cat Rescue
- 18:20 Life At Vet University
- 19:15 Tanked
- 20:10 Mekong: Soul Of A River
- 21:05 Treetop Cat Rescue
- 21:30 Treetop Cat Rescue
- 22:00 Life At Vet University
- 22:55 Gator Boys



- 00:05 Famously Single
- 00:55 Famously Single
- 01:50 E! News
- 02:50 Celebrity Style Story
- 03:20 Celebrity Style Story
- 03:50 Mariah's World
- 04:40 Mariah's World
- 05:30 Celebrity Style Story
- 06:00 EJ NYC
- 06:55 E! News
- 07:10 EJ NYC
- 08:10 E! News
- 09:10 So Cosmo
- 10:05 So Cosmo
- 11:00 So Cosmo
- 12:00 E! News
- 12:15 Mariah's World
- 13:10 Mariah's World
- 14:05 Mariah's World
- 15:00 E! News
- 15:15 So Cosmo
- 16:10 So Cosmo
- 17:05 So Cosmo
- 18:00 So Cosmo
- 19:00 E! News
- 20:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
- 21:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
- 22:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
- 23:00 E! News
- 23:15 Mariah's World



- 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
- 02:05 Binny And The Ghost
- 02:15 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
- 08:50 Tsum Tsum Shorts
- 08:55 The Zhuzhus
- 09:20 Elena Of Avalor
- 07:45 Bizaardvark
- 08:10 Bizaardvark
- 08:35 Stuck In The Middle
- 09:25 Disney The Lodge
- 09:50 Bunk'd
- 10:15 Bunk'd
- 10:40 Bad Hair Day
- 12:15 Disney Mickey Mouse
- 12:20 Jessie
- 12:45 Jessie
- 13:10 Austin & Ally
- 14:00 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



WAR OF THE WORLDS ON OSN MOVIES HD

- 08:40 California Investigator
- 09:05 California Investigator
- 09:30 Beauty Queen Murders
- 10:20 I Almost Got Away With It
- 11:10 Killer Instinct With Chris Hansen
- 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 Evil Online
- 17:00 I'd Kill For You
- 17:50 I Almost Got Away With It
- 18:40 Over My Dead Body
- 19:05 Over My Dead Body
- 19:30 Beauty Queen Murders
- 20:20 I Almost Got Away With It
- 21:10 Murder Comes To Town
- 22:00 Pandora's Box: Unleashing Evil
- 22:50 Murder Book
- 23:40 The Perfect Murder



- 00:20 Super Pride
- 01:10 Wild 24
- 02:00 Tiger's Revenge
- 02:50 Built For The Kill
- 03:45 Dr Oakley: Yukon Vet
- 04:40 Unlikely Animal Friends
- 05:35 Tiger's Revenge
- 06:30 Built For The Kill
- 07:25 Dr Oakley: Yukon Vet
- 08:20 Unlikely Animal Friends
- 09:15 Ultimate Rivals: Cat V. Dog
- 10:10 Dr. K's Exotic Animal ER
- 11:05 Amazing Animal Selfies
- 12:00 Blitzkrieg Sharks
- 12:55 Storm Cats
- 13:50 Expedition Wild
- 14:45 Dr Oakley: Yukon Vet
- 15:40 Unlikely Animal Friends
- 16:35 Caught In The Act
- 17:30 Dr. K's Exotic Animal ER
- 18:25 Strangest Bird Alive
- 19:20 Dr Oakley: Yukon Vet
- 20:10 Unlikely Animal Friends
- 21:00 Caught In The Act
- 21:50 Dr. K's Exotic Animal ER
- 22:40 Strangest Bird Alive
- 23:30 Blitzkrieg Sharks



- 00:30 Green Street 3: Never Back Down
- 02:15 Code Of Silence
- 04:00 Bad Company
- 06:00 Divergent
- 08:30 Survivor
- 10:15 Escape
- 12:00 Bad Company
- 14:00 Divergent
- 16:30 Rivers Nine
- 18:15 Reign Of Fire
- 20:00 Insurgent



- 00:00 Please Give
- 02:00 Coneheads
- 04:00 Father Of The Bride Part II
- 06:00 Pixels
- 08:00 Coneheads
- 10:00 Father Of The Bride Part II
- 12:00 Pixels
- 14:00 Twins
- 16:00 The Duff
- 18:00 Ricki And The Flash
- 20:00 Superfast
- 22:00 Neighbors



- 02:00 Get On Up
- 04:30 Land Of Mine
- 06:15 Every Thing Will Be Fine
- 08:15 Wildlike
- 10:15 Healing
- 12:15 Get On Up
- 14:45 Half Of A Yellow Sun
- 16:45 WarGames
- 18:45 The Disappearance Of Eleanor Rigby: Her
- 20:45 The Disappearance Of Eleanor Rigby: Him
- 22:30 Black Swan



- 00:30 Angie Tribeca
- 01:00 Angie Tribeca
- 01:30 Sex & Drugs & Rock & Roll
- 02:00 Sex & Drugs & Rock & Roll
- 02:30 Togetherness
- 03:05 Scrubs
- 03:30 Scrubs
- 04:00 10 Items Or Less
- 04:30 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
- 05:30 The Carmichael Show
- 06:00 George Lopez
- 06:30 Late Night With Seth Meyers
- 07:30 The Good Place
- 08:00 10 Items Or Less
- 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 10 Items Or Less
- 13:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
- 14:00 Scrubs
- 14:30 Built For The Kill
- 15:00 The Carmichael Show
- 15:30 Angie Tribeca
- 16:00 Angie Tribeca
- 16:30 George Lopez
- 17:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
- 18:00 Scrubs
- 19:30 People Of Earth
- 19:30 People Of Earth
- 20:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
- 21:00 Angie Tribeca
- 21:30 Angie Tribeca



- 00:30 V/H/S Viral
- 02:15 The Legend Of Zorro
- 04:45 Up Close And Personal
- 07:15 A Lot Like Love
- 09:15 The Legend Of Zorro
- 11:45 Rise Of The Planet Of The Apes
- 13:45 While You Were Sleeping
- 15:45 Gulliver's Travels
- 17:30 The Fisher King
- 20:00 War Of The Worlds
- 22:00 Ex Machina



- 01:00 Curious George
- 02:45 Miffy The Movie
- 04:30 Bamse And The City Of Thieves
- 06:00 Bonta
- 07:45 Marco Macaco
- 09:15 Garfield
- 10:45 Curious George
- 12:30 Miffy The Movie
- 14:00 Hey Arnold! The Movie
- 16:00 Garfield
- 18:00 The Tale Of Despereaux
- 20:00 Worms
- 21:45 Hey Arnold! The Movie
- 23:15 Marco Macaco



- 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 Outdaughters: 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



- 01:15 Max
- 03:15 Mary Poppins
- 05:45 Because Of Winn Dixie
- 07:45 Mickey, Donald, Goofy: The 3 Musketeers
- 09:00 Mickey's Twice Upon A Christmas
- 10:15 Beverly Hills Chihuahua
- 11:45 Because Of Winn Dixie
- 13:45 Mickey's Twice Upon A Christmas
- 15:00 Brother Bear
- 17:00 Diary Of A Wimpy Kid: Rodrick Rules
- 19:00 Pirates Of The Caribbean 2: Dead Man's Chest
- 21:30 Return To Oz
- 23:30 Brother Bear



- 00:10 Uncensored With Michael Ware
- 01:00 Parched
- 02:00 Uncensored With Michael Ware
- 05:00 Crime Lab
- 06:00 Mega Factories
- 07:00 Science Of Stupid
- 07:30 Science Of Stupid



- 00:30 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
- 01:20 Zoltan The Wolfman
- 02:10 Finding Bigfoot
- 03:00 Destroyed In Seconds
- 03:50 Ultimate Survival
- 04:40 How It's Made
- 05:30 Dirty Jobs
- 06:20 Mythbusters
- 07:00 Doki
- 07:25 Bear Grylls Survival School
- 07:50 My Cat From Hell
- 08:40 How It's Made
- 09:30 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
- 10:20 Mythbusters
- 11:10 My Cat From Hell
- 12:00 Ultimate Survival
- 12:50 How It's Made
- 13:40 Dirty Jobs
- 14:30 Doki



- 00:20 Britain's Bloodiest Dynasty
- 01:10 Big Easy Motors
- 01:35 Big Easy Motors
- 02:00 Forged In Fire
- 02:50 Storage Wars
- 03:15 American Pickers
- 04:05 Pawn Stars
- 04:30 Pawn Stars
- 05:00 Mountain Men
- 06:00 Lost In Transmission
- 06:50 Ice Road Truckers
- 07:40 Counting Cars
- 08:05 Car Hunters
- 08:30 Pawn Stars
- 08:55 Pawn Stars
- 09:20 Storage Wars
- 09:45 Storage Wars
- 10:10 American Pickers
- 11:00 Alone
- 11:50 Battle 360
- 12:40 Swamp People
- 13:30 Ax Men
- 14:20 Mountain Men
- 15:10 Ice Road Truckers
- 16:00 Lost In Transmission
- 16:50 Pawn Stars
- 17:15 Pawn Stars
- 17:40 Forged In Fire
- 18:30 Big Easy Motors
- 18:55 Big Easy Motors
- 19:20 Mountain Men
- 20:10 American Pickers
- 21:00 Sean Bean On Waterloo
- 21:50 Gold Hunters: Legend Of The Superstition...
- 22:40 Hunting Hitler
- 23:30 American Pickers



- 00:00 Chopped
- 01:00 The Great Food Truck Race
- 02:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 03:00 Man Fire Food



- 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



- 06:00 Guardians Of The Galaxy
- 06:25 Marvel Ultimate Spider-Man vs The Sinister 6
- 06:50 Zou
- 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 Lab Rats: Bionic Island
- 11:35 Lab Rats: Bionic Island
- 12:00 Pants On Fire
- 13:30 Star vs The Forces Of Evil



- 00:10 The Chase
- 01:00 Emmerdale
- 01:30 Coronation Street
- 02:30 Guess This House
- 03:25 Broadchurch
- 05:15 Come Date With Me Australia
- 06:10 The Chase
- 07:05 Guess This House
- 08:00 Broadchurch
- 09:00 Broadchurch
- 10:00 Come Date With Me Australia
- 10:30 Come Date With Me Australia
- 10:55 The Chase
- 11:50 Guess This House
- 12:45 Emmerdale
- 13:15 Coronation Street
- 13:45 Coronation Street
- 14:15 The Chase
- 15:10 Guess This House
- 16:00 Paul O'Grady's Animal Orphans
- 16:55 5 Star Family Reunion
- 17:50 Come Date With Me Australia
- 18:20 Come Date With Me Australia
- 18:45 Emmerdale
- 19:15 Coronation Street
- 19:45 Coronation Street
- 20:10 Guess This House
- 21:00 Paul O'Grady's Animal Orphans
- 21:55 5 Star Family Reunion
- 22:50 Emmerdale
- 23:15 Coronation Street
- 23:40 Coronation Street



- 00:15 Bangkok Airport
- 01:05 The Best Job In The World
- 01:30 Dog Whisperer
- 02:20 Cool Spaces
- 03:10 One Man & His Campervan
- 03:35 Maximum Foodie
- 04:00 Confucius Was A Foodie
- 04:50 The Food Files
- 05:20 Raw Travel
- 05:45 Raw Travel
- 06:15 Restoration Man
- 07:10 The Best Job In The World
- 07:35 Dog Whisperer
- 08:30 Cool Spaces
- 09:25 One Man & His Campervan
- 09:55 Maximum Foodie
- 10:20 Confucius Was A Foodie
- 11:15 The Food Files
- 11:45 Raw Travel
- 12:10 Raw Travel
- 12:40 Places We Go
- 13:05 Dog Whisperer
- 14:00 Access 360 World Heritage
- 14:55 Fish Of The Day
- 15:25 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
- 16:20 The Food Files
- 16:45 The Food Files
- 17:15 Raw Travel
- 17:40 Raw Travel
- 18:10 Restoration Man
- 19:05 Fish Of The Day
- 19:30 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
- 20:25 The Food Files
- 20:55 The Food Files
- 21:20 Raw Travel
- 21:45 Raw Travel
- 22:10 Restoration Man
- 23:00 Places We Go
- 23:25 Dog Whisperer



