





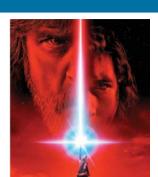
Month-long 'Sarayat Season' brings unstable weather



Dozens killed, wounded as car bomb hits Syria evacuees



'Star Wars: The Last Jedi' first trailer thrills fans



Sensational Isco spares Real blushes against Sporting





NORTH KOREA STAGES GIANT SHOW OF MILITARY STRENGTH

Pyongyang flaunts missiles as US carrier group approaches



Max 34° **High Tide** 03:20 & 14:14 **Low Tide**

08:44 & 21:31

TESTS LAUNCHED FOR UPGRADED US NUKE BOMB

ALBUQUERQUE, New Mexico: Scientists at Sandia National Laboratories are claiming success with the first in a new series of test flights involving an upgraded version of a nuclear bomb that has been part of the US arsenal for decades. Work on the B61-12 has been ongoing for years, and government officials say the latest tests using mock versions of the bomb will be vital to the refurbishing effort. An F-16 from Nellis Air Force Base dropped an inert version of the weapon over the Nevada desert last month to test its non-nuclear functions as well as the plane's ability to carry the bomb.

With a mere puff of dust, the mock bomb landed in a dry lake bed at the Tonopah Test Range. "It's great to see things all come together: The weapon design, the test preparation, the aircraft, the range and the people who made it happen," Anna Schauer, director of Sandia's Stockpile Resource Center, said in a statement. Scientists are planning to spend months analyzing the data gathered from the test. Tracking telescopes, remote cameras and other instruments at the test range recorded

Continued on Page 13



PYONGYANG: North Korean men and women wave flags and plastic flowers as a float with model missiles and rockets with words that read "For Peace and Stability in the World" is paraded across Kim II Sung Square during a military parade yesterday. — AP

PYONGYANG: North Korea's weapons of war rolled through Pyongyang streets yesterday and it promised "nuclear justice" in response to any atomic attack as leader Kim Jong-Un mounted a spectacular show of strength. Tensions over Pyongyang's nuclear ambitions are stretched to the limit, with US President Donald Trump deploying an aircraft carrier battle group to the region. After a 21-gun salute, tens of thousands of soldiers, sailors and airmen goosestepped through Kim II-Sung Square turning their eyes towards the high balcony from where Kim watched, flanked by officers and officials.

Some detachments carried assault rifles or rocketpropelled grenades, others were equipped with nightvision goggles and daubed in face paint. One troupe was made up of sword-wielding women. Tanks came next through the square - named after Kim's grandfather, the North's founder - followed by the objects of world concern. A total of 56 missiles of 10 different types were displayed, culminating in enormous rockets on articulated trailers and on 16-wheeler vehicles.

The nuclear-armed North is under United Nations sanctions over its weapons programs, and has ambitions to build a rocket capable of delivering a warhead to the US mainland - something Trump has vowed "won't happen". Ostensibly, yesterday's event was to mark the 105th anniversary of Kim Il-Sung's birth - a date known as the "Day of the Sun" in the North - and a squadron of warplanes flew overhead forming the number.

Continued on Page 13



WASHINGTON: Protestors take part in the "Tax March" to call on US President

Donald Trump to release his tax records yesterday. — AFP

PROTESTERS TAKE TO STREETS TO **DEMAND TRUMP TAX RETURNS**

NEW YORK: Tens of thousands of people were expected to take to the streets across the United States and beyond yesterday to press President Donald Trump to release his tax returns and to dispute his claim that the public does not care about the issue. The demonstrations, organized by a loose coalition of labor and left-leaning groups with various economic agendas, intended to focus on Trump's refusal to disclose his tax-paying history, something his predecessors in the White House have done for more than 40 years.

"When we check in with our members, this is something they care about deeply," said Ben Wikler, Washington director of MoveOn.org, a progressive political group. Critics have raised questions about what Trump's tax returns say about his net worth and about his various business ties. Organizers of "Tax March" were planning events in more than 150 cities, including New York, Washington and Los Angeles, as well as cities in Europe, Japan and New Zealand.

As a candidate and as president, Trump has steadfastly refused to release his tax returns, citing an ongoing audit by the Internal Revenue Service.

In September, he told ABC News, "I don't think anybody cares, except some members of the press." The IRS has said that Trump can release his tax returns even while under audit. The demonstrations are taking place on the traditional April 15 Tax Day, the deadline for filing federal tax returns, although the IRS this year pushed back the deadline by three days.

The Trump tax marches were launched

by a single tweet, organizers said. A day after the massive Jan 21 women's march in Washington and other cities, comedy writer Frank Lesser tapped out on Twitter, "Trump claims no one cares about his taxes. The next mass protest should be on Tax Day to prove him wrong." It has been retweeted more than 21,000 times.

Organizers said they stuck with the traditional April 15 Tax Day for the marches because as a Saturday, it would draw more attendance, even though this year's income tax filing deadline was pushed back to Tuesday. Joe Dinkin, spokesman for the Working Families Party, which is also planning the marches, said ongoing investigations into the Trump campaign's connections with Russia underscore the need to disclose his returns. "Without seeing his taxes we'll never really know who he's working for," said Dinkin, who expects the marches to draw at least 100,000 protesters.

There have been some glimpses into Trump's tax history. Last month, MSNBC host Rachel Maddow released two pages of Trump's 2005 return that were obtained by investigative reporter David Cay Johnston. They showed Trump paid \$38 million in taxes on more than \$150 million in income. And last October, The New York Times reported that Trump had declared a \$916 million loss on his 1995 federal tax return, citing three pages of documents from the return. In a Quinnipiac University poll released on April 4, more than two-thirds of the respondents said Trump should publicly release his tax returns. Other recent polls had similar results. —Reuters

TURKEY RIVALS IN LAST POLL PUSH



Emma Morano

WORLD'S OLDEST PERSON DIES IN **ITALY AGED 117**

ROME: Emma Morano, who at 117 was believed to be the world's oldest person and the last to be born in the 19th century, died yesterday, Italian media reported. Morano, who lived in northern Italy, was born on Nov 29, 1899, four years before the Wright brothers first took to the air. Her life spanned three centuries, two World Wars and more than 90 Italian governments. Italian news agencies ANSA and Agi said the

death was reported by her friends and family. Dr Carlo Bava told AP by telephone that Morano's caretaker called him to say the woman had passed away yesterday afternoon while sitting in an armchair in her home in Verbania, a town on Lake Maggiore. Bava said he had last paid his nearly-daily call on Morano on Friday. He says "she thanked me and held my hand" as usual. — Agencies

ISTANBUL: Turkey's top politicians made a final effort yesterday to sway undecided voters in a frenetic end to campaigning a day ahead of the closely-contested referendum on expanding President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's powers. With election rules banning all campaigning after 1500 GMT, both the 'Yes' and 'No' camps squeezed in a flurry of rallies as the clock ticked down to today's landmark poll. Analysts see the poll as a historic choice on the direction of the NATO member which will shape its future political system

If passed, the new presidential system will implement the most radical political shake-up in Turkey's recent history, dispensing with the office of the prime minister and centralizing the entire executive bureaucracy under the presidency. "Turkey will tomorrow make one of the most important decisions in its history," said Erdogan as he wrapped up an exhausting nationwide campaign with a rally in the Istanbul district of Sariyer.

Confidently predicting victory, he declared: "The polls look really good."



ISTANBUL: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan poses with children after a rally yesterday on the eve of a constitutional referendum. — AFP

BLACK US MUSLIMS AIM FOR UNITY

DEARBORN, Michigan: In her job as a refugee case manager, Fatimah Farooq would come to work in a hijab and speak with her clients in Arabic. Nonetheless, she found herself being asked whether she was Muslim. It's not easy, Farooq says, navigating her dual identities as black and Muslim. "I'm constantly trying to prove that I belong," said Farooq, who now works in public health. "It's really hard not to be an outsider in a community - especially today, in the

current times." Many Muslims are reeling from a US presidential administration that's cracked down on immigrants, including through the introduction of a travel ban that suspends new visas for people from six Muslim-majority countries and is now tied up in court. But black American-born Muslims say they have been pushed to the edges of the conversations - even by those who share the same religion.

They say they often feel discrimination on multiple fronts: For being black, for being Muslim



Fatimah Farooq

and for being black and Muslim among a population of immigrant Muslims. Farooq, whose Sudanese parents came to the US before she was born, said her own family used to attend a largely African-American mosque but then moved to a predominantly Arab one - yet in both cases still felt like "outsiders."

The identity issues have rippled into social media with Twitter's #BeingBlackAnd Muslim and

@BlkMuslimWisdom formed in recent weeks to amplify stories of black Muslims, whether it's to praise Mahershala Ali, who is black and became the first Muslim actor to win an Oscar, or to express concern over the lack of black speakers at a recent Islamic conference. Tensions are also being aired at community town halls, with panelists questioning why there hasn't been more involvement from Arab and South Asian Muslims in Black Lives Matters events.

In response, activists say they're seizing the opportunity to unite Muslims of all backgrounds. Kashif Syed, who lives in the Washington, DC area, grew up in a family of South Asian Muslim immigrants around Detroit that was insulated from black Muslims. Now that he's part of a young professional Muslim community, he's trying to honor the experiences of others.

"We're seeing increasingly visible threats to Muslims across the country now - it's an important reminder of what black communities have

Continued on Page 13

By Bader Al-Dehani

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KUWAITIS AND EXPATS

SHARE KUWAIT

could sense it very well. You could sense it very well, too,

fonly you listen and see well enough. There is a grow-

ng sense of hatred towards non-nationals in Kuwait -

Bloomberg just recently thought so, too. Politicians, oh do

paigns, capitalize on such rhetoric. It feeds into their inter-

it the sour taste it needs, loud political demands make it

look fresh and good, bake it for thirty minutes and there

Is Kuwait - or, to broaden the concern, the Arab world -

immune to the global populist wave that has begun taking

shape on June 23rd, 2016? Will we ever see the Marine Le Pen

and Nigel Farage of Kuwait anytime soon? Or do they already

Well, I think it all returns back to how well our economy

breathes - and what does not return back to the economy?

well enough - and of course it is not doing well because of

the unneeded, unessential, untaxed 'other.' Do not blame

the fact that our economy is mainly dependent on oil rev-

enues and the oil market, as of just recently, was drowning

with the oversupplied commodity which, as a result, has

led to cheaper oil prices. You should also never blame the

highly subsidized goods and services that Kuwait's social contract has promised to provide since oil was discovered

and produced in the first half of the twentieth century.

and you create another 'other' within. And the story will

never end until actual, technical economic reforms are

enforced.

Kuwait.

Nope, the 'other' is always the problem. Get rid of the 'other'

Yes, we may be at 4.7 percent unemployment rate and

yes we may have just last month borrowed money for the

first time, but I nonetheless happen to very much disagree

come. Welcome to the Kuwait of opportunities where, if you

with such illogical, anti-globalization, highly isolationist

viewpoint. Dear expatriates, foreigners, immigrants, wel-

work hard and smart enough, you too might be the next

founder of Talabat or Carriage. This is the Kuwait that I envi-

sion: a liberal environment where one could freely produce

and where the free market would then price the product. It

is the Kuwait where the rule of law is celebrated, science and

technology cherished, liberal arts encouraged, private sector

emboldened, economy strengthened, legislature checked

and questioned about policies, implementations and out-

comes. It is the Kuwait that does not limit itself to oil rev-

enues but, rather, diversifies its economy and encourages

Dear Kuwaitis and non-nationals, because we share a

country that is proud to be part of the international eco-

Kuwait that we all envision. Again, I welcome you to your

nomic community, we are responsible in building the

the energizing of its domestic economic activity.

There is a growing belief that our economy is not doing

exist? Why would we be against globalization anyway?

you go: Widespread, populist anti-'other' movement in

ests. Deficit concerns spice the dish, economic reforms give

they love kicking off occasional 'us-versus-them' cam-

in my **view**



Local **spotlight**

PARENTS OF ALL BOMBS!



By Muna Al-Fuzai

muna@kuwaittimes.net

t the weekend, the world was awoken by a US military strike with the so-called MOAB (Mother of All Bombs). The operation targeted the Islamic State (IS) in Afghanistan, which killed 36 militants and destroyed their base and a large stash of weapons. The 9,800-kg bomb was dropped on a tunnel complex used by IS. While the strike did not eliminate IS completely, it carried out its mission as planned and also sent a message that the US is back and will start using its weapons heavily. This operation raised many questions, but without answers. How powerful is the 'mother of all bombs' and what is the deal behind it now? What's next?

The US also fired several rockets at terrorist targets in Syria this week. America's clearly back to war in the Middle East and with the full force of weapons. I personally support all operations to combat terror, its cells and even supporters anywhere and at any cost. If this is the price to reach peace and secure the life of millions of innocents, so be it.

Chief Executive of Afghanistan Abdullah Abdullah confirmed that the attack had been carried out in coordination with the government and that "great care had been taken to avoid civilian harm." But not everyone was in agreement with the official talk, because former Afghan president Hamid Karzai condemned the attack as "an inhuman and the most brutal misuse of our country."

The mother of all bombs reminded me of the statements of former Iraqi president Saddam Hussein when he called his war "the mother of all battles," in which he was defeated badly. So I hope not to see such extreme confidence in military strikes - I think of it as a bad omen. The war against IS is not about military weapons it is a war against the spread of extremist ideas and this task is for everyone.

At the time when the world was busy talking about the mother of all bombs, which is approximately valued at \$16 million, some press reports spoke about a Russian bomb called FOAB (Father of All Bombs), which they claim has stronger features than the MOAB! I think we are witnessing the end of the Cold War forever now.

I believe the world is perched at the beginning of a world war or its manifestations and this should lead everyone to consider its possible implications. This requires serious preparations. The GCC does not represent a military force, therefore it is better for the Gulf states to focus on the preservation of their internal security so as not to allow IS members or agents to sneak in from abroad, because the war against terrorism does not end with military strikes.