DIVERGENT ON OSN MOVIES ACTION HD

- 14:55 Bear Grylls Survival School
- 15:20 Mythbusters
- 16:10 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
- 17:00 Strip The Cosmos
- 17:50 NASA's Unexplained Files
- 18:40 Destroyed In Seconds
- 19:30 How It's Made
- 20:20 Mythbusters
- 21:10 Strip The Cosmos
- 22:00 NASA's Unexplained Files
- 03:30 Man Fire Food
- 04:00 Chopped
- 05:00 Guy's Grocery Games
- 06:00 Barefoot Contessa
- 07:00 The Kitchen
- 08:00 The Pioneer Woman
- 09:00 Cooking For Real
- 10:00 Siba's Table
- 11:00 The Kitchen
- 12:00 The Pioneer Woman
- 13:00 Siba's Table
- 14:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 15:00 Chopped
- 16:00 The Kitchen
- 17:00 Cooking For Real
- 18:00 Chopped
- 19:00 Iron Chef America
- 20:00 Tia Mowry At Home
- 21:00 Dinner At Tiffani's
- 22:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 22:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 00:30 How Do They Do It?
- 00:55 Food Factory
- 01:20 Strip The Cosmos
- 02:10 Eco-Tech
- 03:00 Prototype This
- 03:48 Mythbusters
- 04:36 How Do They Do It?
- 05:00 Food Factory
- 05:24 Strip The Cosmos
- 06:12 Eco-Tech
- 07:00 How Do They Do It?
- 07:26 Prototype This
- 08:14 Mythbusters
- 09:02 Eco-Tech
- 09:50 How Do They Do It?
- 10:14 Food Factory
- 10:38 Sport Science
- 11:26 Prototype This
- 12:14 Mythbusters
- 13:02 How Do They Do It?
- 13:26 Food Factory
- 13:50 Eco-Tech
- 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
- 10:30 Doc McStuffins
- 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 Sofia The First
- 19:25 Sofia The First
- 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 The Lion Guard
- 22:25 The Lion Guard
- 22:55 PJ Masks
- 23:20 Henry Hugglemonster
- 23:35 The Hive
- 23:45 Loopdidoo
- 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 Boyster
- 23:00 Programmes Start At 6:00am KSA
- 00:30 Blood Relatives
- 01:20 The Perfect Murder
- 02:10 Pandora's Box: Unleashing Evil
- 03:00 Dead Silent
- 03:48 I Almost Got Away With It
- 04:36 California Investigator
- 05:01 California Investigator
- 05:24 Beauty Queen Murders
- 06:12 I Almost Got Away With It
- 07:00 I'd Kill For You
- 07:50 I Almost Got Away With It



MARCO MACACO ON OSN MOVIES KIDS HD

CLASSIFIEDS



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THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 2017

Kuwait Times



KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (13/04/2017 TO 19/04/2017)

SHARQIA-1 FEIN QALBY 12:00 PM FEIN QALBY 2:15 PM RABBIT SCHOOL 4:30 PM SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE 6:15 PM FEIN QALBY 8:15 PM GOING IN STYLE 10:30 PM FEIN QALBY 12:30 AM	GOING IN STYLE 2:30 PM SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE 4:30 PM SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE 6:30 PM SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE 8:30 PM GOING IN STYLE 10:30 PM GOING IN STYLE 12:30 AM	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE 1:45 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 3:45 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 6:30 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 9:15 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 12:05 AM	FAST & FURIOUS 8 11:30 PM
SHARQIA-2 SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE 11:45 AM FAST & FURIOUS 8 1:45 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 4:30 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 7:15 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 10:00 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 12:45 AM	FANAR-3 KONG: SKULL ISLAND 1:00 PM RABBIT SCHOOL 1:30 PM RABBIT SCHOOL 3:30 PM RABBIT SCHOOL 5:15 PM KONG: SKULL ISLAND 7:00 PM THE BELKO EXPERIMENT 9:30 PM THE BELKO EXPERIMENT 11:15 PM THE BELKO EXPERIMENT 1:00 AM	AVENUES-3 FAST & FURIOUS 8 11:45 AM FAST & FURIOUS 8 2:30 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 5:45 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 8:30 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 11:15 PM	AL-KOUT:3 GOING IN STYLE 12:30 PM GOING IN STYLE 2:30 PM THE BELKO EXPERIMENT 4:30 PM SAFRA 5 NJOOM 6:30 PM SAFRA 5 NJOOM 8:30 PM SAFRA 5 NJOOM 10:30 PM THE BELKO EXPERIMENT 12:30 AM
SHARQIA-3 FAST & FURIOUS 8 12:45 PM GOING IN STYLE 1:30 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 3:30 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 6:15 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 9:00 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 11:45 PM	FANAR-4 SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE 11:45 AM FAST & FURIOUS 8 1:45 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 4:30 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 7:15 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 10:00 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 12:45 AM	AVENUES-4 FAST & FURIOUS 8 12:00 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 2:45 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 5:30 PM Special Show "SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE" 5:30 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 8:15 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 11:00 PM	BAIRAQ-1 FAST & FURIOUS 8 12:00 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 2:45 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 5:30 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 8:15 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 11:00 PM
MUHALAB-1 FEIN QALBY 11:45 AM FEIN QALBY 2:00 PM RABBIT SCHOOL 2:15 PM RABBIT SCHOOL 4:15 PM SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE- Arabic 6:00 PM SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE 8:00 PM FEIN QALBY 10:00 PM FEIN QALBY 12:15 AM	MARINA-1 FEIN QALBY 12:15 PM RABBIT SCHOOL 2:30 PM RABBIT SCHOOL 4:15 PM SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE 6:00 PM SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE 8:00 PM FEIN QALBY 10:00 PM FEIN QALBY 12:15 AM	360° 1 FAST & FURIOUS 8 11:30 AM FAST & FURIOUS 8 2:15 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 5:00 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 7:45 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 10:30 PM GET OUT 1:15 AM	BAIRAQ-2 FAST & FURIOUS 8 11:30 AM RABBIT SCHOOL 3:00 PM RABBIT SCHOOL 4:45 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 6:30 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 9:15 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 12:05 AM
MUHALAB-2 FAST & FURIOUS 8 12:15 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 3:00 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 5:45 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 8:30 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 11:15 PM	MARINA-2 FAST & FURIOUS 8 1:00 PM SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE 1:45 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 3:45 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 6:30 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 9:15 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 12:05 AM	360° 2 AFTERMATH 1:30 PM THE GREAT FATHER- Malayalam 3:45 PM THE GREAT FATHER- Malayalam 6:45 PM THE GREAT FATHER- Malayalam THU+FRI+MON 9:45 PM	BAIRAQ-3 FEIN QALBY 11:45 AM SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE 2:00 PM SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE- Arabic 4:00 PM SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE 6:00 PM SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE 8:00 PM FEIN QALBY 10:00 PM FEIN QALBY 12:15 AM
MUHALAB-3 FAST & FURIOUS 8 11:30 AM SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE 2:00 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 4:00 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 6:45 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 9:30 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 12:15 AM	MARINA-3 FAST & FURIOUS 8 12:00 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 2:45 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 5:30 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 8:15 PM Special Show "FAST & FURIOUS 8" 8:15 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 11:00 PM	360° 3 GOING IN STYLE 12:15 PM GOING IN STYLE 2:30 PM GOING IN STYLE 4:45 PM GOING IN STYLE 7:00 PM AKHER DEEK FE MASR- Arabic 9:15 PM GOING IN STYLE 11:30 PM	PLAZA FAST & FURIOUS 8 4:00 PM NO FRI+SAT+MON THE GREAT FATHER- Malayalam FRI+SAT+MON 3:45 PM THE GREAT FATHER- Malayalam 6:45 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 9:45 PM
FANAR-1 FEIN QALBY 12:00 PM FEIN QALBY 2:30 PM FEIN QALBY 4:45 PM FEIN QALBY 7:00 PM FEIN QALBY 9:15 PM FEIN QALBY 11:30 PM	AVENUES-1 RABBIT SCHOOL 12:00 PM RABBIT SCHOOL 2:00 PM RABBIT SCHOOL 3:45 PM RABBIT SCHOOL 5:30 PM SAFRA 5 NJOOM 7:30 PM SAFRA 5 NJOOM 9:45 PM SAFRA 5 NJOOM 12:15 AM	AL-KOUT:1 SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE 11:30 AM FAST & FURIOUS 8 1:30 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 4:15 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 7:00 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 9:45 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 12:30 AM	LAILA GOING IN STYLE 3:15 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 5:15 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 8:00 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 10:45 PM
FANAR-2 GOING IN STYLE 12:30 PM SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE 2:30 PM	AVENUES-2 FAST & FURIOUS 8-2D-4DX 1:00 PM	AL-KOUT:2 FAST & FURIOUS 8 11:45 AM RABBIT SCHOOL 2:30 PM RABBIT SCHOOL 4:15 PM RABBIT SCHOOL 6:00 PM FAST & FURIOUS 8 8:45 PM	AJIAL:1 THE GREAT FATHER- Malayalam 3:30 PM THE GREAT FATHER- Malayalam 6:30 PM THE GREAT FATHER- Malayalam 9:30 PM Special Show "THE GREAT FATHER- Malayalam" 9:30 PM

REQUIRED

Fresh Graduate
Engineers – Electrical Instrumentation
 With 1-2 yrs experience for Engineering & Projects
 Work needed urgently
 Preferably Indians from good University

E-mail resume to
hrrecruitment504@outlook.com
 with latest photo

CHANGE OF NAME

The public is hereby notified that ANNALEE VILLAREAL HERNANDEZ has filed with the Embassy of the Republic of the Philippines, State of Kuwait, a Migrant Petition for Change of First Name of her daughter, from LIRY to LYRA ABBYGAIL in the Report of Birth filed with the Embassy on 11 April 2017 under Registry Number 2012-4140291. Any person having knowledge and/or claiming interest or may be adversely affected by said Petition, file a written opposition with the Philippine Embassy within ten (10) working days. (C 5295) (C 5295) 13-4-2017

FOR RENT

Residential Ground Floor In Mishref 90976777

Khalilullah Nawabjan Shaikh, hereinafter in all my dealings and documents. (C 5294)

I, Maddipatla Nagaraja s/o Narayana Naidu, holder of Indian Passport No. H8473093 and Civil ID No. 279060501967 has changed my name to Rallapalli Nagaraja Naidu, hereinafter in all my dealings and documents. (C 5293) 11-4-2017

PRAYER TIMINGS

Fajr: 04:02 Asr: 15:23
Shorook: 05:26 Maghrib: 18:12
Duhr: 11:49 Isha: 19:32



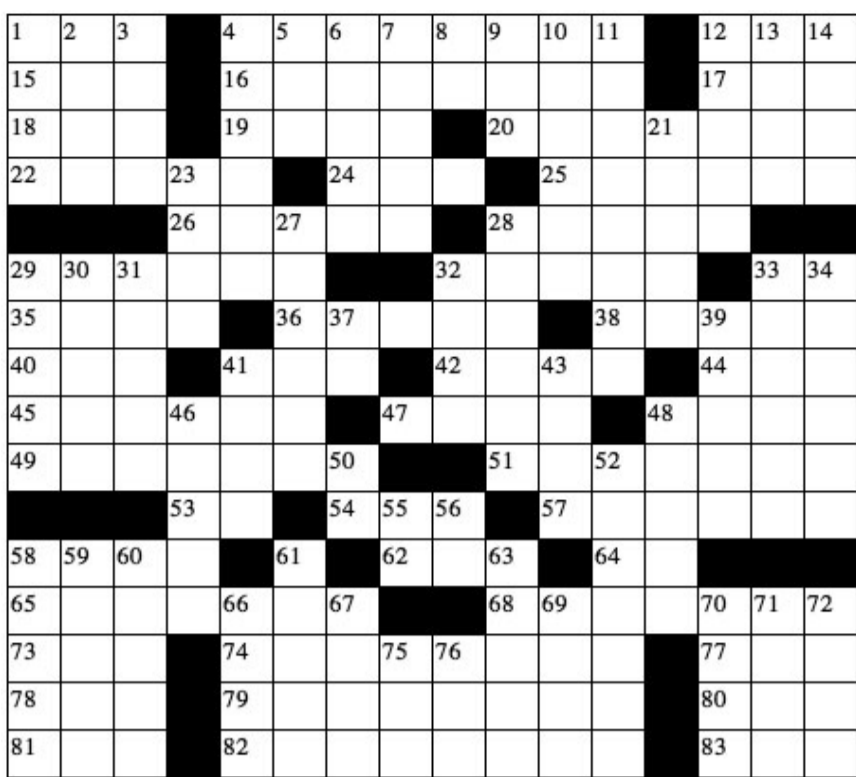
Flight Schedule

Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page (www.kuwait-airport.com.kw)