The security level should be increased and check-points and inspection at airports should be upgraded. Threats to food security or disruption of water supplies means a priority plan must be prepared for the population, whether citizens or expatriates. The war on terror is not a picnic and has a long agenda. I believe when the military machine enters it, this means the internal readiness of every country is essential.



KUWAIT: Vehicles drive through a sandstorm that hit Kuwait yesterday. —KUNA



MONTH-LONG 'SARAYAT SEASON' BRINGS UNSTABLE WEATHER

KUWAIT: Kuwait was affected by a sandstorm yesterday after authorities advised the pubic to be cautious when using highways because of the low visibility caused by weather instability due to high winds.

People were urged in a Ministry of Interior statement to call the emergency hotline (112) for any kind of assistance needed. Moreover, a press statement by Kuwait's Fire Department asked boat owners not to go to sea during the unstable weather, urging them to

follow the weather forecast through available channels. Winds at speed of more than 60 km/h were forecasted yesterday, accompanied with low vertical visibility to less than 1,000 meters in some areas. High winds and sandstorms are common unstable weather features in the Sarayat Season which officially started yesterday and lasts until the middle of May. It is also characterized by sudden weather changes and thunderstorms.

KUWAITI-BAHRAINI JOINT COMMITTEE MEETS TODAY

KUWAIT: Kuwait will host the ninth round of the Kuwaiti-Bahraini joint supreme cooperation committee today, for follow up on mutual cooperation. First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah will head the Kuwaiti side, whereas the Bahraini Foreign Minister Sheikh Khalid bin Ahmed Al-Khalifa will lead the Bahraini officials during the commission meeting. More than 51 representatives of various sectors from both countries will participate in the meet-



Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah

ing to enhance the ongoing cooperation between both nations in all fields. The agreement for establishing the committee was inked in September 2001. The Bahraini capital hosted the previous round on 24th of December 2014. —KUNA

ARAB MEDIA FORUM CHOOSES BAHRAIN HONORARY GUEST

KUWAIT: The Kingdom of Bahrain is chosen as an honorary guest for the 14th session of the Arab Media Forum due on April 22-24, the forum General Secretary Madhi Khamis said on yesterday. The session, themed 'media is life,' will be attended by a number of Arab ministers, officials, prominent publishers and academics.

Bahrain has been chosen to be the honorary guest for cementing relations between Kuwait and Bahrain, he said, also noting prime role for the youth in organizing the session activities and workshops.

Meanwhile, Saleh Al-Otaibi, the guidance director at the Ministry of Information, underlined necessity of coordination among the official Arab media outlets for such cooperation "is currently very much crucial." He lauded the forum describing it as "an incubator for Arab media leaders and helpful for attaining international competition."

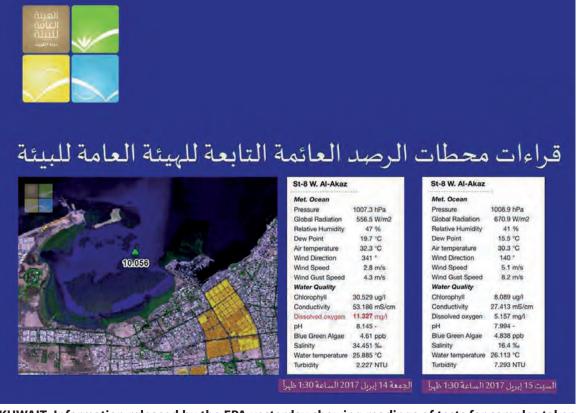
The forum was established in 2003 to develop the Arab media rhetoric and capacities of the Arab media personnel. It has an observer's status at the permanent Arab media committee and the Arab Media Council at the Arab League. —KUNA



KUWAIT: Officials attend a press conference to announce the 14th session of the Arab Media Forum. —KUNA

KUWAIT MONITORS ALGAE SLICK FLOATING IN PORT

KUWAIT: A slick of algae floating in the waters of Shuwaikh Port has caused no deaths in marine creatures, the Public Environment Authority (EPA) said yesterday. Analyses have shown that the floating slick comprises some harmful algae however no deaths among the living creatures have been recorded. These algae may kill some of the creatures, it said, urging residents and expatriates to report about any deaths among the marine animals in the area. EPA has been monitoring status of the slick for some days. Kuwait had in the past witnessed appearance of red algae in the country's bay, coupled with death of fish and other marine creatures. —KUNA



KUWAIT: Information released by the EPA yesterday showing readings of tests for samples taken from the floating slick.—KUNA

DNA CENTER LAUNCHED FOR AGRICULTURE, FISH

KUWAIT: The Public Authority of Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) has finalized the blueprint of a project to launch a DNA research center for the development of agricultural and fish resources. The planned center aims to combine DNA technology and biotechnology with a view to increasing the growth efficiency of plants and fish, PAAAFR Director-General Faisal Al-Hasawi said.

"It is keeping with the 2035 vision of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah for a balanced human and material development through the employment of the latest technologies in the management of natural resources," he said. The idea of launching the center stemmed from the PAAAFR fish sector that was concerned with the management of the fish stocks, a main source of food in Kuwait, Hasawi pointed out. Due to the geographical location of the country that gives way to free movement of the fish stocks across the territorial waters of countries in the region, there is a need to trace the migrant fish and shrimps stocks, and identify their age, he said, noting that the center will help do so.

"Besides providing essential knowledge about the country's national fish and agricul-

tural resources, the center will allow regional cooperation in this field pursuant to the PAAAFR vision for the rehabilitation of the environment and the sustainable development of the flora and fauna life," Hasawi went on. PAAAFR presented the blueprint of the project to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and Kuwait Direct Promotion Authority (KDIPA). KDIPA presented the draft to the cabinet, which approved the launching of the project through the Kuwait Offset Program, he revealed. The center, to be attached to the PAAAFR central lab, will employ the latest technologies to obtain key information about the genes of plants and fish and analyze them at their respective PAAAFR sectors.

Experts at the PAAAFR flora sector will start with arranging the sequences of plant genes in order to obtain knowledge about the pests and diseases of the plants, Hasawi stated. This knowledge could be helpful for a larger project for the rehabilitation of the flora life, being implemented under auspices of the UN Compensation Commission that was created in 1991 to process claims for losses and damage suffered as a direct result of Iraq's invasion and occupation of Kuwait (1990-91). —KUNA



PANEL DISCUSSES LABOR LAW AMENDMENTS

MORE JOB SECURITY TO CITIZENS IN PRIVATE SECTOR

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Minister of State for Economic Affairs



Minister Hind

Hind Al-Sabeeh is scheduled to take part in the parliamentary health affairs committee's meeting morning to discuss some proposed amendments to the private sector labor law. The

meeting will also

include represen-

tatives of the **Kuwait Chamber Al-Sabeeh** of Commerce and Industry (KCCI), the Kuwaiti Private Sector Employees' Rights Committee and Kuwait Labor Union. The committee aims at granting Kuwaitis working for the private sector insurance to protect them from being laid off and being subject to abusive dismissals. The committee also plans to compel Civil Service

Single window

Commission (CSC) to find alternative jobs for

citizens dismissed from the private sector.

Accompanied by Minister of Commerce and Industry Khaled Al-Roudhan, a number of lawmakers will today inspect the single window services at Kuwait Business Center in Ishbelia. The tour is meant to brief the lawmakers about the latest procedures on founding new companies according to the most up-to-date technology.

Meanwhile, the parliamentary legislative affairs committee is scheduled to discuss stateless people's civil and social rights before referring the bill to the interior and defense committee. Notably, the rights to be discussed include the right of healthcare, education and employment, in addition to issuing security IDs without any complications, all of which are initially approved by the government.

In the meantime, a special committee formed to investigate the 'disappearance of containers' from Shuwaikh Port will meet at 12:30 pm to discuss the latest developments and findings of a visit its members made to the port earlier in the presence of Sabeeh and Housing Minister Yasser Abul. Abul said the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) would open allocation of land plots in Khaitan to be distributed during the next fiscal year.

Judiciary-related laws

Minister of Justice Dr Mohammed Al-Azeb announced that his ministry is currently preparing some bills pending submission to the parliament for discussion by relevant committees. "No laws concerning judiciary matters will be proposed unless the Supreme Judicial Council is consulted and approves them," Azeb said, noting that the ministry is keen that the council, being the highest judicial body, is consulted about the judiciary in general and is represented in each legislative committee.

ANI-CORRUPTION AUTHORITY ENCOURAGES COOPERATION

Authority yesterday reiterated keenness on bolstering cooperation with the civil society organizations for boosting the principles of integrity. The authority's Assistant Secretary General for prevention of corruption and strategic planning, Abdulaziz Al-Mansour, made the statement at a news conference, announcing a symposium, to be organize today under the slogan of 'Kuwait on the international indices, reality and hopes.'

The authority is eager to take necessary measures that secure participation of the civil society organizations in efforts to expose hazards of corruption

KUWAIT: The Anti-Corruption Public and impact on the society as well as expanding activities to fight it, Mansour said. The two-day event, organized in cooperation with the Kuwait Transparency Society and the Kuwaiti Society for the Defense of Public Funds, is a national dialogue in which representatives of the welfare societies will set breadlines for the national strategy to fight corruption.

> Through this strategy, the authority is seeking to attain a host of goals, topped with activating the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), and enhancing efforts for studying the legislation and other legal tools to counter it. —KUNA

POLICE ARREST 87 VISA VIOLATORS INVOLVED IN ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Detectives arrested 87 illegal residents, the Interior Ministry's relations and security media department said yesterday. The arrests came after detectives were tipped off concerning a residence harboring a large number of illegal residents and absconders involved in various illegal activities such as immorality, human trafficking, selling alcohol and detaining people against their will. Upon raiding the place, 31 absconding expats of various nationalities were arrested, and all of them had article 20 visas (domestic helpers). The suspects said that they had paid money to get residency visas without working for their sponsors. This operation comes a few days after police arrested a human trafficking ring led by a Ugandan national who smuggled women from Sierra Leone to Kuwait. In another inspection campaign along Wafra highway, residency detectives arrested 56 people in violation of residency laws who were selling agricultural products.

Traffic crackdown

Traffic police cracked down on reckless drivers and racers along Gulf Road, Maghreb Expressway, Second Ring Road and Jahra Road, said security sources, noting that the campaign was led by the traffic directorate's acting director Maj Gen Fahd Al-Showayye and lasted for six hours, starting from midnight. The sources added that the campaign, that included 50 police patrols and 117 officers and policemen, resulted in arresting 46 motorists for reckless driving and racing and detaining six bikes and 65 vehicles.

Policeman insulted

An Egyptian woman in her thirties was arrested for insulting a traffic policeman on duty who was investigating a traffic accident. Security sources said the woman kept shouting when taken to Nugra police station and posted photos she took of another officer on her Facebook account, before she assaulted a female investigator. The officer said that the woman approached while he was examining the accident although she was not part of it, and when he asked her to leave, she argued with him, and was ticketed for obstructing traffic. Taken to the station, she recorded a video at the police station including the investigating officer and posted it on Facebook. She also kept screaming after her mobile phone was confiscated. The woman is facing multiple charges of blocking traffic, insulting an officer on duty, assaulting another and slandering the state and its laws.

Fatal crash

A Bangladeshi man died in an accident reported yesterday in Abdali. The man's vehicle had collided into a lamppost near farms in the area. He was rushed to Jahra Hospital where he later succumbed to his injuries. An investigation was opened to determine the circumstances which led to the accident.



KUWAIT: Vehicles impounded during a traffic police crackdown.





KUWAIT REQUESTS MORE EFFORTS TO FIND MISSING CITIZEN IN ROMANIA



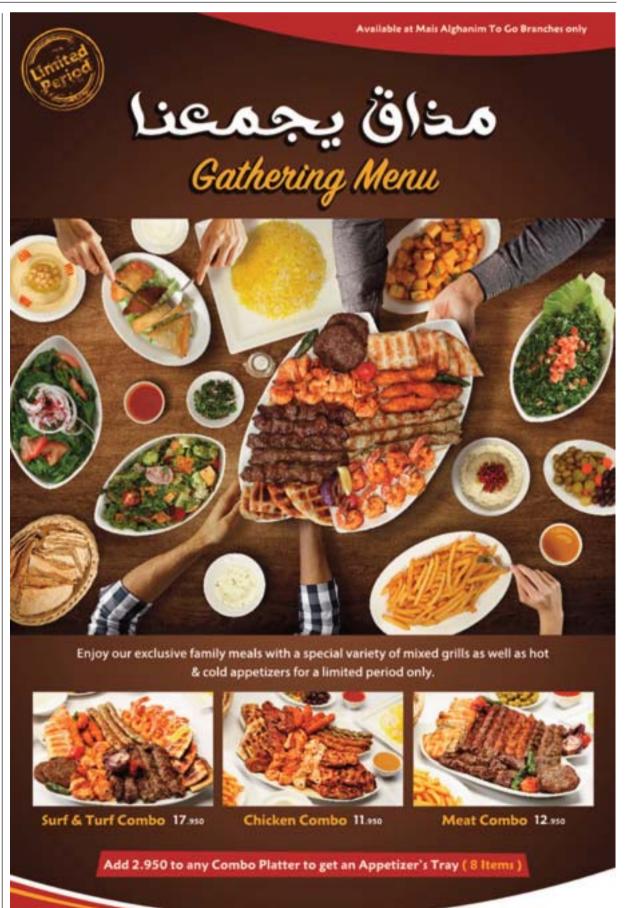
Kuwaiti Ambassador Talal Al-Haraji meets with Romanian Prime Minister Sorin Grindeanu

VIENNA: Romania is eager to bolster ties on all possible levels with its important Gulf region partner Kuwait, said Romanian Prime Minister Sorin Grindeanu. According to a statement by the Kuwaiti embassy in Bucharest yesterday, Grindeanu's praising of Kuwait came during his meeting with Kuwaiti Ambassador Talal Al-Haraji. Grindeanu expressed eagerness to further bolster relations with Kuwait on all possible domains, said the Ambassador who affirmed on his part that his country was looking into means to fully implement previously signed agreements between Kuwait and Romania. Meanwhile, the Ambassador asked Prime Minister Grindeanu to intensify efforts to find Kuwaiti national Mohammad Al-Baghli who went missing in Romania in late 2015. —KUNA





KUWAIT: Kuwait Municipality carried out a crackdown in Hawally recently during which two unlicensed restaurants and a cafe were closed. Municipality workers also removed 55 unlicensed billboards during the campaign.







Photo

of the day



KUWAIT: A palm tree is silhouetted by the sunset in Kuwait City. — KUNA photo



painting. So, please pick up your color pencils, paint brushes, crayons or whatever you prefer and start drawing and painting. Good luck to you, our young artists.

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

* For all Jazeera Airways tickets terms and conditions are applied







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X-CITE BY ALGHANIM ELECTRONICS WINS **EXCELLENCE IN CUSTOMER SERVICE AWARD**

KUWAIT: X-cite by Alghanim Electronics (Xcite), part of Alghanim Industries, one of the largest private companies in the region, won the Excellence in Customer Service Award of the electronics category from the annual Kuwait Public Relations and Customer Service Awards.

The ceremony was held under the patronage of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and was attended by his representative, Hind Al-Sabeeh, Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Minister of State for Economic Affairs.

Companies were evaluated by a judging panel comprising a number of local and international experts in the public relations and customer service sectors, using world-class standards of evaluation in order to choose the winning company in each category.

After receiving the award, President of Retail, Food and Beverage, and Distribution at Alghanim Industries, Samer Savegh, said: "We are proud to receive this honor that recognizes the quality of customer service at X-cite. We at Alghanim Industries always place the cus-



KUWAIT: X-cite's Samer Sayegh receives the award from Minister Hind Al-Sabeeh.

tomer at the core of our businesses, which gives us a competitive edge in our various operations and sectors. We are pleased to accept this distinction from the Kuwait Public Relations Association, and we strive to continue this success in all our other customer facing

sectors." X-cite played a key role in Alghanim Industries as one of the first multi brand retailor in Kuwait. Today, it operates 18 stores across Kuwait, 4 stores in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and on online store which caters to both markets



Haneen Al-Rumaihi and Jenan Al-Qassem from Burgan Bank pose with EMTAZ team from Kuwait Petroleum Corporation.

BURGAN BANK REVEALS A SPECIAL PACKAGE FOR OIL SECTOR EMPLOYEES

KUWAIT: Burgan Bank recently designed a special package catering to the financial needs of the oil sector employees working in Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) and its subsidiaries' or in Ministry of oil or EQUATE Petrochemical. In partnership with Kuwait Petroleum Company and its EMTAZ project, the new offering allows clients to enjoy several benefits upon transfer of salary to Burgan Bank.

Employees of oil sector will be entitled to a cash prize of KD 100 upon salary transfer, free credit cards for the first three years, free concierge services, free account statement for life, free cheque books for life (25 pages), one free telex transfer per month and 50 percent discount on safety boxes.

Employees from KPC and its subsidiaries or from, Ministry of Oil or EQUATE Petrochemical Company can avail the package by visiting any of Burgan Bank's branches or by applying online through Burgan Bank's official website. As part to its commitment towards offering the best to its clients, Burgan Bank will continue to catering to their financial needs by introducing new offers and promotions throughout the year.

WORLD CUSTOMS CHIEF LAUDS KUWAIT'S CUSTOMS ADMINISTRATION

BRUSSELS: The Ambassador of Kuwait to Belgium, Jasem Albudaiwi, met the Secretary General of the World Customs Organization (WCO), Kunio Mikuriya, Thursday evening and presented him two international convention documents to boost cooperation with the WCO.

The two documents are the Instruments of accession of Kuwait to the International Convention on the Simplification and Harmonization of Customs Procedures (Revised Kyoto Convention-RKC) and to the Convention on Temporary Admission (Istanbul Convention). "Today Kuwait accedes to the Kyoto and Istanbul conventions. It is a very good message to the world that Kuwait is a place for business and the customs procedure (in Kuwait) is very up to date," Mikuriya said after the meeting. "I congratulate Kuwait customs and we can work further to share and implement the global standards and make sure that the Kuwait's economy is well integrated into the global trading system," he said. "Kuwait has been a very important member for the World Custom Organization. Kuwait has been very modern, very democratic and very transparent," emphasized the head of the WCO.

"We are very keen to work with the Kuwait customs to share best practices from all over the world and encourage them to be more competitive than already a very good customs administration," he added. With the accessions of Kuwait, the RKC Convention now has 109 Contracting Parties, and the Istanbul Convention, 69

Contracting Parties. Meanwhile, Ambassador Jasem Al-Budaiwi said that the deposit of these documents confirms the importance attached by the State of Kuwait to the work of this Organization and Kuwait's desire to cooperate with the international community in regulating customs work to safeguard the interests of States and ensure their security. He noted that Kuwait is an active member of the World Customs Organization and participates regularly in the meetings held by the Organization and coordinates with Member States on all issues and issues of common interest.

The Kuwaiti Ambassador affirmed that he discussed with the Secretary-General of the WCO ways to enhance relations between the two sides, including considering the possibility of holding workshops dedicated to the employees of the concerned authorities in the State of Kuwait in order to familiarize them with what has been achieved and reached internationally in the field of Customs administration at the administrative and practical levels, and the findings of current customs regulations, structuring and cus-



BRUSSELS: Ambassador of Kuwait to Belgium Jasem Albudaiwi meets with Secretary **General of the World Customs Organization** (WCO) Kunio Mikuriya. — KUNA

toms institutions at the international level.

Created in 1952 the Brussels-based WCO is an inter-governmental organization with 181 Members, who are responsible for managing more than 98 percent of world trade. Kuwait became a member in 1993. Mikuriya has been Secretary General of the WCO since on January 1, 2009. Prior to joining the WCO, he worked for Japan's Ministry of Finance for 25 years. — KUNA









Roundup of Kuwait's humanitarian efforts

KUWAIT: Living up to its UN recognition as International 'Humanitarian Center,' the State of Kuwait continued assisting needy people in a number of countries in the region throughout the week. Last Monday, Somalia's Embassy in Kuwait voiced appreciation to the State of Kuwait for its relief aid to Somali people during the recent drought wave that hit the country. The embassy said in a release that it was very grateful to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's instructions called for helping Somalis. The Kuwait-based Mercy International, affiliated to the Association of Social Reform, had announced the launch of an urgent relief

campaign for the victims of drought in Somalia. The campaign delivered medical programs, food packages and mobile water tanks. The aid was handed out in cooperation with Kuwait's Zakat House, the Kuwait Relief Society, the International Islamic Charitable Organization (IICO) and Al-Najat Charity In Lebanon. Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) decided Thursday to pay the costs of a kidney transplant for an Iraqi three-year-old child, as part of the society's philanthropic work and support to urgent critical cases.

The KRCS delegate to Lebanon Musaed Al-Enezi said that the society decided to take this move in favor of Amir Bashar Aboud who has to be operated on as soon as possible. The society's humanitarian efforts are part of Kuwait's philanthropic initiatives extended to the needy around the globe, Enezi said. Meanwhile, the child's father expressed gratitude to the KRCS and the entire Kuwaiti people for the generous assistance offered to his son, and to many other people. He said that he discovered that his son was suffering kidney failure when the child was still six months old. His case has aggravated since then, and now it is critical.

Shebl Murani, the doctor supervising the child's case, told KUNA that the little boy arrived in the Lebanese capital with full renal failure and was admitted to the ICU. He added that the family could not afford a kidney transplant for the kid. The KRCS has provided the costs of scores of refugees in Lebanon over the last years through the kidney dialysis it launched in north of the country. In Akkar, northern Lebanon, Al-Sayer Group's CEO, Hamad Al-Sayer said Friday that Kuwait is always keen to provide a helping hand to people who are in need of aid worldwide.

Speaking during a visit to Al-Rihaniyeh Syrian refugee camp in Akkar, the Kuwaiti official said that the visit, by officials from Al-Sayer Group and the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), was to assess efforts to provide electricity and warm water using portable and stationary solar panels. Al-Sayer group's involvement is in line with the Kuwaiti leadership's policies to provide refugees, especially Syrians, with every bit of assistance that they need to overcome a bit of their suffering.

Al-Sayer and UNEP Regional Director Iyad Abumoghli carried out the visit to Al-Rihaniyeh camp, which includes around 1,000 people who are living in 400 tents, mostly accommodating children, women, and the elderly.

Meanwhile, Abumoghli said that cooperation between

Kuwait and UNEP was not new, affirming that both sides had worked previously on several programs in the region. The "annual and generous" support and funding by Kuwait to UNEP ventures will always be appreciated by the international organization, said the official who hoped that both sides would be able to work together in the near future. Some refugees at the camp told KUNA that they were grateful for the assistance provided by the Kuwaiti group, saying that from darkness, the camp was transform into a place where light illuminated their paths

The assistance also provided warm water that helped to bring a smile to the people who suffered from the lack basic human needs.

A statement by UNEP indicated that after suffering from long injustice and cold weather, the program through the generous financial support of its main partner Kuwaiti Al-Sayer Group - has contributed its efforts to lighting up tents and walkways in the camp in addition to providing solar-powered water heaters. This initiative is the first of its kind in terms of using clean energy to cater to the basic needs of refugees in one of the largest camps in Akkar. Meanwhile, KRCS signed a \$188,000 agreement with the International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC) to rehabilitate Syrian refugees in Lebanon, who were wounded during the conflict in their country.

KRCS's Enezi said that the agreement was part of the society's continuous efforts to help Syrian refugees in Lebanon. The agreement will also include other nationalities, said the Kuwaiti official who stressed that Syrian refugees will have the priority in receiving rehabilitation

Meanwhile, head of the ICRC delegation in Lebanon Fabrizio Carboni said that his organization was keen on bolstering efforts with KRCS to help all those who are in need including Syrian refugees in the country. The mission for the Syrian refugees will continue with other international partners to ease the pain of those who are suffering, said Carboni. In Irbil, the society Thursday inaugurated a second school for the displaced people.

It was the second school that Kuwait opened in Irbil to meet the educational needs of displaced children, Kuwait Consul-General in Irbil Dr Omar Al-Kandari said on the sidelines of the opening ceremony. He vowed that Kuwait would continue its humanitarian aid to displaced people in Kurdistan region.

Kandari added that the Kuwaiti non-stop aid to Iraqi people came in implementation of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's instructions to all Kuwaiti institutions to stand by Iraqi displaced people and help alleviate their suffering.

The new school contains 14 classrooms and accommodates for 500 students. For his part, Minister of Education in Kurdistan regional government Pishtiwan Sadig expressed gratitude for Kuwait aid for the displaced students in the province. He described the school building as a great humanitarian initiative with remarkable effects on the community. — KUNA



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GOING PLACES TOGETHER



Kuwait's Al-Najat Charity offered \$436,000 to cover the tuition expenses of 1,516 Jordanian and Syrian orphans in Jordan.



KRCS and ICRC workers are seen with a wounded Syrian refugee in Lebanon.



Relief aid sent from Kuwait to Libya.





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Report

TWO ARRESTED FOR SMUGGLING

KUWAIT: Salmi authorities arrested a Saudi for trying to smuggle a Syrian with an expired residency visa into Saudi Arabia by hiding him in his vehicle, said security sources, noting that the suspect had planned to take advantage of a congestion resulting from a system breakdown, but detectives managed to foil his attempt. Both suspects were arrested and referred to relevant authorities.

Reckless driver

A search is currently in progress for a reckless driver who was seen in a social media video driving his vehicle on two wheels in Ali Sabah Al-Salem Co-op Society's parking lot, endangering his own life and those of others.

Crashed drone

The wreckage of a camera-equipped drone was found after it crashed into Central Bank of Kuwait's building, said security sources. They said the National Guard's intelligence unit was alerted, and on inspecting the wreckage, they found a memory card. The sources added that the owner was identified to be an Egyptian who turned out to be working for a company licensed to shoot some videos in Mubarakiya. The man was summoned for questioning and said that he lost control over the drone and lost it. The man's story was verified after he presented the official license and documents.

Fugitive caught

A citizen wanted in nine separate cases was arrested when went to renew his passport at Shamiya citizen service center. Security sources said on checking the applicant, a clerk found that he was wanted, and reported the matter. On spotting detectives approaching, the man tried to escape, but was apprehended.

Camps removed

Ahmadi security removed three camps that were still pitched in the desert to the north of Ahmadi after the conclusion of the camping season. — Translated from the Arabic press



IRAQI FISHERMEN ARRESTED IN KHOR ABDULLAH FOR TRESPASSING

KUWAIT: Kuwait navy handed over seven Iraqi fishermen who had been arrested for violating national waters and fishing in Khor Abdullah using a boat with an Iraqi flag on it, said security sources.

The sources added the fishermen justified trespassing into Kuwaiti national waters by saying that the range in Iraqi waters became in view of restricted areas occupied by oil facilities and pipelines. —Translated from the arabic press

NBK EXPANDS ITS TAILORED SERVICES TO SERVE CUSTOMERS WITH DISABILITIES NOW REACHING SEVEN ATMS KUWAIT: Driven by its commitment to develop inclusive banking services that cater to all segments including people with

special needs, NBK has recently added an ATM machine at the Kuwait Blind Association to its existing list of seven machines to serve customers with special needs in various governorates. This comes in support of the Central Bank of Kuwait instructions and regulations that urge banks to provide tailored services for people with special needs.