DIAL 161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Thursday 13/4/2017				Departure Flights on Thursday 13/4/2017			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
THY	772	Istanbul	00:10	AIC	976	Goa/Chennai	00:05
KAC	102	London	00:15	BBC	044	Dhaka	00:10
SVA	502	Jeddah	00:20	JAI	573	Mumbai	00:30
SVA	514	Riyadh	00:25	FDB	072	Dubai	00:30
KAC	786	Jeddah	00:30	PIA	240	Sialkot	00:40
MSC	411	Asyut	00:30	JZR	502	Luxor	01:15
JZR	267	Beirut	00:35	SVA	503	Jeddah	01:20
KAC	504	Beirut	00:45	SVA	515	Asyut	01:25
DLH	539	Doha	01:00	KAC	412	Istanbul	01:30
JZR	635	Doha	01:25	FDB	060	Dubai	01:40
SAI	441	Lahore	01:30	QTR	1079	Doha	01:40
UAE	853	Dubai	01:40	KAC	563	Amman	02:00
RJA	642	Amman	01:45	SVA	501	Jeddah	02:30
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	01:50	KAC	775	Riyadh	02:50
KKK	6506	Istanbul	01:55	JZR	188	Dubai	02:55
AXB	395	Kozhikode	02:00	KNE	530	Jeddah	02:55
KLM	446	Bahrain	02:05	KAC	661	Abu Dhabi	03:05
QTR	1086	Doha	02:05	KAC	743	Dammam	03:10
JZR	553	Alexandria	02:10	KAC	619	Doha	03:25
PGT	830	Istanbul	02:10	OMA	646	Muscat	03:30
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:15	ABY	128	Sharjah	03:30
KAC	418	Manila	02:50	ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	03:40
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	KAC	615	Bahrain	04:05
MSR	606	Luxor	03:05	SAW	706	Damascus	04:05
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:10	RJA	641	Amman	04:10
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	KAC	675	Dubai	04:10
FDB	069	Dubai	03:15	FDB	052	Dubai	04:15
QTR	1076	Doha	03:40	KAC	503	Beirut	04:20
KAC	1544	Cairo	03:50	JZR	266	Beirut	04:45
LMU	510	Cairo	04:00	QTR	1073	Doha	05:00
UAE	873	Dubai	04:15	KNE	532	Jeddah	05:35
KAC	358	Kochi	04:50	JZR	240	Amman	05:55
KAC	784	Jeddah	05:00	UAE	858	Dubai	06:15
FEG	931	Alexandria	05:00	KAC	357	Kochi	06:25
THY	770	Istanbul	05:05	NIA	362	Alexandria	06:50
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:10	KAC	343	Chennai	06:55
KAC	344	Chennai	05:30	KAC	283	Dhaka	07:05
JZR	529	Asyut	05:35	SVA	511	Riyadh	07:15
KAC	362	Colombo	05:50	GFA	216	Bahrain	07:15
BAW	157	London	06:05	JZR	184	Dubai	07:55
KAC	204	Lahore	06:20	JZR	538	Jeddah	08:20
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:35	KAC	785	Cairo	08:30
QTR	8511	Doha	06:35	QTR	1081	Doha	08:35
KAC	206	Islamabad	06:40	KAC	345	Ahmedabad	08:35
KAC	302	Mumbai	06:55	JZR	124	Bahrain	08:45
KAC	156	Istanbul	07:05	MSR	621	Cairo	08:50
JZR	503	Luxor	07:25	GFA	218	Bahrain	09:00
KAC	524	Al Najaf	07:30	FDB	064	Dubai	09:15
KAC	354	Bangalore	07:50	ABY	124	Sharjah	09:15
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50	FDB	058	Dubai	09:30
KAC	384	Delhi	08:00	UAE	876	Dubai	09:30
KAC	332	Trivandrum	08:05	KAC	353	Bangalore	09:30
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	DLH	634	Doha	09:35
IRA	673	Ahwaz	08:35	OMA	648	Muscat	09:40
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	08:55	KNE	232	Riyadh	09:40
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	MEA	403	Beirut	09:45
IRA	667	Esfahan	09:05	JZR	554	Alexandria	09:50
QTR	1070	Doha	09:20	KAC	1543	Cairo	10:00
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	KAC	301	Mumbai	10:00
SVA	512	Riyadh	10:00	QTR	1089	Doha	10:05
FDK	803	Damascus	10:00	KAC	203	Lahore	10:15
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	DHX	171	Bahrain	10:30
KAC	774	Riyadh	10:45	ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	10:35
MEA	404	Beirut	10:55	KAC	155	Istanbul	10:35
PAL	668	Manila	11:00	ALK	230	Colombo	11:00
SYR	341	Damascus	11:00	KLM	445	Bahrain	11:00
JZR	561	Sohag	11:10	FDB	8054	Dubai	11:35
KAC	614	Bahrain	11:15	UAE	860	Dubai	11:55
MSC	403	Asyut	11:15	KAC	383	Delhi	12:00
RBG	553	Alexandria	11:30	GFA	220	Bahrain	12:00
JZR	165	Dubai	11:50	ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	12:10
JZR	239	Amman	12:20	NIA	162	Cairo	12:15
UAE	871	Dubai	12:45	KAC	783	Jeddah	13:10
THY	766	Istanbul	12:50	QTR	1083	Doha	13:10
FEG	933	Sohag	12:55				

CROSSWORD 1577



ACROSS

1. (computer science) The rate at which data is transferred (as by a modem).
4. A large family of trees, shrubs, vines, and herbs bearing bean pods.
12. A health resort near a spring or at the seaside.
15. Resinlike substance secreted by certain lac insects.
16. An extinct Semitic language of northern Syria.
17. Liveliness and energy.
18. A constellation in the southern hemisphere near Telescopium and Norma.
19. Concerning those not members of the clergy.
20. Cause to agonize.
22. A coffee cake flavored with orange rind and raisins and almonds.
24. The 26th letter of the Roman alphabet.
25. A drug (trade name Inocor) used intravenously in heart failure.
26. Not fed.
29. A volcanic island (part of Campania) in the Tyrrhenian Sea at the north end of the Bay of Naples.
35. In the near future.
36. A Hindu disciple of a swami.
38. A state in the Rocky Mountains.
40. Thickening of tissue in the motor tracts of the lateral columns and anterior horns of the spinal cord.
42. An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the sale of petroleum.
44. The second day of the week.
45. Regional and archaic.
47. Made agreeably cold (especially by ice).
49. A hen that has just laid an egg and emits a shrill squawk.
51. A Russian river.
53. The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.
54. The elementary stages of any subject (usually plural).
57. (Roman Catholic Church) A devotion consisting of prayers on nine consecutive days.
58. According to the Old Testament he was a pagan king of Israel and husband of Jezebel (9th century BC).
62. A rotating disk shaped to convert circular into linear motion.
64. An informal term for a father.
65. A handheld collapsible source of shade.
68. An alloy of mercury with another metal (usually silver) used by dentists to fill cavities in teeth.
73. Inflammation of the female pelvic organs (especially the Fallopian tubes) caused by infection by any of several microorganisms (chiefly gonococci and chlamydia).
74. As many as a house will accommodate.
77. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
78. A sweetened beverage of diluted fruit juice.
79. (zoology) Of or resembling a goose.
80. A city in north central Morocco.
81. A workplace for the conduct of scientific research.
82. A great raja.
83. A federal agency established to regulate the release of new foods and health-related products.

DOWN

1. Divulge information or secrets.
2. (obstetrics) The number of live-born children a woman has delivered.
3. Someone who works (or provides work-

- ers) during a strike.
4. A family of languages of the Fula people of west Africa in the sub-Saharan regions from Senegal to Chad.
5. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
6. A bright green fabric napped to resemble felt.
7. (architecture) Forming or resembling an arch.
8. Being one more than one hundred.
9. The 7th letter of the Greek alphabet.
10. An island in the Aegean Sea in the Saronic Gulf.
11. Of or relating to an economy, the system of production and management of material wealth.
12. Aromatic substances of vegetable origin used as a preservative.
13. The basic unit of money in Uruguay.
14. Someone who copies the words or behavior of another.
21. A member of a people who have no permanent home but move about according to the seasons.
23. Austrian chemist who did research on carotenoids and vitamins (1900-1967).
27. The face or front of a building.
28. Having a taste like that of grapes.
30. A system of solmization using the solfa syllables.
31. Ratio of the hypotenuse to the opposite side.
32. A group of countries in special alliance.
33. Preferred above all others.
34. Small genus of densely tufted annual herbs.
37. A hemoprotein composed of globin and heme that gives red blood cells their characteristic color.
39. Occupy in an agreeable, entertaining or pleasant fashion.
41. Agency of the United States government charged with mediating disputes between management and labor.
43. Any place of complete bliss and delight and peace.
46. Jordan's port.
48. Being in competition.
50. An intensely radioactive metallic element that occurs in minute amounts in uranium ores.
52. A genus of the cactus family with scarlet flowers.
55. Date used in reckoning dates before the supposed year Christ was born.
56. A white metallic element that burns with a brilliant light.
59. A member of a seafaring group of North American Indians who lived on the Pacific coast of British Columbia and southwestern Alaska.
60. A unit of dry measure used in Egypt.
61. Formerly included in genus Cedrela.
63. A crime syndicate in the United States.
66. Adopted in order to deceive.
67. Produced or growing in extreme abundance.
69. Tough Asiatic grass whose culms are used for ropes and baskets.
70. A spar rising aft from a mast to support the head of a quadrilateral fore-and-aft sail.
71. In bed.
72. An independent group of closely related Chadic languages spoken in the area between the Biu-Mandara and East Chadic language groups.
75. Relating to or characteristic of or occurring on the sea or ships.
76. To make a mistake or be incorrect.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You enjoy being around well-educated and communicative people. To soak up stimulating conversation is related to absorbing the beauty of art. Both activities provide imagination and description of past and future possibilities. The ability to follow an unknown path to unknown places is the adventurer in you. It is this feeling of newness and curiosity that takes you into some wonderful places. This may mean you are a writer, designer or investigator like no other. You bring your very own uniqueness to most any project. Your willingness to finance, test or create a better mousetrap makes you the brave and gallant hero. Keep working on the borders of your imagination. Tonight is for celebrating.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

While you may be used to passing on the final decision making to someone else in your company, it may be time to show higher-ups that you have an opinion. Your decision-making abilities are very good and you might want to start gaining attention through a written report or proposal. You will begin to see some positive difference in the respect that you receive from your supervisors and co-workers. Seek, perhaps through books, the strategies of other businesses and you will gain some additional problem-solving ideas. You and a loved one would enjoy a treat this next weekend and now is a good time to plan. Perhaps two days in the country or a visit to a water-garden display or gardening class would be enjoyable.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

An old resentment may surface over money today. Remember, money is not the problem; it is what you do with it that is the problem. Someone may owe you money, or you owe someone. Whatever the circumstances, payments over a period of time can be worked out or you will have to make a decision to either let it go, or seek legal aid. In any case, you may find forward movement on your goals has temporarily slowed. Realities demand that you tend to business and forget personal matters for the time being. You could come up with new solutions or inventions this afternoon that will make everyone's job easier. You are tuned into the thoughts of your friends and family this evening. An attitude of compromise and understanding is the right path.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Rushing about could cause you to be accident-prone, so easy does it. Learn to plan ahead as much as possible. If your time is already booked, say no to other activities now. Ideas and interaction with authority figures or older people may be in the forecast. Working with-rather than against-the flow should be easy. Tiny conversations within several teams seem to help uncover all the corners that have held unseen answers. You love the detective work and you are good at deciphering a truth. You may enjoy a sense of creating your own opportunities. Someone older or in authority may be a motivating force. This is a good day, with lots of energy and ambition. New personal projects, perhaps a hobby, can be enjoyed this afternoon.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Your work is an important area for you. You are proud of your work and others in your business often try to model professional decisions on your style. If you are in a business that can show off your talents you are indeed a happy camper. Unearthing previously unrealized talents can be a positive answer to a flux in income. You may be somewhat impulsive today and you may find yourself doing things you normally would not do. Avoid important decisions for now, if possible, as you may have difficulty concentrating. You may choose to move into different friendships soon because your hobbies, likes and dislikes may change a bit. Eat healthy food and drink lots of water this week in order to keep your body running smoothly.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Spontaneity is the mood of the day. You enjoy your work and the people with whom you work. This allows you to create long-time friends. You may find yourself enjoying a long conversation, writing a letter or making a special phone call later today. Your advice regarding a friend's very personal issues helps to some degree but the listening is the most important part. You are able to cut through the red tape and get at what is beneath and behind most puzzles. You communicate by listening. Spread some cheer today-names are not necessary-a thoughtful act of kindness can make someone's day. Maybe he or she will pass on a favor to someone else. A beautiful sunset or a beautiful new flower may be the target for your camera this afternoon.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Today you may discover that your co-workers value you for your abilities. The public has discovered your talents and will seek you out to help them match colors or styles and chat over the morning news as well. If you are not in management, you will do well to log in these moments of decision making. Higher-ups in your company will be advised of your capabilities in the area of management. Opportunities for social gatherings are strong this afternoon. As long as you keep focused on the practical side of issues, clear insights can be understood. There are opportunities to participate in outdoor activities later today. Make sure your participation in these activities is within reason. There are constructive conversations with friends tonight.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Communicating quickly, yet clearly enough so that others understand you, is important to you. Your timing is perfect for whatever you want to accomplish. A quick meeting directs the day's activity for you and those around you; focus. It is important that the results of your efforts be positive and so you may work extra hard to increase your productivity. You enjoy close communication with family members and they comment on your good works. You could be sifting through some of your old things to sell in a neighborhood garage sale later today. You encourage other family members to go through their closets. You cannot buy anything new when there are old things that do not fit any more and crowd the closet-there will be room for the new!



Sagittarius (November 22-December 19)

You may reassess some long-term responsibility in the workplace just now. What you once thought was glamorous may not be glamorous at all. With your ability to change one thing into another, you might find a way to see this responsibility through with a little less resentment-you can do it! You will find praise and admiration for any creative expression with which you decide to become involved. There is a lot of pride in what you do and your energies allow you to exhibit much showmanship. Mischievous behavior could outweigh the practical if you have no plans this afternoon. Decide to plan your day early. Friendship is a huge area of gain for you. Your circle of friends continues to grow. Today you talk to your friends and plan the next event.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

You can often express an understanding and sensitivity to the needs of others. This quality about you tends to put you in a good position to communicate as a leader, if needed. This is a good day to work at keeping connections between co-workers and leaders strong. Busy times at work may have caused you to become slack in your personal contacts. You may decide to make an effort after work to locate a few of your friends and plan a get-together soon. Perhaps you can partake in a short trip to the country or schedule in some competitive game for fun. Get in touch with your intuitive side; seek out good energies to absorb, perhaps at an aquarium, planetarium, park, etc. This can be a creative and even romantic phase, a time of pride and fondness.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

Today you may feel like staying at home. However, this may be the day that was meant for your advancement. Something that seems very dull to you has the possibility of becoming an enticing job for others-remember Tom Sawyer in order to find a helper or a replacement for a particular job, take on a more creative attitude. Now is a better time to sell than to buy, a period when trimming the excess and the antiquated is the right thing to do. This applies to material things, but extends to social and romantic relationships as well. There is a need to improve channels of understanding and appreciation. Get out and work off some of your frustrations with your wonderful friends or a loved one. A relationship changes for the positive this evening.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You may find yourself working overtime today. This is a good day to solve problems and make important decisions. You will find a way around almost any obstacle and are in control and able to guide yourself with ease. Your sense of inner direction is good and should lead to opportunities. Today you will be able to tackle tasks that require real discipline. You find yourself in a very practical mood and working with, instead of against, yourself. This evening it is easy to relax with friends and family. Your charisma shows and your friends will enjoy your company. Your need for attention can be satiated through your sense of humor and entertaining skills. Do not forget to read or help a young person to read a story tonight-communicate.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Trees

Find and circle all of the Trees that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell a secret message - a Greek Proverb.

Grid for word search puzzle containing various tree names and a hidden message.

- | | | | |
|--------------|------------|--------------|-------------|
| APPLE | CEDAR | LINDEN | POPLAR |
| APRICOT | CHERRY | LONDON PLANE | REDBUD |
| ASH | CHESTNUT | MAPLE | RUBBER TREE |
| ASPEN | COTTONWOOD | OAK | SEQUOIA |
| ARBORVITAE | ELM | PALM | SPRUCE |
| BALD CYPRESS | FIR | GINKGO | SYCAMORE |
| BEECH | GOLDENRAIN | PEAR | TULIPTREE |
| BIRCH | HAZELNUT | PECAN | WALNUT |
| BOXWOOD | HEMLOCK | PLUM | WITCHHAZEL |
| BUCKEYE | HICKORY | PINE | WILLOW |
| BUTTERNUT | LARCH | | YELLOWWOOD |
| CATALPA | | | |

Yesterday's Solution

Treasure Island

Grid for yesterday's solution containing words and a hidden message.

The hidden message is: TREASURE ISLAND WAS WRITTEN BY ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

Yesterday's Solution

Grid for yesterday's crossword solution.

Daily SuDoku

9x9 grid for daily sudoku puzzle.

Yesterday's Solution

9x9 grid for yesterday's sudoku solution.

For labor-related inquiries and complaints:
Call MSAL hotline 128



PHARMACIES ON 24 HRS DUTY

GOVERNORATE	PHARMACY	ADDRESS	PHONE
Ahmadi	Sama Safwan Abu Halaifa Danat Al-Sultan	Fahaeel Makka St Abu Halaifa-Coastal Rd Mahboula Block 1, Coastal Rd	23915883 23715414 23726558
Jahra	Modern Jahra Madina Munawara	Jahra-Block 3 Lot 1 Jahra-Block 92	24575518 24566622
Capital	Ahlam Khaldiya Coop	Fahad Al-Salem St Khaldiya Coop	22436184 24833967
Farwaniya	New Shifa Ferdous Coop Modern Safwan	Farwaniya Block 40 Ferdous Coop Old Kheitan Block 11	24734000 24881201 24726638
Hawally	Tariq Hana Ikhlas Hawally & Rawdha Ghadeer Kindy Ibn Al-Nafis Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Salmiya-Amman St Hawally-Beirut St Hawally & Rawdha Coop Jabriya-Block 1A Jabriya-Block 3B Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	25726265 25647075 22625999 22564549 25340559 25326554 25721264 25380581 25628241

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

INTERNATIONAL CALLS



Afghanistan	0093	Lithuania	00370
Albania	00355	Luxembourg	00352
Algeria	00213	Macau	00853
Andorra	00376	Macedonia	00389
Angola	00244	Madagascar	00261
Anguilla	001264	Majorca	0034
Antiga	001268	Malawi	00265
Argentina	0054	Malaysia	0060
Armenia	00374	Maldives	00960
Australia	0061	Mali	00223
Austria	0043	Malta	00356
Azerbaijan	00994	Marshall Islands	00692
Bahamas	001242	Martinique	00596
Bahrain	00973	Mauritania	00222
Bangladesh	00880	Mauritius	00230
Barbados	001246	Mayotte	00269
Belarus	00375	Mexico	0052
Belgium	0032	Micronesia	00691
Belize	00501	Moldova	00373
Benin	00229	Monaco	00377
Bermuda	001441	Mongolia	00976
Bhutan	00975	Montserrat	001664
Bolivia	00591	Morocco	00212
Bosnia	00387	Mozambique	00258
Botswana	00267	Myanmar (Burma)	0095
Brazil	0055	Namibia	00264
Brunei	00673	Nepal	00977
Bulgaria	00359	Netherlands	0031
Burkina	00226	Netherlands Antilles	00599
Burundi	00257	New Caledonia	00687
Cambodia	00855	New Zealand	0064
Cameroon	00237	Nicaragua	00505
Canada	001	Niger	00227
Cape Verde	00238	Nigeria	00234
Cayman Islands	001345	Niue	00683
Central African	00236	Norfolk Island	00672
Chad	00235	N. Ireland (UK)	0044
Chile	0056	North Korea	00850
China	0086	Norway	0047
Colombia	0057	Oman	00968
Comoros	00269	Pakistan	0092
Congo	00242	Palau	00680
Cook Islands	00682	Panama	00507
Costa Rica	00506	Papua New Guinea	00675
Croatia	00385	Paraguay	00595
Cuba	0053	Peru	0051
Cyprus	00357	Philippines	0063
Cyprus (Northern)	0090392	Poland	0048
Czech Republic	00420	Portugal	00351
Denmark	0045	Puerto Rico	001787
Diego Garcia	00246	Qatar	00974
Djibouti	00253	Romania	0040
Dominica	001767	Russian Federation	007
Dominican Republic	001809	Rwanda	00250
Ecuador	00593	Saint Helena	00290
Egypt	0020	Saint Kitts	001869
El Salvador	00503	Saint Lucia	001758
England (UK)	0044	Saint Pierre	00508
Equatorial Guinea	00240	Saint Vincent	001784
Eritrea	00291	Samoa US	00684
Estonia	00372	Samoa West	00685
Ethiopia	00251	San Marino	00378
Falkland Islands	00500	Sao Tome	00239
Faroe Islands	00298	Saudi Arabia	00966
Fiji	00679	Scotland (UK)	0044
Finland	00358	Senegal	00221
France	0033	Seychelles	00284
French Guiana	00594	Sierra Leone	00232
French Polynesia	00689	Singapore	0065
Gabon	00241	Slovakia	00421
Gambia	00220	Slovenia	00386
Georgia	00995	Solomon Islands	00677
Germany	0049	Somalia	00252
Ghana	00233	South Africa	0027
Gibraltar	00350	South Korea	0082
Greece	0030	Spain	0034
Greenland	00299	Sri Lanka	0094
Grenada	001473	Sudan	00249
Guadeloupe	00590	Suriname	00597
Guam	001671	Swaziland	00268
Guatemala	00502	Sweden	0046
Guinea	00224	Switzerland	0041
Guyana	00592	Syria	00963
Haiti	00509	Serbia	00381
Holland (Netherlands)	0031	Taiwan	00886
Honduras	00504	Tanzania	00255
Hong Kong	00852	Thailand	0066
Hungary	0036	Togo	00228
Ibiza (Spain)	0034	Tonga	00676
Iceland	00354	Tokelau	00690
India	0091	Trinidad	001868
Indian Ocean	00873	Tunisia	00216
Indonesia	0062	Turkey	0090
Iran	0098	Tuvalu	00688
Iraq	00964	Uganda	00256
Ireland	00353	Ukraine	00380
Italy	0039	United Arab Emirates	00976
Ivory Coast	00225	United Kingdom	0044
Jamaica	001876	Uruguay	00598
Japan	0081	USA	001
Jordan	00962	Uzbekistan	00998
Kazakhstan	007	Vanuatu	00678
Kenya	00254	Venezuela	00582
Kiribati	00686	Vietnam	0084
Kuwait	00965	Virgin Islands UK	001284
Kyrgyzstan	00996	Virgin Islands US	001340
Laos	00856	Wales (UK)	0044
Latvia	00371	Yemen	00967
Lebanon	00961	Yugoslavia	00381
Liberia	00231	Zambia	00260
Libya	00218	Zimbabwe	00263
Lesotho	00266		

STATE OF KUWAIT DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



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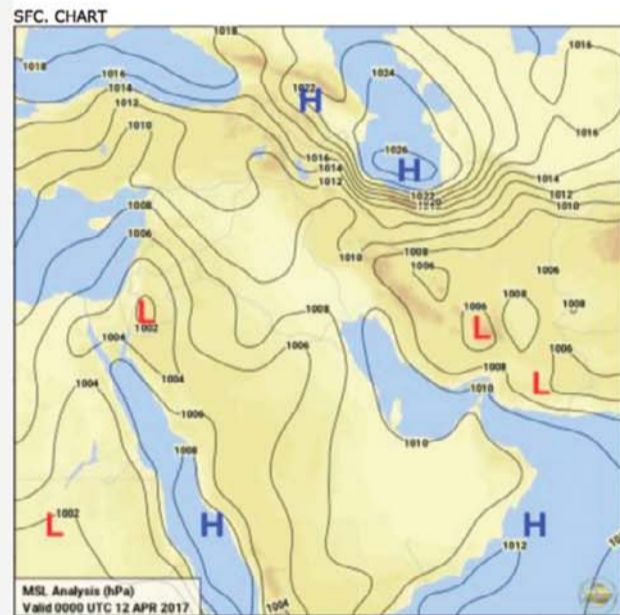


Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

Issued 12/04/2017-07:00 LT UTC +3hr

Max Temperature 41 °C

By Day : Relatively hot and Partly cloudy with light to moderate freshening gradually at times south easterly to easterly wind, with speed of 15 - 40 km/h with a chance for scattered rain
By Night : Partly cloudy with light to moderate freshening gradually at times south easterly wind, with speed of 15 - 40 km/h with a chance for scattered rain



Four-Day Forecast

	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Expected Weather	Relatively hot+partly cloudy+rising dust	Relatively hot+partly cloudy+rising dust	partly cloudy+thundery rain+rising dust	partly cloudy
Min Temp °C	24	26	24	23
Max Temp °C	39	42	37	34
Wind Direction	south easterly changing to south westerly	south westerly changing to south easterly	northerly to north easterly	north westerly to northerly
Wind Speed km/h	15 - 40	15 - 40	15 - 40	12 - 35

All times are local time (GMT+3) unless otherwise stated

Warnings & Weather Watches

no warnings or weather watches

Kuwait Forecast

Station	MIN °C	REC	Max °C	EXP
KUWAIT CITY	24		38	
KUWAIT AIRPORT	25		41	
ABDALY	23		42	
BUBYAN	24		34	
JAHRA	24		42	
FAILAKA ISLAND	23		32	
SALMIYAH	23		38	
AHMADI	23		38	
JAL ALIYAH	23		42	
QAROH ISLAND	23		33	
UMM AL-MARADEM	22		34	
NUWAISIB	22		39	
WAFRA	23		40	
SALMY	25		42	
MUTRIBA	22		41	

Recorded Yesterday at Kuwait Airport

Max Temp (°C)	32
Min Temp (°C)	24
Max Rel Hum (%)	57
Min Rel Hum (%)	25
Max Wind Speed (km/h) and Direction	36 E
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR	0 mm

Sunrise	05:26
Sunset	18:12

Prayer Times

Fajr	04:04
Sunrise	05:26
Zuhr	11:49
Asr	15:23
Sunset	18:12
Isha	19:32



PRIVATE CLINICS

Ophthalmologists	
Dr. Abdallah Al-Mansoor	25622444
Dr. Samy Al-Rabea	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-Mikhazem	23926920
Dr. Kathem Maarafi	25730465
Dr. Abdallah Ahmad Eyadah	25655528
Dr. Nabeel Al-Ayoobi	24577781
Dr. Dina Abdallah Al-Rafea	25333501
Urologists	
Dr. Ali Naser Al-Serfy	22641534
Dr. Fawzi Taher Abul	22639955
Dr. Khaleel Abdallah Al-Awadi	22616660
Dr. Adel Al-Hunayan FRCS (C)	25313120
Dr. Leons Joseph	66703427

Plastic Surgeons	
Dr. Mohammad Al-Khalaf	22547272
Dr. Abdal-Redha Lari	22617700
Dr. Abdel Quttainah	25625030/60
Family Doctor	
Dr Divya Damodar	23729596/23729581
Psychiatrists	
Dr. Esam Al-Ansari	22635047
Dr Eisa M. Al-Balhan	22613623/0
Gynaecologists & Obstetricians	
DrAdrian arbe	23729596/23729581
Dr. Verginia s.Marin	2572-6666 ext 8321
Dr. Fozeya Ali Al-Qatan	22655539
Dr. Majeda Khalefa Aliyami	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

GOSSIP

Ed Sheeran films Galway Girl video in Galway

Ed Sheeran fans lined the streets of Galway, Ireland on Tuesday to be in his music video for 'Galway Girl'. The 26-year-old singer-songwriter took to Instagram yesterday to share a photo of a large group of school children stood behind barriers waving to him, and he thanked them for taking part in the promo clip for his smash hit song from his record-breaking LP 'Divide'. Alongside the picture, he wrote: "Thank you to Galway and all the wonderful people in it for helping us shoot a music video yesterday x (sic)" Several images have appeared online from the shoot, including the city's Salthill House. The 'Shape of You' hitmaker performed at Dublin's 3Arena last evening. Ed and the woman who inspired the track co-wrote the song together. Niamh Dunne from the band Beoga previously revealed how she

ended up writing a song about herself after becoming the inspiration for the flame-haired singer's popular track. She said: "I am in a band called Beoga and we actually co-wrote the song with Ed. We were over in Suffolk last year recording with him, so that was kind of when the song came together. I suppose I was in front of him so he just wrote a song about what was in front of him so that was how it came about. "It started with a mutual friend of ours, Foy Vance. They were on tour together and they played some of Beoga's tracks in the van together and Ed liked it so when he was making his new album he emailed us and asked if we would be up for doing some recording."



Shaun Ryder: The 80s and 90s are a blur

Shaun Ryder says the 80s and the 90s are one big "blur". The 54-year-old rocker is set to perform at Shiiine On Weekender at Butlin's Arena, Minehead in November with his band the Happy Mondays, along with Levellers, Pop Will Eat Itself, Jim Bob (Carter USM) and The Woodentops, in a celebration of the very best of 80s and 90s Indie and Dance music. However, the 'Step On' hitmaker - who was added on drugs and booze back then - admits he doesn't have much of a recollection of what went down back then, except for their trips to Brazil. In February 1991, Happy Mondays famously played at the Maracan Stadium in Rio de Janeiro and meet Ronnie Biggs, an English thief, known for his role in the Great Train Robbery of 1963, for his escape from prison in 1965. Speaking exclusively to BANG Showbiz, he said: "Well, I tell you, I can remember the 60s more than I can remember the 80s and the 90s. "They are just a blur. We had

a couple of good times in Brazil, you would have to give me something specific. I was eight years old in the 60s, but I can remember it a lot better than the 90s." Ryder says their set at Shiiine On will be much like their 30th anniversary tour, all of the hits from their back catalogue of five studio albums. Asked what punters at the adult weekend extravaganza can expect, he said: "We are doing something from all the albums. It's the 30th anniversary of 'Squirrel and G-Man Twenty Four Hour Party People Plastic Face Carnt Smile (White Out)' that is the name of the tour that we are doing. So we are going to be doing bits from all of the albums actually. It's a greatest hits album set." Shiiine On / Butlin's Live Music Weekends is a festival for grown-ups who don't want to trudge around in the mud! It takes place from November 10 to November 13.

Sienna Miller will star in The Private Life of a Modern Woman

Sienna Miller is set to star in 'The Private Life of a Modern Woman'. The 35-year-old actress has been cast in James Toback's upcoming drama alongside Alec Baldwin and Charles Grodin, and the cast have already filmed the entire production in secret, which is currently being edited by the 72-year-old filmmaker. And the creative mastermind has praised the golden-haired beauty - who has four-year-old daughter Marlowe with her former partner Tom Sturridge - for her acting ability, as he never knew she had as many "brilliantly calibrated nuances" in her. Speaking about the New York-born star to the New York Post's Page Six Column, Toback said: "She is astonishing. I'm editing now and every day I'm discovering a new set of brilliantly calibrated nuances in her performance." Miller will also appear in the film alongside Oliver 'Power' Grant, who will portray Rameesh, whilst Nick Mathews and John Prescod will also feature in the project. Alan Helene,

Michael Mailer, Martin Tuchman and Valda Witt were on hand to produce the project, with co-producers Mike Donovan and Scott Kluge, whilst Angela Ceccio and Alessandro Penazzi executive produced the project. Toback has revealed he is on a tight deadline to complete the project by July, although it is reportedly scheduled for release later this year or in 2018. He explained: "I wish I could experiment with it indefinitely-but I have a deadline in July." Miller's representative has confirmed the 'Burnt' star's role in the movie, however the star has kept details of her latest venture close to her chest. And Miller has had a busy few weeks as she has been cast in 'The Burning Woman', which will see her portray Christina Hendricks in the thriller, as well as a new theatre production of 'Cat On A Hot Tin Roof'.



Williams' songwriting dries up

Robbie Williams' songwriting has dried up. The 43-year-old singer has revealed he has hundreds of unused songs locked away in a secret vault, and while he plans on releasing some of them, he is lacking inspiration for new ideas as he admits he's said the lines "I'm neurotic, I messed up" and "I love women" too many times before. He confessed: "I'm definitely running out of ideas. I don't know how many ways I can say: 'I'm neurotic and I messed up. Or: 'I love you, love me, I'm thick.' "Or: Women, I like women." "There's only so many times you can go to the well before the well becomes dry." On the songs he has stored up, the 'I Love My Life' hitmaker told the Daily Star newspaper: "I've written 12 studio albums so far, this new album took 80 songs to create it, to then whittle it down to 11. "And so it's been with all of the albums so over a period of time I've probably clocked up 500 or 600 songs that are finished and maybe another 200 or 300 that are not." Robbie - who has Teddy, four, and two-year-old Charlton with his wife Ayda Field - plans on doing something grand when he drops his next record, but he says it will require a lot of "oxygen" as he admits it's harder to get his songs played on the radio nowadays, although he has vowed never to retire from music. He explained: "I'll do something bombastic just to make a noise because the oxygen that I need to make my album is eroding. "That happens in the music industry, the radio stops playing you and you got into a semi-retirement home and I don't want to do that." It was recently reported that the 'Angels' singer is planning to release his next record - the follow-up to 2016's 'The Heavy Entertainment Show' - on YouTube as a compilation titled 'Under The Radar Volume 2'. A source said: "Robbie has the songs recorded and ready to go. The track-listing for 'The Heavy Entertainment Show' was meticulously picked by him as he wanted it to have a certain sound but he has loads of great music still in the vault. "There's also intriguing stuff left over from previous albums that fans will want to hear. "After previously keeping his fans waiting so long for new music he wants to keep them interested."

Hartley to star in Bad Moms Christmas

Justin Hartley has joined 'Bad Moms Christmas'. The 'This Is Us' star is to play Ty Swindle, a handsome firefighter by day who doubles as a stripper by night, in the sequel to the 2016 comedy movie 'Bad Moms', which proved to be a hit at the box office. Justin, 40, will appear alongside returning cast members Mila Kunis, Kristen Bell and Kathryn Hahn who are all reprising their roles from the first film. The plot of the movie focuses on the under-appreciated and rebellious mothering trio of Amy Mitchell (Kunis), Kiki (Bell) and Carla Dunkler (Hahn) who must cope with having their own mums stay for the Christmas period. Jon Lucas and Scott Moore are teaming up again to write and direct the script for the second movie which is scheduled to hit cinemas in November. Suzanne Todd will produce the project and Bill Block is on board as the executive producer. Hartley is mostly famous for his television roles and he will be returning as Kevin Pearson in NBC's family drama 'This Is Us' which has been commissioned for two more seasons. The hunk also starred in 'Mistresses', 'Revenge' and 'Smallville'. Hartley is engaged to former 'Days of Our Lives' actress Chrishell Stause.



Styles faces 'tight race' to top the charts

Harry Styles faces an "incredibly tight race" to land his first solo No. 1. The 23-year-old singer recently launched his debut track as a solo artist, 'Sign Of The Times', but it's still far from certain he will secure the coveted No. 1 slot later this week, with Ed Sheeran's hit single 'Shape Of You' providing stiff competition. A source said: "Sign Of The Times' is only at No. 12 on Spotify overall. That might not be enough when the streaming ratio is properly added come the end of the week." Harry currently leads Ed by around 10,000 sales, according to the latest figures, but that gap could conceivably be closed by the time the final result is announced later this week. The insider explained to The Sun newspaper: "'Shape Of You' is still getting 488,000 daily streams to Harry's 277,000. "It is now an incredibly tight race. It'll be fascinating to see who comes out on top on Friday." Earlier this month, Harry compared releasing his new music to giving birth. The One Direction heartthrob admitted that branching out on his own away from the band has left him feeling "vulnerable". He recently explained: "It's very much like giving birth - without the pain, obviously. It was very exciting. It was nerve wracking. Also, very exciting to have a job again. "But I think honestly, any time you are putting something out that's kind of a piece of you, I guess it's quite a vulnerable feeling. But it is exciting. I like it. And I think that helps in terms of the nerves. I think if I was putting something out that I didn't like, then I'd be much more nervous."