NBK's Head of Branches Ghadeer Al-Awadi said "our growing ATM network is prepared to serve the banking requirements of customers with disabilities, which translate our aim to conveniently and safely service people with special needs; whether the blind, deaf or people with physical disability

Awadi added that the bank currently provides designated services in all branches for this segment, like: reserved and clearly marked parking spaces, as well as wheelchair friendly access to the branch and ATMs. Yet, NBK has recently dedicated seven ATMs to further support our customers with special needs and are situated in the following locations: Fahaheel Al-Saheli, Mubarak Al-Kabeer, Cinema Salmiya, Saad Al-Abdullah, Rehab, Head Office and now Kuwait Blind Association.

NBK's ATMs are equipped with Braille keypads and a headset jack for voice guidance commands to assist customers in conducting their transactions privately, as well as employing additional security measures

inside the ATM room to guarantee customers' safety and personal wellbeing at all times. Awadi concluded by affirming that this step stems from the bank's strict adherence to CBK's latest instructions and regulation to equip one branch in each governorate to serve people with special needs, as well as translates NBK's mission to deliver world-class banking services that cater to all segments. It is worth noting that selected NBK's branches are managed by a team of well-trained staff to communicate in sign language, in addition to services for the visually impaired and disabled customers such as Braille printing facilities inside the branch, iPads providing speech to text functionality for visually-impaired, easily accessible safe deposit boxes, and debit and credit cards with photo functionality for easy identification, when requested.

I AM NBK

KUWAIT: The National Bank of Kuwait hosted its annual ceremony to honor its elite staff members from the retail banking services group, featuring the participation of several senior management members.

GOVERNORATE HONORS COMMERCIAL BANK

KUWAIT: Ahmadi governorate recently held a special ceremony to honor the sponsors and participants in its National Day celebrations. The ceremony was held in the presence of representatives from the Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK). CBK was honored in appreciation of its efforts in communal and social responsibility activities.

Speaking on the occasion, Ahmadi Governor Sheikh Fawaz Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah expressed gratitude to CBK's administration for its second participation in the festivities. Meanwhile, CBK's Assistant Manager for Public Relations and Media Amani Al-Wer'a stressed that CBK's participation in KUWAIT: Ahmadi Governor Sheikh sponsoring the governorate's national ceremonies is an integral part of social responsibilities towards the society.



Fawaz Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah (left) honors the Commercial Bank of



DEMOGRAPHIC IMBALANCE

By Khalid Al-Tarrah

here is no doubt that the political, economic and security situation the region is going through compels its countries to give the demographic imbalance issue more attention, following the tough circumstances the Arab region went through and their repercussions on the Arabian Gulf region. The demographic imbalance was always under discussion and still is, but it does not find the necessary practical steps to serious discussions that reach clear views in order to present suitable solutions.

This introduction was mentioned in a study made on March 12, 2017 by the political and economic studies department at the State Ministry for National Assembly Affairs. What made me go through the study of the demographic imbalance is the argument that the political arena has seen lately, especially what is related to the opinions of those who support amending the nationality law, and others who reject such proposal

For the sake of neutrality, I went through the website of the State Ministry for National Assembly Affairs, and I ended up with an effort that was neither scientific nor tiring, to read the political research as described by the ministry. I had previously talked about this ministry, saying that its existence or nonexistence are the same, because it is a ministry that should be merged with another state department, and has its structure reduced or cancelled completely in order to rationalize government spending as mentioned in the so-called the 'economic reform document.'

The research includes in its introduction a clear confession about "absence of serious discussions to find suitable solutions." This is not strange for a struggling state department, but the introduction of the nine-page research that was based on the sources of four local newspapers, al-Mojtamaa Magazine (the Muslims magazine around the world), and the Kuwait 2035 vision that "the danger of the current and coming results require a different performance by decision makers in their dealing with the phenomenon that is worrying Kuwait and Kuwaitis more than any time before."

Who are the decision makers that are supposed to have a different performance? The answer is simply the government, as the government bears the responsibility of the demographic structure's imbalance for many years. The problem does not only lie in the presence of "unskilled labor and expats whose numbers are more than citizens," as the study said, but also in damaging the national identity since the 1970s, besides the government's procrastination in "dealing with the situation of illegal residents," which is one of the recommendations mentioned in the study.

Scientific studies and appeals by MPs and writers for tens of years warned against the demographic imbalance, which has been snowballing until it later became a social and political ticking bomb that may lead to fragmenting the society and causing a division of dire effects. The humble demographic study is an indicator of the existence of more than one authority within the executive authority. The State Ministry of National Assembly Affairs carried out a number of political studies including three studies in 2010, three others in 2015, and one in 2017, while the economic studies' department did not have any study, perhaps because we are approaching a 'new Kuwait with eyes that do not see.'

—Translated by Kuwait Times

الجريدة.

POLITICS, NOT RELIGION BEHIND TERRORISM

By Ali Al-Bedah

hy does terrorism strike Shiites in Kuwait and Christians in Egypt, not the other way round? The answer is that current terrorism is not practiced for religious reasons or for doctrinal fanaticism. The ultimate aim is division, undermining national unity and executing a policy of dividing the Arab Nation for Israel's best interest.

Such terrorism usually seeks societies where it can flourish and start endless fires, especially if such society includes a large religious or doctrinal pluralism to effectively facilitate the creation of tumults. The ultimate goal of this policy is to have GCC doctrinal sects and the Egyptian religious factions fight each other the way it happened in Irag, Syria, Sudan, Libya and Yemen. Whoever planned, trained, funded, led, armed and provided all modern technologies to either side, does not aim at supporting Sunnis, Shiites or Muslims against Copts. This terrorism has no religion even if it disguises behind old different names and manages to recruit sickminded people for its suicide bombing operations. Followers of the behavior of extremists in all Arab countries would easily realize that Islam is their least concern.

Moreover, their primary goal is to destroy Islam. They clearly have a more political objective, which is a criminal one only serving Islam's enemies who are definitely not Muslim or Christian sects in any way. Reactions are still limited to caution and security measures which usually have a high tone after each aggression or attack, then start to fade away a while later, making criminals await the following possible moment of relaxation and negligence to resume their crimes. The same operations have been recurring with the same techniques each time.

The things we have not so far done in combating terrorism is preventing the spread of its ideology, raising younger generations up to love and rejection of division because terrorism has been appealing to certain ears since minds had been and are still being brought up to hate and rejection of others. I am not talking here about a certain doctrine, but all of them practice the same sort of feeding and prompting. They knowingly and unknowingly recruit minds and wait for a time when terrorism can strike or find people ready to use bombs to attack their fellow citizens.

Religious and educational messages should address our kids, teaching them to love everybody. Governments must also be fair with their own citizens to avoid creating grudges, envy and fanaticism. The recent terrorist attacks in the Egyptian churches must cause all Arab hearts to bleed. We should all condemn them and tell the Egyptian Copts that they are the original people of Egypt. It was them who welcomed Arabs and Muslim and opened their houses for them. We would never tolerate harming them. Egyptian Copts must determine the real source of terrorism, who is behind it and who manages it in order to realize that the Copts' enemy is the very same of that of Muslims and all Arabs.

— Translated by Kuwait Times from Al-Jarida



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SUNDAY, APRIL 16, 2017

OPCW: RIDDING THE WORLD OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS

8 charged over Pakistani liberal student's death

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JALALABAD: US forces and Afghan commandos are seen in Asad Khil near the site of a US bombing in the Achin district of Jalalabad, east of Kabul, Afghanistan yesterday.—AP

MOTHER OF ALL BOMBS' DEATH TOLL HITS 90

JALALABAD: Afghan authorities yesterday reported a jump in fatalities from the American military's largest non-nuclear bomb, declaring some 90 Islamic State fighters dead, as US-led ground forces advanced on their mountain hideouts. Dubbed the "Mother Of All Bombs", the GBU-43/B Massive Ordnance Air Blast was unleashed in combat for the first time Thursday, hitting IS positions in a remote area of eastern Nangarhar province.

The unprecedented attack triggered global shock waves, with some condemning the use of Afghanistan as what they called a testing ground for the weapon, and against a militant group that is not considered a threat as big as the resurgent Taleban. The bomb smashed IS's hideouts, a tunnel-and-cave complex that had been mined against conventional ground attacks, engulfing the remote area in a huge mushroom cloud and towering flames. "At least 92 Daesh (IS) fighters were killed in the bombing," Achin district governor Esmail Shinwari said yesterday.

Shinwari said that American and Afghan ground forces were slowly advancing on the mountainous area blanketed with landmines, but there were still some pockets of resistance from insurgents. "New fighters have probably come from the other side of the border to collect the dead bodies," he added. Nangarhar provincial spokesman Attaullah Khogyani gave a death toll of 90, far higher than the initial toll of 36 IS fighters given by Afghan officials. Shinwari insisted there were "no military and civilian casualties at all". Security experts say IS had built their redoubts close to civilian homes, but the government said thousands of local families had already fled the area in recent months of fighting.

An elderly man who lives close to the bombing site in Achin's Momand Dara area said the blast was so piercingly loud that his infant granddaughter was experiencing hearing loss. The massive bomb was dropped after fighting intensified over the past week and US-backed ground forces struggled to advance on the area. An American Special Forces soldier was killed last Saturday in Nangarhar while conducting anti-IS operations. "The enemy had created bunkers, tunnels and extensive mine fields, and this weapon was used to reduce those obstacles so that we could continue our offensive in Nangarhar," General John Nicholson, the top US commander in Afghanistan, said on Friday.

'Disproportionate'

President Ashraf Ghani threw his support behind the bombardment, saying it was "designed to support the efforts of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) and US forces conducting clearance operations in the region." The bombing came only a week after US President Donald Trump ordered missile strikes against Syria in retaliation for a suspected chemical attack, and as China warned of the potential for conflict amid rising US tensions with North Korea.

Trump hailed the mission in Achin as "very, very successful". But some analysts called the action "disproportionate". "The Trump administration made a lot of noise with this bomb, but the general state of play on the ground remains the same: The Taleban continues to wage a formidable and ferocious insurgency. ISIS, by comparison, is a sideshow," Michael Kugelman of the Woodrow Wilson Center in Washington told AFP, using an alternative acronym for IS.

"Still, from a strategic standpoint, there is an unsettling takeaway here: The US pulled off a huge shock and awe mission against an enemy that isn't even the top threat to the US in Afghanistan. The Taleban continues to sit pretty." The Taleban, a much bigger insurgent group, is expected to soon announce the start of this year's fighting season. IS, notorious for its reign of terror in Syria and Iraq, has made inroads into Afghanistan in recent years, attracting disaffected members of the Pakistani and Afghan Taleban as well as Uzbek Islamists. But the group has been steadily losing ground in the face of heavy pressure both from US air strikes and a ground offensive led by Afghan forces.—AFP

CALIFORNIA'S MOSQUE LED BY WOMEN OPENS DOORS TO ALL

BERKELEY: The second mosque in the United States led solely by women held its inaugural service in California on Friday, but unlike a Los Angeles congregation that opened two years ago, the new female-led Muslim house of worship in Berkeley is open to both genders. The Qal'bu Maryam Women's Mosque "is a place for women to worship in the sanctuary, to not be hidden away in dank rooms," said Rabi'a Keeble, founder of the Berkeley mosque, whose name means "heart of Mary" in Arabic.

Many mosques around the world admit men and women, but most segregate the genders. At the Women's Mosque of America in Los Angeles, male worshippers over the age of 12 are excluded, making the new Berkeley mosque the first of its kind in the country. "We uplift the female, and just as the Prophet loved women, we must follow in his footsteps and love ourselves and each other," she said. Keeble is a 40-something convert from Christianity with a master's degree in religious leadership from the Starr King School of Ministry, a seminary affiliated with the University of California, Berkeley which has donated space for the mosque. At Qal'bu Maryam, there is no imam, as the cleric who conducts worship at a mosque is called. Rather, female lay leaders will rotate in leading the prayers and the talks. About 50 or so women and men, including Muslims, Christians and Jews, attended the jummah or traditional Friday service, listening to prayer leader Crystal Keshawarz chant the holy Arabic words, "God is great" or "Allahu Akbar." The Quran does not directly address whether women can lead congregational prayer, according to many traditional Islamic scholars. Some argue the Prophet Mohammad gave permission to women to lead any kind of prayer, while others say that he meant to restrict women to leading prayer at home.

Still, many traditionalists do not believe a man should hear a woman's voice in prayer. "Men are conditioned to believe that women's voices are seducing and if they hear her voice they are pushed into an adulteress area," Keeble said. "Men should think better of themselves. They are not animals." Mohammad Sarodi, former chairman of the Muslim Community Association in Santa Clara, California, said he would not attend prayers led by women. "If women are leading prayers for women, fine. But if they are leading prayers for men, then that is not something I have been raised with," Sarodi, 70, said. "I have never heard from the scholars that this is acceptable. Women are certainly not inferior, but this is not how it's done."—Reuters





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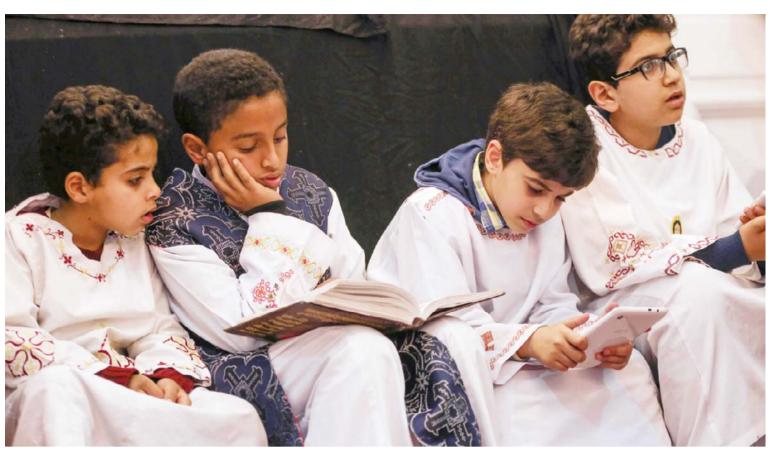












MOHALLA: Egyptian Christian boys take part in the Good Friday procession at the St George church in the town of Mohalla in the north

SECURITY TIGHT AS EGYPTIAN COPTS PREPARE FOR EASTER

'Happiness of resurrection helps us overcome the pain'

churches as Coptic Christians prepared for a subdued Easter mass yesterday days after suicide bombers killed scores of people in two churches north of the capital. Worshippers will pass through arduous checks outside churches after police, backed by the military, beefed up security following the Palm Sunday church bombings that killed 45 people in two cities north of Cairo. The government had declared a state of emergency and called in the army to protect "vital" installations following the suicide bombings in Tanta and Alexandria, which were claimed by the Islamic State group.