Tempah started rapping on £20 microphone

Tinie Tempah's first ever raps were recorded on a £20 microphone from PC World. The 'Pass Out' hitmaker has opened up about his humble start in life and how he has had to graft his way to becoming a star, which is something he has put across in his forthcoming LP 'Youth', which is packed with songs about his "emotional" journey to the top. He revealed how the cheap recording device from the British computer store was the only thing he could afford to make music. He said: "A lot of people see it [his career] as glitz and glamour but this has by no means been easy at all. I grew up in Peckham, I got a £20 microphone from PC World and started recording my first raps when I was 12 or 13. "We didn't really have anything there weren't that many prospects or hopes. "There were hardly any British rappers we could look at. I've put in a lot of graft." One way Tinie got inspiration for his first record in four years - the follow-up to 2013's 'Demonstration' - was by allowing strangers to use his studio in Greenwich, London. The 28-year-old rapper's record is full of collaborations with people as a result of making his studio an open house for artists at all levels. He told the Metro newspaper: "One of the first things I did was to open my studio and let all sorts of different people come in - not necessarily to be connected to me but just to use it. As a result you have that awkward encounter, you go and make tea and, before you know it, you're talking to someone you probably wouldn't have otherwise." Now Tinie lives in an East London home that once belonged to the late fashion designer Alexander McQueen - who died in 2010 - which is full of stuffed animals, which he recently said helped with his creativity for 'Youth'. He said: "The giraffe was already there, but I bought a zebra, which is my favorite animal, so that the giraffe could have a friend in the house. "I'm not going to lie because I get some weird vibes in there, but it's positive and I think it's added and contributed to my creativity."



MUSIC & MOVIES

'Centerfold' frontman J Geils dead at 71



In this Aug 6, 2011 photo, J Geils, left, and Peter Wolf of J. Geils Band perform at the Fleet Boston Pavilion in Boston. — AP

J Geils, the blues rock guitarist whose band topped the charts with the party-ready 1981 anthem "Centerfold," died Tuesday, police said. He was 71. The rocker, whose full name was John Warren Geils Jr, was found unresponsive when emergency personnel were called to his home in Groton, Massachusetts, police said in a statement. Police said they were investigating the cause of death but had ruled out foul play. Leading The J Geils Band, the guitarist adapted blues influences to create a hard-rocking, fun-loving rock sound that appealed to a largely working-class male audience. "Centerfold," a tale of a man who is

stunned that a girl he fancied in school has posed in an adult magazine, spent six weeks at number one on the US chart, led by a video that enjoyed heavy airplay in the first days of MTV. The J Geils Band was sometimes compared to another Massachusetts band, Aerosmith, but did not have the same staying power. The J Geils Band had another hit with "Freeze Frame," the title track off the album that featured "Centerfold," but the band dissolved several years later. Underlying the split were tensions pitting Geils against keyboardist Seth Justman and guitarist Peter Wolf, who together wrote

much of the music. The band members fought to keep the use of the name The J Geils Band despite performing without Geils. He retreated to Groton, best known for an elite private high school, and pursued a passion for restoring racecars. Although Geils occasionally still performed, he focused on jazz and more classic blues, saying he had grown tired of the harder-charging rock. The J Geils Band has been nominated to but not entered the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. — AFP

Fleetwood Mac members announce new album

Members of blues-rock powerhouse Fleetwood Mac on Tuesday announced a new album that will bring together all of the band's classic lineup-except Stevie Nicks. Guitarist Lindsey Buckingham said the album would be the first by a duo of him and keyboardist Christine McVie, who rejoined Fleetwood Mac for a 2014-15 global tour after staying out of the spot-

light for years. Entitled simply "Lindsey Buckingham/Christine McVie," the 10-track album will come out on June 9 followed by a US tour. The duo will release a first single, "In My World," on Friday. The duo in a statement said that the two started working on new material when McVie joined rehearsals for the tour and "their natural creative

chemistry was reignited." Recording the album at the Los Angeles studio where Fleetwood Mac made its 1979 album "Tusk," the pair was joined by two band mates-drummer Mick Fleetwood and bassist John McVie. Notably absent from the recording sessions was Stevie Nicks, who has gone on to become the most identifiable member of Fleetwood Mac with a successful solo career led by her unique sandy voice.

Buckingham, in a 2014 interview with Billboard magazine, had said that Nicks was busy with other commitments when the others headed to the studio. The part-British, part-US band was notorious for internal tensions which played out in the music. Nicks was romantically involved at times with Buckingham and Fleetwood, while Christine McVie was formerly married to John McVie. Fleetwood Mac has not released a studio album since 2003's "Say You Will," on which Christine McVie was absent, but the reunited lineup with Nicks has become a major draw on the live circuit. Fleetwood Mac and The Eagles will headline a new festival called The Classic in Los Angeles and New York in July. — AFP



This file photo shows (From left) John McVie, Christine McVie, Stevie Nicks, Lindsey Buckingham and Mick Fleetwood of Fleetwood Mac posing on stage on NBC's "Today" at the NBC's Today Show in New York.



CHEMISTRY ONSTAGE MAKES FAITH HILL AND TIM MCGRAW A TOP TOUR

The love story of Tim McGraw and Faith Hill started on a tour two decades ago and that sparkling chemistry onstage has made them one of the genre's biggest headliners. The country couple with movie star glamour has sold over 63 million albums in the US between their two careers, has earned two Grammys for duets they sang together and has three children. This year, they are releasing their first-ever duet album together and started their third installment of their highly successful Soul2Soul World (it launched last week). "I haven't been on a stage like this in 10 years and that is no lie," Hill said of the tour. "I can tell you right now I am fired up."

During an Associated Press interview with the couple before their rehearsal at the Academy of Country Music Awards in Las Vegas earlier this month, Hill and McGraw were giddy with anticipation. "She's ready to turn it loose," McGraw said. "Age is not an issue," added Hill, who together with her husband will be turning 50 during the tour that runs through October. The Mississippi-born Hill and the Louisiana-born McGraw fell in love when she opened for him on his 1996 Spontaneous Combustion tour and they married that year.

In 2000, the first Soul2Soul tour grossed \$48.8 million, making it the best grossing country tour in North America that year, according to Pollstar. The Soul2Soul II tour was even more successful, grossing \$88.8 million in 2006, and made it the 3rd highest grossing North American tour that year.

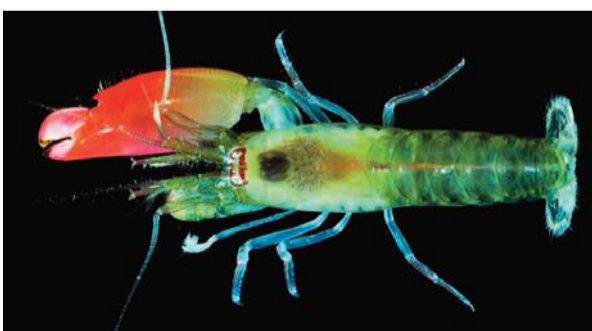
McGraw credited their success on the road to the fact that they are very different singers who push each other to expand their ranges onstage. "Faith, I would say, is more of an R&B, sort of gospel-inspired singer," McGraw said. "And I think I am more of a '70s rock, arena rock, Merle Haggard meets arena rock kind of singer. She brings me a little bit more to the R&B side, and I bring her more to the arena rock side, and I think it creates a sort of magic."

Their first duet together, "It's Your Love," was on McGraw's 1997 "Everywhere" album, which was followed by "Just to Hear You Say That You Love Me," from Hill's multi-platinum album "Faith." Since then, they have had several popular duets, including their latest, "Speak to a Girl," which jumped into the Top 10 of Billboard's Hot country songs chart after they performed it on the ACM Awards. But they say they don't always agree in music, or in marriage, but McGraw said commitment is key. "Look, there is no secret," Hill said. "Either you like one another or you don't. You want to stay married or you don't. You work at it, or you don't. Simple as that. It is not always easy and there are moments that are rocky." "But you don't walk away," McGraw said. "I would rather live a life in rocky road ice cream than vanilla any day of the week," Hill said. "Honestly, vanilla gets boring after a couple of days." A smiling McGraw adds: "So I am not vanilla!" — AP

NEW SONIC BLAST SHRIMP NAMED AFTER PINK FLOYD

A newly-discovered shrimp species with a bright pink claw and the ability to produce one of the loudest sounds in the ocean has been named after legendary British band Pink Floyd, zoologists said yesterday. "Synalpheus pinkfloydi" has a bright pink claw that, "just like all good rock bands," can produce large amounts of sonic energy, according to a post on the blog of the University of Oxford's Museum of Natural History. Zoologist Sammy de Grave, a lifelong Pink Floyd fan who works at the museum, said the shrimp's discovery off the coast of Panama was "the perfect opportunity to finally give a nod to my favorite band".

By closing its distinctive claw at rapid speed, the shrimp can produce a sound strong enough to stun or even kill a small fish. A description of the shrimp appeared in the journal Zootaxa yesterday and the Oxford team featured the shrimp in fictitious covers for the legendary British rock band's albums "Animals" and "The Wall." "I often play Pink Floyd as background music while I'm working," de Grave said. "But now the band and my work have been happily combined in the scientific literature." — AFP



This photograph received from the Federal University of Goias yesterday, shows the newly-discovered bright pink-clawed pistol shrimp which has been named as 'Synalpheus pinkfloydi' in the scientific description of the species. — AFP

Alabama country music star Cook suffering from Parkinson's



Jeff Cook

Jeff Cook of the country music group Alabama said on Tuesday he has the nervous system disorder Parkinson's disease and will be stepping back from touring with the band. Cook, 67, who plays fiddle and guitar, said he was diagnosed four years ago with the disease, which robs sufferers of balance and causes tremors. "For me, this has made it extremely frustrating to try and play guitar, fiddle or sing," Cook said in a video statement for The Tennessean newspaper. "I'm not calling it quits but sometimes our bodies dictate what we have to do, and mine is telling me it's time to take a break and heal."

Alabama, which also includes Cook's cousins Randy Owen and Teddy Gentry, broke in to the national country music

scene in the 1980s and has sold some 75 million records. The band was named entertainer of the year - the top award - three times by the Country Music Association and was inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame in 2005. The band said it planned to continue to record as a trio and with hopes Cook will join them on stage from time to time. Cook's announcement followed recent speculation that he had a substance abuse problem. "That's the part that hurts so bad, for people to think that he's intoxicated or something," Owen said, saying that the trio had kept the diagnosis secret for years. — Reuters

'The Lost City of Z' is a mesmerizing adventure

Modest and majestic at once, the films of James Gray patiently burrow their way into the souls of their characters and, maybe, into you. Gray is painterly and exacting - some might say to a fault. But his movies' revelations are complex and contradictory - full of life's messiness - and their formal textures break open with moments of transcendence. So, yeah, I like them - particularly his last one, "The Immigrant," and his new one, "The Lost City of Z."

Romantic sense of exploration

Both are period films with a pulse and a now-ness the genre often lacks. Each plunges us into the passages of early 20th century strivers and leaves us with a shattering final image of departure. Like the tide, they overwhelm and then

recede. "He's been rather unfortunate in his choice of ancestors," is how one character explains Percy Fawcett's predicament early in "The Lost City of Z," based on David Grann's nonfiction book. Fawcett (Charlie Hunnam) is a British officer but decoration has eluded him, and his deceased, disgraced father has soiled his name.

Though craving action, he's assigned in 1906 on a map-making mission to the "blank spaces" of Bolivia where the British are meant to act as "referents" in a territory dispute with Brazil. The expedition into the Amazon jungles soon fills him with a romantic sense of exploration (his wife, Nina, played by Sienna Miller, reads him Kipling's "The Explorer"), and he travels across the Atlantic in search of glory and redemption. Success, he's told, would change his lot "considerably."

On the boat to South America, Fawcett meets his aide-de-camp, Henry Costin (an excellent, heavily bearded Robert Pattinson), who initially eyes his leader warily. "You might be a little too English for this jungle," he says as they step through flies and snakes. They and their small team travel up a river and it immediately feels as though "The Lost City of Z" has swum into the currents of Werner Herzog's "Aguirre, the Wrath of God" and "Fitzcarraldo" and Francis Ford Coppola's "Apocalypse Now." The ominous notes are many: a glassy-eyed rubber baron (Franco Nero) whose business the British are there to protect; a native guide who warns that the river "is always danger"; the onset of hunger among the thinning crew.—AP

Musicians from Prince bands to speak at anniversary event



Prince

Musicians who played on stage with Prince will speak at a four-day celebration of the "Purple Rain" superstar at Paisley Park. Organizers of "Celebration 2017" announced speakers for the event on Tuesday. It's scheduled to run April 20-23, being held during the anniversary of Prince's death. Among the speakers are Lisa Coleman, Wendy Melvoin, drummer Bobby Z, keyboardist Matt Fink and bassist BrownMark from Prince's 1980s

band, The Revolution. Other speakers include Levi Seacer from Prince's 1990s band, New Power Generation, keyboardist Morris Hayes, costume designer Stacia Lang and singer Shelby J.

Tickets are nearly sold out. Only certain general admission passes are still available, at \$549 each. Each day will include performances on Paisley Park's soundstage. Prince died April 21, 2016, of an accidental overdose. — AP

FEATURES



Photo shows the log cabin structure which was originally used as a kitchen, next to the plantation house at Josiah Henson Park in Bethesda, Maryland.



The interior of a log cabin structure which was originally used as a kitchen, next to the plantation house at Josiah Henson Park in Bethesda, Maryland.



The interior of the plantation house at Josiah Henson Park with a portrait of Henson above the mantel in Bethesda.— AFP photos

Late homage for US slave from 'Uncle Tom's Cabin'

His life may have inspired the landmark novel "Uncle Tom's Cabin" but 150 years after the abolition of slavery in the US, Josiah Henson remains a controversial figure, and efforts to turn his onetime home outside Washington into a museum are slow at best. In Rockville, now a swank suburb of the US capital, all that remains of the tobacco and wheat plantation where Henson once worked is a wooden house painted white with a small, single-room attachment. The cabin is not specifically where Henson lived-its construction came long after he left-but it resembles the hut he described in his 1849 autobiography, "The Life of Josiah Henson, Formerly a Slave."

Archeologists working with authorities in Maryland's Montgomery County—who bought the plantation house in 2006 and plan to develop the site in the next years to allow regular guest visits-discovered traces of a kitchen below. Henson may have slept there for time during his 30 years on Isaac Riley's plantation, where he joined his mother at age five in 1795, and experts hope they can use the traces to reconstruct his actual dwelling. Author Harriet Beecher Stowe used Henson's autobiography as the basis for "Uncle Tom's Cabin," her 1852 novel

that was one of the best-selling books of the 19th century which fueled tensions between the industrial northern states and the slave-owning south.

Tensions erupted in the 1861-1865 Civil War, which ended with the formal abolition of slavery across the country. Shirl Spicer, museum manager for Montgomery County parks, plans to showcase editions of both Henson's book and "Uncle Tom's Cabin" at the site. But she says the museum will not be ready for at least five years, due to a lack of funding.

'Shame'

Honoring Henson is still a sensitive topic, especially among African Americans, some of whom think that he "betrayed his race to obey his white master," Spicer explains. For many, the term "Uncle Tom" is synonymous with terms like "obsequious," "sell-out" and "collaborator." Spicer said that even Henson's descendants, who came to the park a few years ago, said they had "always been ashamed of him." In 1825, Riley had Henson take some of his slaves to his brother's farm in Kentucky to keep them away from creditors. Henson obeyed, even though he could have escaped during the long journey on foot. Henson returned with his meager savings and tried-but failed-

to buy his own freedom from Riley. "He felt the only honest way to achieve freedom was to buy it," said historian Jamie Kuhns.

Hero?

Montgomery County officials hope to rehabilitate Henson. "We have to introduce the real man to everyone, the hero behind the fictional character," Spicer said. In 1830, Henson fled to Canada along with other slaves via a network of clandestine back roads known as the "underground railroad." Once in Canada, he established a fugitive slave community, and worked as a Methodist minister.

Henson's departure explains why he is being honored so late in his native country. "He left the US and escaped and stayed in Canada, where he is a national hero," said Kuhns. Archeologist Cassandra Michaud says she has found no trace of shackles, chains or collars in the former plantation-no doubt because Henson, a rare enslaved African-American who supervised some 20 other slaves-was "taking care of them in a way."

Kuhns said that the situation has to be viewed in the proper context. "If you live in a system based on subservience, it's a hard thing to break," she said.



A portrait of Josiah Henson in a book he authored, at Josiah Henson Park in Bethesda.— AFP



This undated family photo provided by Bernice McNeil shows a woman named Ethel Cooke with Robert Remington, right, of Hamden, Conn. Remington was killed in France in May of 1918 during World War I.— AP photos

Preparing artifacts of the 'Great War' for the digital age

Rick Maynard found the manila envelope containing letters from the battlefields of World War I while he and his sister were cleaning out the basement after their father's death. The more than three dozen letters were written, some in pencil, by Paul Maynard, Rick's great-uncle. "He was on the front lines," said Rick Maynard, the parks and recreation director for the town of Guilford. "In one of the letters to his mother, he said he had not slept in 10 days. I can't imagine it. I can't fathom that."

Soon, letters such as those from 21-year-old Paul Maynard, who died in 1918 during the last day of battle, will be available for anyone to read, thanks to a project spearheaded by the Connecticut State Library to help mark the 100th anniversary of the US involvement in the war. The library is hosting events across Connecticut, inviting people to bring in photos, letters and any artifacts associated with the "Great War" to be photographed or scanned for posterity. Students and veterans also conduct interviews with the owners to get a history of the items and the people to whom they are linked.

The library says it has the largest World War I archive of any US state. Since the project began in 2014, about 130 people have come to events, resulting in the digital preservation of more than 600 items and the creation of about 150 profiles of people who took part in the war effort.

Similar preservation efforts are being done at some universities, some branches of the military and local historical societies, but nothing on the scale of Connecticut's project, said Chris Isleib, spokesman for the US World War I Centennial Commission. The preservation is funded in part by an \$11,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. The New Haven Museum will host a major scanning event May 24. There are 16 others scheduled this year across the state.

"We can do high-resolution captures of anything that comes in, 3D objects, flat objects," said Christine

Pittsley, the project managers for the state's Remembering World War I: Sharing History/Preserving Memories program. "All of that stuff is going to be online. It's being preserved in the Connecticut digital archive. So, even if that item disappears, there always will be a digital record of it." The library is building a website that will allow anyone to download the images. It also is working with schools across the state on ways to incorporate the stories and images into curriculum.

The project includes not only soldiers' stories, but also those of nurses, YMCA canteen workers, those who sold Liberty Loan war bonds or anyone else associated with the war. The project also allows those who own the objects to learn more about their relatives who served in the war. In 1919, the state library also became the state's Department of War Records. Librarian George Goddard took that role very seriously, and began gathering everything he could get his hands on.

The library sent out questionnaires to every Connecticut resident who served in the war, recording their experiences and thoughts on war. Those are all on file with the state and those attending the digitization events can get help looking up the information. The preservation efforts are important, Isleib said, because they put faces and personal stories to an abstract history lesson about a war that not many understand.

"This is our inheritance and our future generation's inheritance," he said. "These stories make up who we are as Americans." Bernice McNeil, of North Haven, said it was a way to make sure that when she is gone, others will remember the sacrifice of her uncle, Robert Remington, who was killed in 1918 at the age of 18 in Seicheprey, France. "These men and women should be recognized," she said. "He served our country and he died for this country, protecting our freedom." — AP

Cable car above Rio favela becomes ride to nowhere

A cable car built over one of Rio's most violent favelas as a symbol of hope stands idle today, a ride to nowhere in a city whose recent Olympic glory has never seemed more distant. The ski resort-style, multimillion-dollar gondolas were hailed worldwide when they first glided over Rio de Janeiro's gang-infested Complexo do Alemao favela in 2011. In the build-up to the 2014 World Cup and 2016 Rio Olympics, the network of cables and six hilltop terminals was meant to show that Alemao was about more than battles between drug gangs and police. But today the shiny facilities are closed-and the guns are getting louder.



The cable car over the Alemao favela in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, seen here on April 3, 2017, is no longer running.— AFP photos

climb the terminal for an even better look, warned Lieutenant Leonardo Violante, manning the bullet-scarred police station. "The bandits will see you and start shooting."

Brought down to earth

When the favela cable car opened, some criticized the 210 million reais (\$64 million today) price tag, saying the money should instead fund sewage systems, schools and other basic services for the impoverished people below. But the rides, spanning 2.2 miles (3.5 kilometers), became one of Rio's top tourist destinations. The system was also hugely popular with favela residents who could now get around without negotiating Alemao's tortuously steep, narrow streets. Some 9,000 people were reported to ride daily. "It changed a lot for us," said Bruna Teodoro, 26, who used to work in a market and now, like more than 13 percent of Brazilians, is unemployed.

Her commute changed from at least half an hour to five minutes. "We really miss it." What Brazilians call the "teleferico" was not only transport. Each terminal building became a buzzing community hub, housing medical, postal and social services, and in one case a library. "They had social services and community projects," said arts producer Nathalia Menezes, 29, who lives right next to the Alemao terminal. "Theater, fashion-there were a lot of great things."

Bullets flying

The cable car network was also closely integrated with a system of local policing called Pacification Police Units or UPP in Portuguese. The UPP idea was just as revolutionary as the cable cars. Instead of police fighting narco-gangs on sporadic, large-scale raids, officers would live and patrol inside the community, winning locals' trust and displacing the traffickers. Put that with the cable cars and the favela would change forever. So went the plan. "The goal of the project was to take over the traffickers' space," Violante, 28, said outside his UPP. "Up here is right where the drug traffickers used to execute people."

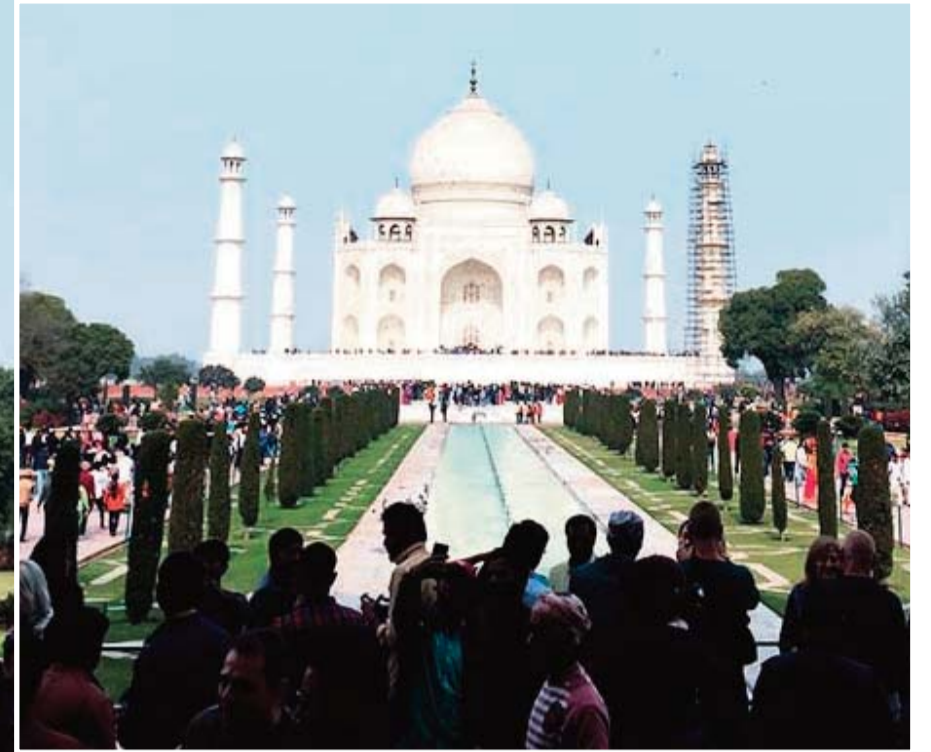
But now it's the heavily armed officers inside the UPPs, not the gangsters outside, who are marginalized. Officers don't go outside without their pistols or automatic rifles and they wouldn't dare go even a short distance alone. Even if they do go in force, the likelihood is they'll get into a firefight. Spraying high velocity bullets around the tightly packed neighborhood is hardly a way to win friends. "We've had to cut back on the patrols a lot because of the problem of stray bullets," the lieutenant said. "The idea was to work with the community but for us to talk with residents means getting into shootouts. It's a bit harder than we thought." — AFP



The cable car over the Alemao favela in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, seen here is no longer running.— AFP photos



This 2017 photo shows India's Taj Mahal in Agra. — AP photos



This photo shows the city of Jodhpur, India, known as the 'Blue City' because of the colors of the rooftops.