Police have deployed in force since Friday creating a cordon outside churches for initial inspection, and worshippers will be searched again with metal detectors at church gates, interior ministry officials said. The heightened security procedures include preventing cars from parking in streets adjacent to churches, according to the officials. "Security has indeed improved so much as it seems the situation needed to be tightened up a lot," said Coptic

CAIRO: Egypt tightened security outside Church spokesman Boulos Halim. Coptic Pope Tawadros II will lead Easter mass in Cairo's Saint Mark's Cathedral, while the church said celebrations this year would be scaled back. "Tanta and Alexandria created a big shock, for all of Egypt," Halim said. Easter, which along with Christmas is one of Christianity's most important events, marks what followers believe was the resurrection of Christ on the third day after his crucifixion. In Egypt, Copts break a 55-day fast abstaining from all animal products following Saturday's mass.

Sunday's bombings, the deadliest attack on Copts in recent memory, were the latest in a series of attacks against the Christians who make up around 10 percent of Egypt's 90 million people. In December, an IS suicide bomber struck a Cairo church, killing 29 people. Halim said the church will forgo Sunday morning's traditional celebrations, and instead members will visit the families of "martyrs" as well as those wounded in the blasts, including police officers. "The happiness of resurrection helps us overcome feelings of pain," said Halim.

Further attacks feared

IS, which has waged an insurgency in the north of the Sinai Peninsula that has seen scores of attacks on security forces, has threatened further attacks on Copts. One Copt who gave his name only as John said he will attend Easter mass despite the threat of attacks. He plans to go to a church in the relative safety of the capital, but admitted "if I were somewhere else outside of Cairo, like a village, I would not want my relatives to go and I would be worried about attending".

Christians in a village south of Cairo had been attacked by Muslims after they tried to pray in an abandoned home on Thursday, after which a mob set fire to four homes nearby, according to police officials. The village boasts several mosques, but Christians there have been prevented from building a church, Ishak Ibrahim, a researcher at the Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights said. "There is a general climate where Copts are being persecuted and unfortunately the state just tries to stop violence from spreading, they don't solve the root cause of the problem." — AFP

OPCW: RIDDING THE WORLD OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS

THE HAGUE: Russia has criticized the world's chemical weapons watchdog for not sending experts to the site of an alleged chemical attack in Syria, saying it was "unacceptable to analyze events from a distance". But the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) is in a difficult position, with its scientists and experts undertaking a dangerous mission in an ongoing war zone. Here is a look at the OPCW:

What is the OPCW?

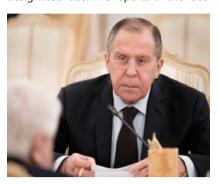
Founded in 1997, the OPCW based in The Hague oversees the application of The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) aimed at ridding the world of toxic arms and preventing new ones being manufactured. Chemical weapons, such as mustard gas, were first used in combat on the battlefields of World War I, and also in 1988 by late Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein against civilians in Halabja, Iraq. Other incidents include the 1995 subway sarin gas attack in Tokyo by a Japanese cult. After almost 20 years of negotiations, the convention took effect on April 29, 1997. The OPCW now has 192 member nations. In the past two decades, the OPCW has overseen the destruction of some 94 percent of the world's declared chemical weapons stockpiles. It is planning a ceremony on April 26 to mark its 20th anniversary. Russia and the United States are on target to destroy their chemical arms stockpiles within the next seven years. Only four nations have not yet signed up to the convention-Egypt, Israel, North Korea and South Sudan.

What is OPCW mission in Syria?

After years of denials, the Syrian regime caved to international pressure in September 2013 and agreed under a US-Russia deal to hand over its toxic stockpile to the OPCW for destruction, averting threatened US air strikes. The admission came after a sarin gas attack in August 2013 on rebel-held areas near Damascus that was blamed by the West and the opposition on the regime. An estimated 1,000 people died. The OPCW says 100 percent of Syria's declared chemical arms-a total of 1,300 metric tons-was handed over and destroyed by January 2016. However, amid continuing attacks there are fears Damascus did not declare everything. The secretary general Ahmet Uzumcu has highlighted what he calls "gaps and inconsistencies" in Syria's 2013 declaration. Chlorine, which can be used to make choking chlorine gas, is however a common chemical for such uses as fertilizers and water purification and does not need to be declared as a chemical weapon.

How does OPCW work in Syria?

For the first time in the OPCW's history, it is investigating chemical weapons in a country embroiled in a civil war. In 2014, a fact-finding mission of scientists and experts was set up to investigate persistent allegations of chemical weapons attacks. It has deployed "numerous" times to Syria and uses "investigative methods to determine if chemical weapons have been used", according to the OPCW. After an OPCW team hit a home-made roadside bomb in Syria in early 2014, experts can no longer travel outside of Damascus for their own safety. Instead, the OPCW "interviews witnesses and obtains environmental and biomedical samples and physical evidence for analysis" in OPCWdesignated labs. The reports of the fact-



Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov

finding mission are sent to a joint UN-OPCW team known as the JIM, set up by the UN Security Council in 2015 to determine "to the greatest extent feasible" who is behind the attacks. It has so far found the Syrian military to blame for at least three chemical attacks in villages in 2014 and 2015. And it has said the so-called Islamic State group was behind a 2015 mustard gas attack.

What about April 4 attack?

The OPCW has an "ongoing" investigation into the April 4 attack on the rebelheld town of Khan Sheikhun, in Idlib province, which killed 87 people. At a special OPCW meeting in The Hague on Thursday, Uzumcu said technical experts had analyzed available information "and their preliminary assessment (was) that this was a credible allegation". Britain told the meeting its scientists had analyzed samples which "have tested positive for the nerve agent sarin, or a sarin-like substance". Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad said the reports were "100 percent for us a fabrication" to justify a US military strike on a Syrian air base. The fact-finding mission is hoping to complete its work in the next two to three weeks. — AFP



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QABOUN: Smoke rises over the skyline in the Qaboun neighborhood of Damascus, Syria, during shelling by Syrian

BLAST ON BUS CONVOY KILLS DOZENS IN SYRIA

Syrians stranded by stalled evacuation deal

BEIRUT: A bomb blast hit a bus convoy waiting to enter Aleppo yesterday, killing and wounding dozens of people after an evacuation deal between Syria's warring sides halted and stranded thousands at two transit points on the city outskirts. Pro-Damascus media outlets said a suicide attacker had detonated a car bomb and killed at least 22 people. Images posted by the outlets showed bodies lying next to charred buses with their windows blown out, and flaming vehicles belching out thick black smoke.

British-based monitor the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights counted 24 dead and dozens more wounded. The blast hit buses in the Rashidin area on Aleppo's outskirts, which had been waiting to cross from rebel-held territory into the government-controlled city itself, carrying people evacuated from two Shiite villages on Friday. The residents, alongside hundreds of pro-government fighters, had left the two rebel-besieged villages in northwest Idlib province under a deal where in exchange, hundreds of Sunni insurgents and their families moved out of a governmentbesieged area near Damascus.

But a delay in the agreement had left all those evacuated stuck at two transit points on Aleppo's outskirts since late on Friday. Residents of Alwere waiting in the Rashidin area. The rebels and residents of Madaya near Damascus were waiting at the government-held Ramousah bus garage, a few miles away. They were to be transported to Idlib province, which the armed opposition controls. The agreement is one of several over recent months that has seen President Bashar Al-Assad's government take back control of areas long besieged by his forces and their allies.

The Observatory said the delay was caused by the fact that rebels from Zabadani, another town near Damascus included in the deal, had not yet been granted safe passage out. A pro-opposition activist said insurgents blamed the delay partly on the fact that a smaller number of progovernment fighters had left the Shiite villages than was agreed. Earlier yesterday, at the transit point where the buses from Al-Foua and Kefraya were waiting, one resident said he was not yet sure where he would live. "After Aleppo I'll see what the rest of the group is doing, if there are any preparations. My house, land and belongings are all in Al-Foua," Mehdi Tahhan said.

'We had no choice'

A Madaya resident, speaking from

Foua and Kefraya, the Shiite villages, the bus garage inside Aleppo, said people had been waiting there since late on Friday, and were not being allowed to leave. "There's no drinking water or food. The bus garage is small so there's not much space to move around," Ahmed, 24, said. "We're sad and angry about what has happened," he said. Many people felt that they had been forced to leave, he said. "There was no other choice in the end - we were besieged inside a small area in Madaya." Syria's opposition says the evacuation deals, which include areas of Aleppo and a district in the city of Homs, amount to forced displacement of Assad's opponents from Syria's main urban centers in the west of the country.

The agreements are also causing demographic changes, they say, because those who are displaced are mostly Sunni Muslims. Syria's population is mostly Sunni. Assad is from the Alawite religious minority, often considered an offshoot of Shiite Islam. He has been backed militarily by Russia, and by Shiite fighters from Iran and the Lebanese Hezbollah group in Syria's six-year-old conflict. Assad has the military advantage over rebels in the west thanks to Russia's intervention in 2015, although the insurgents are still fighting back and have made gains in some areas. — Reuters





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FORT MEADE: Photo shows the National Security Agency (NSA) campus in Fort Meade, Md, where the US Cyber Command is located. The American military services are looking for new ways to bring in more civilians with high-tech skills who can help fight Islamic State militants and prepare for the new range of technological threats the US will face. — AP

US ARMY TAPS RESERVISTS WITH CYBER SKILLS TO FIGHT ISLAMIC STATE MILITIA

PENTAGON DISRUPTS ENEMY'S RECRUITMENT, FUNDRAISING

WASHINGTON: A decade ago, he was a young Army soldier training Iraqi troops when he noticed their primitive filing system: Handwritten notes threaded with different colors of yarn, stacked in piles. For organization's sake, he built them a simple computer database. Now an Army reservist, the major is taking a break from his civilian high-tech job to help America's technological fight against Islamic State extremists, part of a growing force of cyberexperts the Pentagon has assembled to defeat the group.

"The ability to participate in some way in a real mission, that is actually something that's rare, that you can't find in private sector," said the 38-year-old Nebraska native who is working at US Cyber Command at Fort Meade, Maryland. "You're part of a larger team putting your skills to use, not just optimizing clicks for a digital ad, but optimizing the ability to counter ISIS or contribute to the security of our nation."

Last year, then-Defense Secretary Ash Carter expressed frustration that the United States was losing the cyberwar against Islamic States militants. He pushed the Cyber Command to be more aggressive. In response, the Pentagon launched an effort to incorporate cyber technology into its daily military fight, including new ways to disrupt the enemy's communications, recruiting, fundraising and propaganda. To speak with someone at the front lines of the cyber campaign, The Associated Press agreed to withhold the major's name. The military says he

could be threatened or targeted by the militants if he is identified publicly.

The major and other officials wouldn't provide precise details on the highly classified work he is doing. But Lt Gen Paul Nakasone, commander of US Army Cyber Command, said the major is bringing new expertise for identifying enemy networks, pinpointing system administrators or developers, and potentially monitoring how the Islamic State's online traffic moves. He "has the ability to bring an analytic focus of what the threat is doing, coupled with a really deep understanding of how networks run," Nakasone said, describing such contributions as "really helpful for us." He outlined a key question for the military: "How do you impact an adversary that's using cyberspace against us?"

The military services are looking for new ways to bring in more civilians with high-tech skills who can help against IS, and prepare for the new range of technological threats the nation will face. Nakasone said that means getting Guard and Reserve members with technical expertise in digital forensics, math crypto-analysis and writing computer code. The challenge is how to find them. "I would like to say it's this great database that we have, that we've been able to plug in and say, 'Show me the best tool developers and analysts that you have out there," Nakasone said.

"We don't have that yet. We are going to have one, though, by June."The Army Reserve is starting a pilot program cataloging soldiers' talents. Among 190,000 Army reservists, Nakasone said there might be up to 15,000 with some type of cyber-related skills. But there are legal and privacy hurdles, and any database hinges on reservists voluntarily and accurately providing information on their capabilities.

Normally, Nakasone said a reservist's record includes background, training, assignments and schools attended. "I would like to know every single person that has been trained as a certified ethical hacker," he said. The Army has been steadily building cyber mission teams, as part of a broader Defense Department undertaking. Of the 41 Army teams, just over half come from the Army National Guard and Army Reserve. Nakasone said officials were still working out costs. "The money will come," he said, because building a ready cyber force is necessary.

The Army major said others in the civilian high-tech industry are interested in helping. Many would like to participate "in something bigger than themselves, something that has intrinsic value for the nation," he said. The major said he has signed up for a second one-year tour in his cyber job. He is looking at options for staying longer. "I find what I'm doing very satisfying, because I have an opportunity to implement things, to get things done and see them work and see tangible results," he said. "I'm not making as much as I was on the civilian side. But the satisfaction is that strong, and is that valuable, that it's worth it." — AP



LITTLE ROCK: Pulaski County Circuit Judge Wendell Griffen takes part of an anti-death penalty demonstration outside the Governor's Mansion in Little Rock, Ark. — AP

ARKANSAS MULTIPLE EXECUTION IN LIMBO AFTER COURT RULINGS

LITTLE ROCK: Arkansas' push to resume executions after nearly 12 years with an already compromised plan to put eight men to death over 11 days is in limbo after a judge blocked the use of a lethal injection drug a supplier says officials misleadingly obtained and the state's highest court halted the execution of one of the first inmates who had been scheduled to die. A federal judge could further upend the plans, with a possible ruling on Saturday on whether to halt the executions over the inmates' complaints about the compressed timetable and the use of a controversial sedative in the lethal injections.

Pulaski County Circuit Judge Wendell Griffen issued a temporary restraining order Friday blocking the state from using its supply of vecuronium bromide after a company said it had sold the drug to the state for medical purposes, not capital punishment. Griffen scheduled a hearing Tuesday, the day after the first execution was scheduled. Griffen's order effectively halts the executions, which had dropped to six after the state Supreme Court blocked one execution Friday and a federal judge halting another last week, unless it's reversed or the state finds a new supply of the drug.

Supply of midazolam

Arkansas, which has not executed an inmate since 2005 because of drug short-

ages and legal challenges, had initially planned to execute eight before the end of April, when its supply of midazolam expires. That plan, if carried out, would have marked the most inmates executed by a state in such a short period since the US Supreme Court reinstated the death penalty in 1976. "The rulings today are just part of the process and not unexpected," JR Davis, a spokesman for Gov Asa Hutchinson, said in a statement. "The Governor will meet with the Attorney General next week to discuss the appropriate action."

Attorney General Leslie Rutledge's office said she planned to file an emergency request with the state Supreme Court to vacate Griffen's order, saying Griffen shouldn't handle the case. Local media outlets had tweeted photos and video of Griffen appearing to mimic an inmate strapped to a gurney at an anti-death penalty demonstration outside the Governor's Mansion Friday afternoon. "As a public opponent of capital punishment, Judge Griffen should have recused himself from this case," Rutledge spokesman Judd Deere said. The order came the same day justices issued a stay for Bruce Ward, who was scheduled to be put to death on Monday night for the 1989 death of a woman found strangled in the men's room of the Little Rock convenience store where she worked. — AP

JUDGE WEIGHS BLOCKING US ORDER ON SANCTUARY CITIES

LOS ANGELES: A US judge on Friday heard arguments from lawyers representing two so-called sanctuary cities that are challenging President Donald Trump's executive order stripping such jurisdictions of federal funds. The outcome of the high-profile case in US District Court in San Francisco could impact more than 300 cities and counties across the United States that have denounced as unconstitutional Trump's order to withhold funds from cities that refuse to cooperate with federal immigration agents.

The federal judge in the case, William Orrick, said he would issue his decision "as soon as I can" after he heard arguments from lawyers representing San Francisco and Santa Clara County. Both jurisdictions have sued the administration and are seeking an injunction against Trump's order which calls for money to be taken away from local governments that refuse to share information with federal authorities about undocumented immigrants. The case bears similarities to the court challenges faced by the Trump administration over its two travel bans targeting Muslim-majority countries.

Santa Clara officials say the county stands to lose nearly \$1.7 billion in federal funds because of the executive order aimed at sanctuary jurisdictions. San Francisco receives up to \$2 billion a year in federal funding. Lawyers for the Trump administration told the judge on Friday that neither jurisdiction was at immediate risk of losing the federal funding, adding that the order was simply aimed at coercing them to comply with immigration laws.

'Don't mess with us'

"There's been no action threatened or taken against the cities," acting assistant attorney general Chad Readler told the judge. He said Trump's order was "narrow" and would affect a limited number of grants from the departments of Justice and Homeland Security. However attorneys representing Santa Clara and San Francisco in their landmark lawsuits urged Orrick to block the order nationwide on grounds it is unconstitutional. They also said the judge in making his decision should take into account comments made by Trump and Attorney General Jeff Sessions against sanctuary jurisdictions.

Dave Cortese, president of the Board of Supervisors for Santa Clara County, told AFP that it was clear Trump's order was "hastily" put together and was unlikely to stand up in court. "He (Trump) has got two choices-he can just continue to be a bull in a china shop and continue to put forward executive orders and other initiatives that don't pass constitutional muster and that are refuted by the courts or he can get better advice and be more thoughtful in what he's doing," Cortese said. — AFP

WRONG-WAY CRASH KILLS 3 IN PHOENIX

PHOENIX: A wrong-way collision on a Phoenix freeway killed two university students and a young adult Friday in the latest in a string of head-on wrecks on Arizona highways. A 22-year-old man driving a car with Colorado license plates on the wrong side of the freeway slammed into a vehicle carrying two women, ages 19 and 20, at about 2 am, said Arizona Department of Public Safety spokesman Raul Garcia.

Authorities have been seeing a spate of wrong-way wrecks on Phoenix freeways in recent years, with drug and alcohol use typically the main culprit. Authorities have responded to seven wrong way wrecks with injuries or deaths statewide so far this year, compared to nine for all of last year, said Trooper Kameron Lee, another Arizona DPS spokesman. State officials are trying to find ways to prevent the crashes, most of which happen on the web of freeways that weave through the Phoenix metro area. Garcia said the identities of those killed in the wreck weren't immediately available.

But Grand Canyon University spokesman Bob Romantic said two of those killed were students at the private Christian university and that they were in separate vehicles involved in the crash on Interstate 17. Romantic said the university, out of respect for the privacy of the families, would not be releasing information about the students. The car carrying the two women, believed to be sisters, had North Carolina license plates.

Arizona troopers were working with Colorado and North Carolina authorities to notify relatives, Garcia said. It's not immediately known whether the wrong-way driver was under the influence of drugs or alcohol, and that will be determined by toxicol-

ogy tests conducted by the Maricopa County Medical Examiner's Office, Garcia said. In an effort to keep drivers on the right side of the freeway, the Arizona Department of Transportation has installed hundreds of larger and lower "wrong way" and "do not enter" signs on more than 100 freeway ramps.

The agency plans later this year to install a pilot detection and warning system on interstate 17 and ramps, agency spokesman Steve Elliott said. The system will send alerts to law enforcement and transportation department traffic operators, post warnings on overheard message boards, provide location updates on wrong-way drivers and trigger flashing warning signs at exit ramps to try "to get the wrong-way driver to self-correct," ADOT said in a statement. "Ultimately, engineering, along with enforcement, can be only one part of the response to wrong-way driving because this is first and foremost a driver behavior issue," the statement said.

ADOT began planning the pilot project in late 2015 following a rash of wrong-way crashes, including ones that killed an off-duty Mesa police officer and a young Mesa couple. The Department of Public Safety regards wrong-way driving primarily as a societal problem, Garcia said.

"We want the public to take responsibility" to not get behind the wheel if impaired and to keep others from driving if they're impaired, he said. Alternatively, "if they can't take those keys away, dial 911 so we can take those keys away." He also said drivers should stay alert, avoid distractions and plan how they would respond in a split second to a hazard such as an oncoming wrong-way vehicle. — AP



PHOENIX: Photo shows the mangled remains of cars involved in a fatal accident on the Northbound Interstate 17 in Phoenix, Ariz on Friday, April 14, 2017. — AP

4 BRUTALLY MURDERED IN SUSPECTED GANG KILLING

BAY SHORE: Four young people found brutally slain near a soccer field in a park as part of a suspected gang killing were a 16year-old, two 18-year-olds, including one visiting from Florida, and a 20-year-old man, police said. The four were found on Wednesday night, all with what police described as "significant trauma" wounds inflicted by sharp instruments. The killings are among 11 that have struck the working-class immigrant communities of Brentwood and Central Islip, on eastern Long Island, since last September. They're all suspected to be at the hands of the MS-13 street gang, police said. "At this point all indications are that this is the work of MS-13," Suffolk County police Commissioner Timothy Sini said Friday in announcing the identities of the victims.

He cautioned, however, that detectives were still pursuing leads. A day earlier Sini said the tactics employed in the killings using sharp instruments and extreme violence - were consistent with the gang, which has been gaining a foothold on Long Island for years. He identified the four people found Wednesday as Jefferson Villalobos, 18, of Pompano, Florida; Michael Lopez Banegas, 20, of Brentwood; Jorge Tigre, 18, of Bellport; and Justin Llivicura, 16, of East Patchogue. Newsday reported that relatives said Villalobos was visiting his cousin, Banegas, and other family members.

On Thursday, William Tigre told

reporters near the crime scene that an acquaintance had called him to say his brother Jorge was among those killed. The acquaintance also indicated he knew of the killings because he said he had been there. "He just said, 'I saw your brother dying, and I escaped," William Tigre said. He did not return a telephone call seeking comment after police confirmed his brother was among the victims. Sini said Friday that police are aware of a grisly video of the crime scene that was sent to one of the victims' girlfriends, but he declined to comment further, citing the ongoing investigation. He reiterated that Suffolk County detectives have been working with FBI investigators to solve the killings. Police have offered a \$25,000 reward.

Last month, authorities announced the arrests of more than a dozen gang members, including some charged with killing two high school girls with baseball bats and machetes as they walked near their home. The MS-13 gang, also called Mara Salvatrucha, is believed to have been founded as a neighborhood street gang in Los Angeles in the mid-1980s by immigrants fleeing a civil war in El Salvador. It grew after some members were deported to El Salvador, helping turn that country into one of the most violent places in the world. It's now a major international criminal enterprise, with tens of thousands of members in several Central American countries and many US states. — AP



NEW YORK: Emergency personnel walk near a crime scene where four bodies were found in Central Islip, NY. — AP

SRI LANKA GARBAGE DUMP TOLL DEATH RISES TO 19

COLOMBO: Sri Lankan soldiers dug through rubbish with their bare hands yesterday looking for survivors after a huge garbage mountain collapsed destroying 145 homes and killing at least 19 people. Four children were among the dead following Friday's incident at Kolonnawa on the northeastern edge of the capital, Colombo national hospital spokeswoman Pushpa Soysa said. The 300-foot (91-metre) high dump came crashing down on neighboring homes Friday as the country marked the traditional new year. Military spokesman Brigadier Roshan Seneviratne said troops were keeping up a rescue operation 24 hours after disaster struck, but feared that chances of finding anyone alive were slim.

Businessman Saman Wimalasiri was one of the first responders and said he helped to rescue several people trapped inside wrecked homes. "We used ropes and pulled out an elderly woman who was trapped under the debris of her own home," Wimalasiri said. "It took us about four hours to get



COLOMBO: Sri Lankan residents walk through damaged homes at the site of a collapsed garbage dump in Colombo yesterday. — AFP

her to safety." He said some areas could not be reached because the garbage slide had made them unstable. The ini-

tial rescue was carried out by volunteers such as Wimalasiri before President Maithripala Sirisena ordered hundreds of troops to search for survivors through the night. Police said 145 shacks, were destroyed when a side of the garbage mountain came crashing

'Moving mountain'

Minister Wickremesinghe, who is currently visiting Japan, said arrangements had been made to remove the garbage dump, but it came crashing down before relocation work could begin. "Those who lost their homes and those who have to be relocated will be compensated," Wickremesinghe said in a statement. "we will deliver on our promise to remove the garbage dump."Guttila Silva, a former mayor and local politician, said residents were angry that the Colombo Municipality had continued to dump hundreds of tons of garbage at the site daily, despite safety concerns.

About 800 tons of solid waste is added per day to the open dump. "People are naturally angry because their protests were ignored," Silva said. "I fear the death toll could go up because more than a dozen are still missing."

Police said a total of 145 homes, mostly shacks, were destroyed when a side of the garbage mountain came crashing down on Friday following heavy rain the previous day and a fire hours earlier. More than 600 people were given temporary shelter at a government-run school in the area as authorities looked for alternative accommodation for those living near the dump.

Many residents had evacuated their homes before the disaster because of the heavy rain. "The casualties would have been much higher if most people had not left their homes earlier in the day," a disaster management official told reporters at the site. Three homes in the area were destroyed in February last year following a minor garbage slide and the authorities had warned another 25 households to evacuate because of risks to them. Sri Lanka's parliament was warned recently that the 23 million tons of garbage rotting at Kolonnawa was a serious health hazard. Efforts are under way to generate electricity using solid waste as fuel. — AFP

IN FRENCH VOTE, UNDERDOGS SPAN IDEOLOGICAL SPECTRUM

PARIS: One wants to ban Pokeman Go, another lays claim to knowing France the best of all 11 candidates for president after crisscrossing the country on foot for nine months. But with the main candidates hogging the limelight in a rollercoaster race full of upsets and scandals, the underdogs are struggling for the voter's ear. Thanks to France's strict electoral rules on equal time, the candidates who are scoring in the low single digits have been enjoying a somewhat higher profile in the final two weeks before voters cast their first ballots on April 23.

Trotskyist Nathalie Arthaud, who says she has no interest in actually becoming president, seizes every chance at the microphone to attack the "power of money" with gusto. "If I came to power-if my ideas came to power-that would mean there's been a societal upheaval, it would mean millions of women and men have decided to fight and to take their destiny into their own hands," Arthaud, 47, said Thursday on TF1 television. The standard-bearer of the Lutte Ouvriere (Workers' Struggle), who won 0.56 percent in the 2012 election, wants to ban layoffs, raise wages and give workers control over companies.

Arthaud, a schoolteacher, has a soulmate in Philippe Poutou, the only other candidate with a "normal" job-in his case as a mechanic at a Ford factory where he is also a union leader. In an April 4 debate among all 11 candidates, Poutou pleaded for the "millions who suffer in this society and are sick to death of this capitalist steamroller that destroys everything in its path". The 50-year-old head of the New Anti-Capitalist Party also took on conservative candidate Francois Fillon and far-right contender Marine Le Pen, both dogged by scandal.