Women sell brightly colored textiles in Jodhpur, India.



An acid attack survivor helps customers at Sheroes Hangout in Agra, India.



Girls dancing at the Prerna Girls School in Lucknow, India, a school for underprivileged girls.

Curiosity runs both ways for solo female traveler in India

By Kristi Eaton

The blue-tinted dwellings looked like they continued on for miles. From high above the ancient Indian city of Jodhpur, it was easy to see how it became known as the "Blue City." I caught a view of these sky-blue homes while visiting the 15th century Mehrangarh Fort, which includes a palace, temples and garden at the end of a winding road looking down on the city.

Though this was my first visit to India, my perspective on a month-long trip there was not entirely that of an ordinary tourist. I was traveling from one side of the country to the other, researching issues facing women and girls. Jodhpur, in Rajasthan State, was on my itinerary because it is an area with high rates of female illiteracy and child marriage, and a preference for sons over daughters.

But in addition to my research, interviews and writing, I made time for sightseeing and experiencing local culture. At the Mehrangarh Fort, I was stumbled on the Turban Gallery, which tells of the history, traditions and variety of turbans found in Rajasthan. And I happened to be in Ahmedabad, in the west, where I'd entered the country, in time for a wonderful annual spectacle: the colorful International Kite Festival.

In Jodhpur, I befriended a family who invited me to an extravagant Hindu wedding. I thoroughly enjoyed sampling the food and observing the ceremonies and elaborate outfits. But even though I stayed near the family who invited me, being a solo Western woman at such an event didn't come without stares and looks of befuddlement from other attendees. I had come to India to look at gender issues in this com-

plex culture. Among other things, I visited a school for underprivileged girls, met female entrepreneurs and looked at a program that makes sanitary napkins available to rural women. But sometimes, it seemed I was as much an object of curiosity to locals as their culture was to me.

Standing out from the crowd

One challenge for me was getting used to standing out from the crowd. In Ahmedabad, on one of my first few days in India, I desperately wanted a cup of coffee ahead of an interview. I was waiting for another woman who would help me translate at the interview and decided to head to a street vendor for a quick cup. I'd already drawn attention to myself, walking up and down the street looking for the translator, and now I found myself the only woman among a throng of men.

They seemed perplexed by my arrival, but ended up helping me order the tiny coffee and left me alone as I sipped on a bench. I didn't know Hindi or the local Gujarat language, so I didn't try to engage in conversation. But that feeling of standing out was something I had to get used to. Some days it was no big deal. Other days - when I felt responsible for keeping up a conversation, making sure I was safe and doing my best to be culturally aware while exploring sensitive subjects around gender inequality - it was exhausting.

Sheroes

Like many first-time visitors to India, I went to Agra to see the Taj Mahal and also stopped at the Agra Fort. Not far from those attractions was another stop on my itinerary: the Sheroes Hangout. Sheroes Hangout is a cafe run by survivors



A group of women prepare a dish called mahua laddoo to sell at the local market in Chatwal, India.

empowering women who might otherwise feel forced to hide their scars. I felt a bit shy about engaging the women in conversation on my first visit, but on my second, I opened myself up and found they were eager to share stories despite a language barrier that kept the conversations basic.

Making safe choices

In the back of my mind, I couldn't help but think about some of the horrific assaults on women in India - both locals and tourists - that have made headlines. So I made very deliberate choices about my dress and behavior. I always wore loose-fitting pants, a T-shirt and often times a shawl-like cover up. I only had wine on one occasion and rarely stayed out after dark unless I was with someone whom I trusted. And rather than taking long-haul trains on my own, I hired a driver to take me from one destination to the next. It was expensive, but worthwhile for the ability to sleep, relax and work during the sometimes eight- to 12-hour trips. Within cities, I used auto rickshaws, cabs and services like Uber.

I was never harassed, but I did regularly receive stares - something that had not happened during trips I'd taken to other countries like Indonesia, Guatemala and Vietnam. In some small ways, my travels here had allowed me to experience some of the cultural attitudes toward gender that I'd come to research. — AP

of acid attacks - women who were scarred in assaults stemming from family disputes, unrequited love or other conflicts. The cafe also features a small library and handicraft and exhibit space. Other Sheroes Hangouts are located in Lucknow, in Uttar Pradesh, and in Udaipur in Rajasthan - all with a goal of



These pictures taken on April 9, 2017 show people visiting an installation art show for public welfare in Shenyang, northeast China's Liaoning province. — AFP photos



Lifestyle

Curiosity runs both ways for solo female traveler in India



THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 2017

39



A Palestinian man with his donkey poses at the panoramic view from the Mount of Olives on the Old City of Jerusalem, with the Muslim Dome of the Rock in the background. — AFP

ERDOGAN-STYLE MUSTACHES TRENDING IN TURKISH RULING PARTY

The prime minister has one. So does the culture minister. Even the previously clean-shaven ministers of economy and foreign affairs recently began sporting theirs. Neatly-trimmed mustaches, similar to that worn by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, have become increasingly popular among government ministers from his Islamic-rooted Justice and Development Party, or AKP, ahead of a crucial referendum Sunday on expanding the president's powers.

ing - like the crescent moon on the Turkish flag - while leftists tend to grow their bushy and Stalin-esque. Erdogan wears a bristly and tidily-trimmed mustache that is popular among conservative and religious Turks. Some religious men also grow beards. A year ago, more than half of the Cabinet members were clean-shaven. Now only three of Turkey's 27 ministers - including the only woman - don't have facial hair.

The trend appears to have begun with a Cabinet reshuffle last year, trig-

who used to be clean shaven, now sports a mustache, too. In Istanbul's Kasmipasa neighborhood, where Erdogan was born, barber Ahmet Guler said he believes AKP members are growing mustaches to resemble the president - the party's founder and long-time leader. "Because otherwise it draws attention: 'Look, he doesn't have one. A Muslim or a man should have a mustache,'" said Guler, 57.

The chief

Facial hair remains an important reference point in Turkish society and politics but that's starting to change, said Barin Kayaoglu, an expert on Turkish culture and history. He noted that many young Turks are growing "hipster" beards, which cut across all ideologies. "Turkish culture sees facial hair as an expression of masculinity but that association is no longer as powerful as it used to be," Kayaoglu said. According to Hurriyet newspaper, Economy Minister Nihat Zeybekci, who had shaved off his mustache, re-grew it recently after Erdogan remarked, half-jokingly, that some ministers didn't listen to him.

The paper also reported that during a February meeting between Erdogan and a group of AKP legislators, several participants had barely visible mustaches, suggesting that the mustaches were grown in haste before the president's arrival. Some Turks say the trend shows how much influence Erdogan, affectionately known as "the chief," wields over the government, his party and the bureaucracy despite the current constitutional requirement for the president to be neutral. On Sunday, Turks will vote "yes" or "no" to constitutional amendments that would abolish the office of the prime minister and transfer executive powers to the president, something Erdogan's critics fear would cement his powers and further mold Turkey according to his conservative and pro-Islamic views. Opinion polls suggest he could win by a whisker. — AP



A barber cuts the mustache of a customer in Ahmet Guler's barbershop in the Kasimpasa neighborhood in Istanbul. — AP

Some analysts say that's no fluke in a country where facial hair has a history of political significance, and where ministers' loyalty to Erdogan is being closely scrutinized following a failed coup attempt last year. "These days, when Turkey is fighting terror organizations - and in the aftermath of the coup - the mustaches provide a strong and stern image," said Mesut Sen, professor of Turkish studies at Istanbul's Marmara University.

Facial hair

Historically, men in Turkey have worn mustaches not only to assert their manhood but express their political leanings. Traditionally, nationalists wear their mustaches long and downward-point-

gering speculation that ministers were trying to please the powerful president by growing mustaches similar to his. Senior AKP officials continued to grow mustaches, sometimes coupled with beards, after the failed coup attempt in July. One government minister, who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity, said some ministers grew facial hair because Erdogan urged them to. He declined to give further details.

The trend is not limited to the Cabinet. The chief of Turkey's intelligence agency, who was the source of controversy over his alleged failure to warn Erdogan about the coup attempt, first grew a mustache and then a full beard. Erdogan's closest bodyguard,

Bizarre News

Battenbun cake slated as Holy Grail of tea treats

Anna Olson has created the Battenbun to celebrate Easter. The celebrity chef has invented a new tasty treat in time for the religious holiday celebrating the resurrection of Jesus, (PBUH) which is a combination of a classic hot cross bun and a Battenberg cake with the pink and yellow patterned centre, as part of her show 'Bake with Anna Olson'. The hybrid cake, which has been slated as the new sweet treat during English tea time, is a blend of almonds, cinnamon, apricots and marzipan and will be given to customers in East London bakery Lily Vanilli on Easter Sunday before the series' premiere on April 24. Speaking about her creation, Anna said: "The best part about the launch of the third series is that I can continue to share my incredible world of baking with the UK." And Anna is hopeful the Battenbun will encourage more people to get creative in the kitchen. She explained: "I hope both the Battenbun and upcoming season of 'Bake with Anna Olson' inspires the UK to get their rolling pins out and join me on another sweet adventure."



Chicken nugget request is set to break retweet record

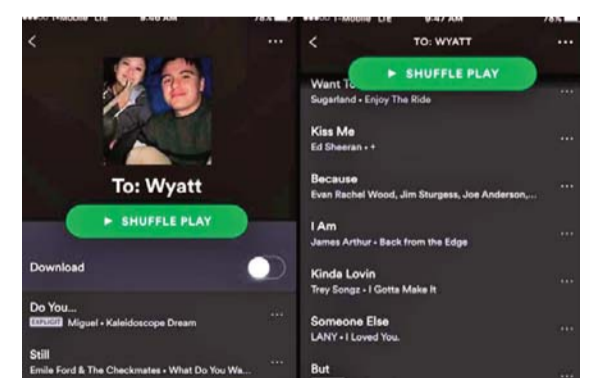
A chicken nugget fan has launched a campaign on social media to get a free lifetime supply of the breaded dish. Carter Wilkerson's took to Twitter to ask Wendy's how many re-tweets he would need to get in order to receive a year's supply of the feast from the food chain, and the ambitious teenager is on set to break the world record and make his dream come true. The 16 year old wrote: "Yo @Wendys how many re-tweets for a year of free chicken nuggets? (sic)." To which the company replied: "18 million (sic)." And the youngster is set to break the world record for the most amount of retweets with his ambitious plea on



the micro blogging site, which has been repeatedly shared almost three million times. However, Carter didn't think his post would be as successful. Speaking to USA Today, he said: "I sent out the tweet as a joke, but then they responded with the outrageous number. I thought 'Consider it done' would be funny among my friend group. Then I put the screen shot up and it started gaining momentum."

Girl breaks up with guy with whiny Spotify playlist

A girl broke up with her boyfriend through a Spotify playlist. The list was of entirely made up of whiny songs such as James Arthur's 'I Am' and Trey Songz 'Kinda Lovin'. 19-year-old student Kristen Titus from Brigham Young University in the city of Provo in Utah used his music to tell Wyatt Hall she was in to him after they went on a few dates. She told BuzzFeed: "I thought if I was going to end things with him I wanted to do it in a creative way." However, little did Kristen know that her young sister had found her playlist and played it out loud.



Consumer leaves bizarre note for lazy delivery men

A consumer has posted the definition of the word doorbell on his front door in response to lazy delivery men. Redditor MacronX became so sick and tired with the service he'd received from delivery companies, he decided to take matters into his own hands, taping the Wikipedia definition of the word to his door. Beneath the definition, MacronX wrote: "It seems people are having difficulty understanding its purpose. Above is an Encyclopedia article explaining what it is for and what it does. 'For those of knocking fruitlessly on the door, we cannot hear you at the back of the house or upstairs...' — Bang Showbiz