"When we're called in by the police, there's no worker's immunity!" he said in a dig at Le Pen, who may see her immunity lifted at the European Parliament over an expenses investigation. Also running "against the political elite that has made a pact with the empire of money" is 75-year-old Jacques Cheminade, even though he attended the training ground for France's elite, the Ecole Nationale d'Administration (ENA).

Running for a third time after winning 0.25 percent of the vote in 2012, the retired civil servant who is the oldest candidate in the race has opted for a more down-to-earth approach after being written off as an oddball five years ago for proposing the colonization of Mars. One of his pledges this time around is to ban Pokemon Go, saying the virtual treasure hunt is an "expression of the mental state of our society that is both ridiculous and appalling".

Southwestern twang

Unlike most of his rivals, one-time shepherd Jean Lassalle is brimming with confidence that he will become France's next president in May, despite his 1.5 percent standing in the latest Ipsos poll. Critics say "I am incapable of doing anything besides keeping sheep," Lassalle, an MP since 2002, told France Info radio in his thick southwestern twang. But "I am the candidate who knows France the best in all its contours," said the 61-yearold who covered more than 5,000 kilometers during his cross-country trek in 2013.He also staged a 39-day hunger strike in 2006 over a threat to jobs in his constituency nestled in a valley of the Pyrenees. On the right side of the aisle are candidates François Asselineau and Nicolas Dupont-Aignan, who both take pains to set themselves apart from Le Pen and Fillon. Asselineau, 59, is a former tax inspector who bills himself as the "national liberation" candidate, vowing to pull France out of the European Union and the euro, as well as NATO.

'Vote with their hearts'

An ENA graduate like Cheminade, Asselineau advocates leaving the EU immediately-unlike Le Pen who says she will put the proposal to a national referendum within the first six months of her presidency. — AFP



This combination of pictures shows people pasting campaign posters. (From top left - clockwise) Lou (left) and Enora, supporters of French presidential election candidate for the far-left coalition 'La France insoumise' Jean-Luc Melenchon in Rennes; Francois, a supporter of French presidential election candidate for the far right-wing Front National (FN) party Marine Le Pen; Nolwenn, a supporter of French presidential election candidate for the right-wing Les Republicains (LR) party Francois Fillon; and Bruno, a supporter of French presidential election candidate for the En Marche! movement Emmanuel Macron. These four candidates are able to qualify for the second round of the French presidential election. —AFP

GREECE, SPAIN IN MIGRANT RESCUES

ATHENS: The Greek coastguard said yesterday it was escorting a vessel carrying around 50 migrants towards the island of Cephalonia in the Ionian sea after answering two mayday calls. A spokesman said it could not confirm the nationalities or exact number of migrants aboard but added that they seemed "to be in good health." An Italian sea rescue helicopter joined three Greek patrol boats in an operation coordinated by EU border control agency Frontex to locate the vessel after receiving the distress calls.

Italy has become the prime European entry point for tens of thousands of migrants since last year's EU-Turkish agreement to stem the flow across the Aegean Sea and since the closure of the Balkan route, also last year. The accord with Ankara came after 2015 saw more than 800,000 refugees, mainly Syrians, reach Greece from Turkey. Spanish police and maritime rescue authorities meanwhile said they had rescued around 200

people off Spain's southern and eastern seaboard since Wednesday. According to the International Organization for Migration around 1,000 people reached Spain by sea between January 1 and April 11 with 47 more drowning.

That compares with 27,000 arrivals and 603 deaths in Italy and 4,107 arrivals and 14 fatalities in Greece, according to IOM data. Spanish authorities said they picked up 62 North Africans, including 18 minors, at Barbate, near the Strait of Gibraltar and 52 more sub-Saharan Africans at Motril in the deep south, likewise opposite the Moroccan coast. A rescue services spokesman said all were in good health. Those rescues followed others throughout the week around Spain's south coast and off the Balearic Islands. A man, a women and a voung girl were reported to have drowned after one barely seaworthy vessel was found off the island of Alboran, off Motril, in midweek.— AFP



SWABI: Villagers carry a body of a student Mohammad Mashal for burial in Swabi, Pakistan. Police said that a group of students at the Abdul Wali Khan University in the northwestern city of Mardan attacked and killed Mashal, accusing him of sharing blasphemous content on Facebook. — AP

8 CHARGED OVER PAKISTANI LIBERAL STUDENT'S MURDER

PAKISTAN ARMY FOILS MAJOR TERRORIST ATTACK

PESHAWAR: Eight Pakistanis who brutally murdered a fellow university student over his liberal views were charged with murder and terrorism yesterday, court officials said. Mashal Khan, a journalism student, was stripped, beaten, shot, and thrown from the second floor of his hostel at the Abdul Wali Khan university in the conservative northwestern town of Mardan on Thursday by a large mob. So far a total of 12 people have been arrested over the incident and police are hunting for more suspects.

"Eight students were presented before an anti-terrorism court in Mardan over murder and challenging the writ of the state," public prosecutor Rafiullah Khan said. Four others were arrested Saturday, Khan said. Graphic video footage from the crime scene showed dozens of men outside the hostel kicking and hurling projectiles at a body sprawled on the ground.

Mushtaq Ghani, Information Minister of northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province,

said the government had also requested Peshawar High Court to conduct a judicial probe into the incident. Students had previously complained to university authorities about Khan's alleged secular and liberal views and Khan had been in a heated debate during a class the day he was killed. Blasphemy is a hugely sensitive charge in conservative Muslim Pakistan, and can carry the death penalty. Even unproven allegations can cause mob lynchings and violence.

At least 65 people have been murdered by vigilantes over blasphemy allegations since 1990. The independent Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) has urged that all those involved in the lynching be brought to justice. "The state's abject failure to protect Mashal Khan's right to life has created great panic and horror among students and academia. Unless all those who played any part in Mashal's brutal murder are brought to justice, such barbarity will only spread," it said. At his funeral on Friday, Khan's father said he hoped

his son's murder would "evoke realization among people that killing an innocent is a sin".

Easter terror attack

In another development, Pakistan's military says security forces foiled a "major terrorist attack" on minority Christians when they killed a militant and detained his associate in the eastern city of Lahore. In a statement, the military said Saturday four soldiers were wounded in an overnight raid. It was unclear which militant group wanted to target Easter Sunday in Lahore, where more than 70 people were killed in a 2016 suicide bombing at a park, which was crowded with Christians and Muslims at the time. The latest raid came hours after Christians celebrated Good Friday by worshipping at city churches. Security forces in recent months have stepped up operations against militants but Friday's raid and shootout came as Christians prepared to celebrate the day followers believe Jesus was resurrected from the dead.— Agencies

TURKEY REFERENDUM: WHAT ARE THE MAIN ISSUES AND PROCESS?

ANKARA: Turkey is holding a national referendum today to approve or reject a package of constitutional reforms that would replace the country's parliamentary system with a presidential one. The referendum is seen by many as the ultimate test of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's popularity. Here's a look at the electoral process and the issues at stake:

The vote

More than 55 million people are eligible to cast votes in some 167,000 ballot boxes at polling stations across the country. Close to 3 million expatriate Turkish citizens in 57 countries were also eligible to vote between March 27 and April 9 at Turkish diplomatic missions. The ballot paper is simply divided into a "yes" and a "no" section. No question is written on the ballot paper and it is assumed that the people know what they are voting for. Polls open at 7:00 am and close at 4:00 pm Sunday in 32 eastern provinces. and open and close an hour later in the rest of the country. Turkey has no official exit polls and media are barred from publishing or broadcasting election results until the High Election Board lifts the ban at 1800 GMT or earlier.

The main issues

The "yes" camp argues that the

proposed changes for a strong presidency will create a robust and stable Turkey, while the "no" side says they would give the office of the president too many powers with very few safeguards. If approved in the referendum, the changes would transfer executive powers currently held by the prime minister to the president. The prime minister's office would be abolished. The president would have the powers to dismiss ministers, issue decrees, declare a state of emergency, and make appointments to key positions. The changes give the president considerable powers over the appointment of members of a council that overseas judges and prosecutors - a move that critics say could further erode the already weak separation of powers in Turkey.

aration of powers in Turkey.

The ruling party argues however that the reforms, which require courts to be "impartial" - and not just "independent" - will strengthen the judiciary. The president would appoint an unlimited number of vice-presidents. Currently, the council of ministers is largely made up of elected legislators. With the changes the members of the council of ministers would not be elected. The president would be able to remain a member of a political party or even lead it - ending the tradition of presidential impartiality. Under the current Constitution,

presidents are required to severe ties with their parties.

Other changes

The president can be elected for two consecutive five-year terms. However, some observers say an early election called in the second-term would reset the clock and allow the president to run for an extra term - meaning that Erdogan could rule until 2029 and beyond. Referring the president to the coun-

try's top court for possible impeachment would require a two-thirds parliamentary majority.

The parliament would not be able to bring down a government or a minister in a vote of no confidence. The ruling party argues that the changes will remedy the current system under which the president can only be tried for treason. Presidential and legislative elections would be held at the same time. — AP



DIYARBAKIR: A Kurdish woman holds a photo of the jailed co-leader of the opposition pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP), Selahattin Demirtas, during a rally of the HDP on the eve of the constitutional referendum yesterday. — AFP

VIOLENCE FLARES AT AUSTRALIAN REFUGEE FACILITY IN PNG

in Papua New Guinea (PNG), and shots were fired when local people tried to break into the centre after an argument got out of hand, media and a rights group reported vesterday. There were no reports of serious injuries at the centre on Manus island but the trouble is likely to add to pressure on Australia from rights groups and the United Nations to close it and another centre in Nauru, criticized over poor conditions.

Australia's ABC broadcaster said a large number of PNG men tried to break into the detention facility on Friday evening and police fired shots to disperse them. The

SYDNEY: Violence has flared at an Australian asylum-seeker detention centre men came back with guns and fired up to 100 rounds into the facility's accommodation wing, ABC reported. Australia's Department of Immigration and Border Protection confirmed in a statement that there had been trouble. "There was an incident at the Manus RPC overnight involving residents and PNG military personnel," the department said, referring to the so-called regional processing centre. "PNG military personnel discharged a weapon into the air during the incident. The incident was quickly resolved."

One inmate was reportedly hit in the head by a rock thrown over the fence and was getting treatment, a department spokeswoman said. She declined to comment on a report two guards had been injured or that shots were fired into the complex. She referred questions to PNG authorities. PNG officials were not immediately available for comment. Images posted on social media appeared to show bullet holes in the walls of the camp accommodation wing. The incident was believed to have been sparked by an altercation between asylum seekers and a PNG resident, the rights group Amnesty International said.

Australia has a strict policy of not allowing anyone who tries to reach the country by boat to settle there, instead detaining them in the Pacific camps, where asylum claims processing can take years. Even if people are found to be genuine refugees, they are barred from Australia. The policy has drawn criticism from the United Nations and rights organizations amid a global debate on how to manage people displaced by conflict. Many of the people trying to reach Australia have been from the Middle East and Afghanistan, Attempts in recent years to resettle some of them in Cambodia and Malaysia collapsed. The PNG Supreme Court last year ruled that the detention of asylum seekers on Manus breached the constitution and ordered that the camp be closed. — Reuters



BOHOL: People stand by boats which the military said were used by Abu Sayyaf militants to enter the Ibananga River in Bohol province, central Philippines, as government

PHILIPPINES FOILS ATTACK BY IS-LINKED EXTREMISTS

ARMY DETECTS, THWARTS KIDNAPPING PLOT

MANILA: A foiled attack on a central Philippine resort commander and emerging leader of Abu Sayyaf, Askali had island this week was a kidnapping and bombing mission by at least three extremist groups affiliated with the Islamic State group in one of their most daring terror plots, security officials said yesterday. The Philippine military initially said that government forces, backed by airstrikes, successfully detected and thwarted a kidnapping plot by Abu Sayyaf militants in the island province of Bohol, a popular tourist destination far from the militants' southern jungle bases.

Three soldiers, a policeman, two villagers and at least four militants, including key Abu Sayyaf commander and spokesman Moammar Askali, were killed in the daylong siege Tuesday in a hinterland village in Bohol's Inabanga town. Military spokesman Brig Gen Restituto Padilla said combined military and police forces in Bohol thwarted "major terrorist activities" by the militants, who were aiming to divert the military's focus from intense offensives on the militants' jungle encampments in southern Sulu province and outlying islands.

"The persons who died in the area, some of whom have been identified to be known terrorists, are still the subject of a continuing investigation to ascertain their participation," Padilla said, adding that the result of the investigation would be made public in the near future. Interviews with three security officials, along with documents and pictures seen by The Associated Press, indicated that three extremist groups that have pledged allegiance to IS deployed their leading bombers and fighters, some of whom wore IS-style black flag patches, for the Bohol assault.

The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to disclose details of the ongoing investigation of the foiled attack. While considered a key

PLAQUE COMMEMORATING

THAI REVOLUTION REMOVED

also led a hard-line Abu Sayyaf faction called the Marakat Ansar Battalion, which is among 10 small armed groups that pledged allegiance to IS about three years ago and formed an IS-inspired alliance in the southern Philippines. Askali had been implicated in the beheadings of two Canadian hostages last year and a German tourist in February in Sulu's jungles, the officials said.

Other Abu Sayyaf commanders have refused to align themselves with the Middle East-based extremist group, according to the officials. Aside from Askali, another key Sulu-based militant killed in Bohol was Edimar Isnain, who had worked with Malaysian and Indonesian militants in assembling bombs and leading bomb-making training for recruits of Abu Sayyaf and another violent group called Dawla Islamiya Ranao, also known as the Maute group, based in southern Lanao del Sur province.

Troops recovered four assault rifles, rifle grenades and a sack load of bomb-making materials, including detonating cords, blasting caps and electronic bomb parts, a military report said. The AP obtained military pictures of Isnain's body, which was dug up by troops in Inabanga, and the other casualties, including an elderly village couple. It's not clear whether the two Inabanga villagers were killed in the crossfire or gunned down by the cornered Abu Sayyaf militants at the height of the fighting.

The militants, who traveled from Sulu, more than 500 kilometers by motor boat to the south of Bohol, were guided to Inabanga's interior hinterlands by Joselito Melloria, a convert to Islam. Military officials believed he may have been designated to lead another IS-linked extremist band called Ansar Khilafa Philippines had the Bohol attack been successful, the officials said. The AKP

group's leader, Mohammad Jaafar Maguid, was killed by Philippine counterterrorism forces in southern Sarangani province in January.

Melloria, who uses the nom de guerre Abu Alih and allowed the militants to stay at his Inabanga home, was wounded in the Bohol fighting and escaped with several other militants, the three officials said. It remains unclear what the targets of the militants were, but Bohol draws foreign and local tourists for its beach resorts, waterfalls, caves and wildlife. Bohol island lies about 640 kilometers southeast of Manila and is about an hour by boat from Cebu province, a trade and tourism center. Bohol is to host a meeting next week of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the regional bloc the Philippines is leading

Militants from the three IS-linked groups first collaborated by bombing a night market in southern Davao city, President Rodrigo Duterte's hometown, in a 2016 attack that killed 15 people and prompted Duterte to declare a state of lawless violence. The Bohol attack was the farthest and most daring plot so far by the allied militants. Duterte has threatened to place the south under martial law if terrorism threats spiral out of control.

A few days before the Bohol violence, the US Embassy in Manila advised Americans to take precautions amid "unsubstantiated yet credible information" of possible kidnappings by terrorists in Bohol and other central areas. A number of other Western embassies, including Canada and Britain, later issued similar travel warnings to their citizens. Abu Sayyaf militants on Thursday beheaded a kidnapped Filipino fishing boat captain in Sulu, apparently in retaliation for the death of their comrades in Bohol and the failure of the hostage's family to pay ransom, officials said. —AP

What would hardliner Raisi MEAN FOR IRAN, THE WORLD?

BANGKOK: The plaque commemorating a 1932 coup in Thailand that saw absolute monarchy abolished and democracy established has gone missing, police in Bangkok said yesterday, prompting outcry from prodemocracy activists. The 1932 coup, also known as the Siamese Revolution, was a crucial turning point in Thai history and ended nearly seven centuries of absolute monarchy, paving the way for political and social reforms. Since then, Thailand has gone through a shaky experiment with democracy and has witnessed a succession of political protests and coups.

Thailand has been governed by a junta since the latest coup, 2014, which saw the military overthrow a democratically elected government. The plaque, which was embedded in a square in central Bangkok, was removed and replaced with a new one which highlights the importance of the monarchy. "It is good to worship the Buddhist trinity, the state, one's own family, and to be faithful to one's monarch and allow oneself to be the engine that brings prosperity to the state," the new plaque reads. Police in the Dusit district where the plaque was located said they were not sure who removed it and were investigating.

Ultra-royalist groups had previously threatened to remove the plaque. Activists said that the plaque's removal was a bid by royalist conservatives to rewrite history. "This is another attempt to alter the history of democracy in this country," Than Rittiphan, a member of the student-led New Democracy Movement which has protested against military rule, told Reuters. "It is nothing more than fascist rhetoric aimed at brainwashing the next generation," he said. The government, led by Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha, a former army chief and staunch royalist, has stepped up prosecution of critics of the monarchy under a harsh royal insult law. — Reuters

TEHRAN: Ebrahim Raisi, the leading candidate for Iran's hardliners in next month's presidential election, has left many wondering whether the country's fragile opening to the West could be under threat. The 56-year-old judge and cleric registered on Friday for the May 19 vote and his candidacy is being closely watched by foreign investors and diplomats who fear the return of a hardline administration that could threaten the 2015 nuclear deal with world powers and efforts to open up trade.

So far, Raisi has given little indication of his views on foreign policy, keeping his comments vague and predictable. "Our relations will be ongoing with every country-except the occupying regime of Israel-but on condition of respect," he said Friday. Analysts describe Raisi as utterly loyal to supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, meaning he would likely remain deeply suspicious of engagement with the West but unlikely to backtrack on the nuclear deal, which had the boss's tacit consent. "He has no experience in foreign policy, so at least initially he will have to follow the system's grand strategy of preserving the nuclear deal and shifting any blame of undermining it to the US," said Ali Vaez, Iran analyst for the International Crisis Group.

Entrenched conservative

Raisi is entrenched in the conservative establishment, having served as attorney general, supervisor of state broadcaster IRIB and prosecutor in the Special Court for Clerics. Press reports indicate he has recently been elevated to the status of "ayatollah". His father-in-law leads Friday prayers in Mashhad and both have seats on the Assembly of Experts that will choose the next supreme leader-a position for which Raisi himself is often rumored to be in the running. There is little chance he will ease social restrictions or release opposition leaders held under house arrest

since the 2009 protest movement, known to conservatives as "the sedition".

"The Islamic System has treated the heads of the sedition with mercy. Those who sympathise with the heads of sedition must know that the great nation of Iran will never forgive this great injustice," he said in 2014. Crucially, Khamenei picked him in March 2016 to head Astan Qods Razavi-the centuries-old foundation that looks after the Imam Reza shrine in Mashhad placing him at the intersection of political, religious and economic power. The foundation hosts 20 million pilgrims a year at the shrine, and has also developed into a sprawling, multi-billion-dollar conglomerate that runs everything from farms and power plants to brokerages and IT firms. — AFP



TEHRAN: Iranian cleric and head of the Imam Reza charitable foundation, Ebrahim Raisi, gestures after registering his candidacy for the upcoming presidential elections at the ministry of interior in the capital Tehran. — AFP

News

in brief

IS launches gas attacks

BAGHDAD: An Iraqi military officer says Islamic State militants have launched a gas attack in a newly-liberated area in western Mosul. The officer with the anti-terrorism forces said yesterday that the attack occurred the night before in the Al-Abar neighborhood, when IS fired a rocket loaded with chlorine. He said seven soldiers suffered breathing problems and were treated in a nearby field clinic. The officer spoke on condition of anonymity as he was not authorized to release information. US-backed Iraqi forces are currently battling IS militants in the more densely-populated western half of Mosul. Iraqi officials say more than half of western Mosul has been retaken. The extremists were driven out of the eastern half of Mosul, Iraq's second-largest city, in January.

Reporter shot dead

MEXICO CITY: Gunmen shot dead a veteran crime reporter in northeastern Mexico on Friday, his employers said, becoming the fourth journalist to be murdered in the gang-plagued country in six weeks. Maximino Rodriguez Palacios "was shot and killed" outside a store as he arrived in his car at around noon with his wife who uses a wheelchair, the Colectivo Pericu news website said. His wife was unharmed. The state prosecutor's office confirmed the 71-year-old's murder "from gunshot wounds," adding that investigators have obtained shell casings that will be analyzed in a lab. Unknown attackers appeared to have used high-powered rifles in the attack, the website said. According to early reports, the shooting occurred as Rodriguez was parking in a disabled parking spot and requested a wheelchair for his wife. "Colectivo Pericu rejects this attack against a comrade," said a statement on the website. "We demand that the authorities clarify this and many other crimes that continue to go unpunished and have left families shattered by pain."

Germany probes letter

BERLIN: German prosecutors are examining a third claim of responsibility for blasts that rocked Borussia Dortmund's team bus it was reported yesterday, but no new suspects have emerged. With Dortmund players due back on the pitch in the Bundesliga, police are pursuing leads regarding the attack on Tuesday that injured Spanish international Marc Bartra and a policeman. Three bombs containing pieces of metal detonated minutes after the team bus left a hotel for a Champions League match against Monaco. The Tagesspiegel newspaper revealed it had received a new letter, apparently from far-right circles, railing against multi-culturalism, saying it had been behind the triple blast and threatening another attack. "We have the letter claiming responsibility. We are examining it," said Frauke Koehler, spokeswoman for federal prosecutors, referring to the claim received by Tagesspiegel. Several such claims have already been investigated without any breakthrough. Three identical letters found close to the site had initially suggested an Islamist link, but questions have arisen about the authenticity of that claim.

14 die in South Sudan

NAIROBI: At least 14 people were killed in the South Sudanese town of Raga when fighting erupted between government forces and the main rebel group, a rebel spokesman said yesterday, within a week of violence in neighboring Wau state that killed 16. The rebels, the main force fighting the government in the famine-hit nation's civil war, had briefly occupied the northwestern town, near the border with Sudan and Central African Republic, before withdrawing to nearby bases to prepare for a counter-attack. "For the last two days the government bombed our areas around Raga and yesterday our forces decided to go and raid Raga," opposition spokesman Lam Paul Gabriel Lam said by phone. "Around 14 people were counted killed but many are injured ... we had one soldier killed with some injuries," he said. The government's military spokesman, Santo Domic Chol, said "I'm right now in Raga and will talk to you later." Oil-rich South Sudan has been riven by violence since 2013, when President Salva Kiir, a Dinka, fired his Nuer deputy Riek Machar.



AZARSHAHR, Iran: Workers try to repair a damaged bridge over a river after torrential rains overflowed rivers and flooded houses, in the northestern Azarshahr city, south of Tabriz. — AFP

30 dead in Iran floods

TEHRAN: At least 30 people were killed and 16 declared missing as flash floods hit northwestern Iran, state media reported yesterday. "Twenty-five people have been killed in the floods across four provinces," the head of Iran's emergency response organization, Esmail Najar, told the ISNA news agency. Torrential rains that began on Friday lashed East Azerbaijan province, with state television showing images of rivers bursting their banks, flooded houses and cars being swept away by the surging water. The districts of Ajabshir and Azarshahr were the worst hit.

Girls in mutilation case

MINNEAPOLIS: Authorities in Minnesota have filed child protection petitions for two 7-year-old girls who prosecutors say were brought to Michigan by their mothers for a genital mutilation procedure. The petitions were filed in Hennepin and Anoka counties on Thursday, the same day a Michigan doctor was charged with performing genital mutilation on the two girls. According to the FBI, Dr Jumana Nagarwala was arrested after the 7-year-olds identified her as the person who performed procedures on them in February at a clinic in suburban Detroit. It is believed to be the first case of its kind prosecuted in federal court. The petition in Hennepin County said one of the girls was removed from her family's suburban Minneapolis home and placed in a shelter on a 72hour health and welfare hold. Her 11-year old brother remains in the home. The Associated Press isn't naming the parents to avoid identifying the girl. They don't have a listed home phone number, and it wasn't immediately clear whether they had an attorney.

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TESTS LAUNCHED FOR UPGRADED US NUKE...

Continued from Page 1

information on the reliability, accuracy and performance of the weapon under conditions that were meant to replicate real-world operations.

More test flights are planned over the next three years, and officials with the National Nuclear Security Administration said the first production unit of the B61-12 - developed under what is called the Life Extension Program - is scheduled to be completed in 2020. The B61-12 consolidates and replaces four older versions in the nation's nuclear arsenal. It's outfitted with a new tail-kit assembly and other hardware.

The weapon is much different than the non-nuclear "mother of all bombs" used in Afghanistan this week to

attack an Islamic State stronghold near the Pakistani border. The Massive Ordnance Air Blast bomb, or MOAB, isn't designed to penetrate like the B61-12 but rather create a large blast over the surface and it has to be ferried by a much larger plane given its size.

In Nevada, it took two passes before the pilot could drop the mock B61-12. A herd of wild horses had to be chased away on the first go-around. With the run commencing, people gathered on balconies at the range despite knowing they would see only dust rising from the target miles away. A video feed showed the test bomb fall through the air after being released by the F-16. Officials said it left behind a rather neat hole. Crews were able to dig the mock weapon out of the dirt so it could be packed up and returned to Albuquerque for further study. —AP

NORTH KOREA STAGES GIANT SHOW...

Continued from Page 1

But it was also intended to send an unmistakable message to Washington about the isolated country's military might. Kim's close aide Choe Ryong-Hae declared that the North was a "powerful nuclear-armed state in the Orient and Asia's leader in rocketry". It could "beat down enemies with the power of nuclear justice", he said, and was "prepared to respond to an all-out war with an all-out war". "We are ready to hit back with nuclear attacks of our own style against any nuclear attacks," he said.

The 1950-53 Korean War ended in an armistice rather than a peace treaty and Pyongyang says it needs nuclear weapons to defend itself against a possible US invasion. It has carried out five nuclear tests - two of them last year - and multiple missile launches, one of which saw several rockets come down in waters provocatively close to Japan last month. Speculation that it could conduct a sixth blast in the coming days to coincide with the anniversary has reached fever pitch, with specialist US website 38North describing its Punggye-ri test site as "primed and ready" and White House officials saying military options were "already being assessed".

After dispatching the aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson and an accompanying battle group to the Korean peninsula Trump told the Fox Business Network: "We are sending an armada." "He is doing the wrong thing," he added of Kim. "He's making a big mistake." China, the North's sole major ally, and Russia have both urged restraint, with Beijing's Foreign Minister Wang Yi warning Friday that "conflict could break out at any moment".

The North is aiming its message at China as well as the US, analysts say. Beijing's priority remains preventing any instability on its doorstep, and it has been unnerved by the sabre-rattling. But diplomats in Pyongyang point out that the North raises its rhetoric every spring, when Washington and Seoul hold annual

IANT SHOW...
joint military exercises that it views as preparations for

invasion. It has not previously held a nuclear test in the

month of April.

Military specialists keep a close eye on Pyongyang's parades for clues about developments in its capabilities. The hardware displayed Saturday included what appeared to be new ICBMs or prototypes, and the Pukkuksong submarine-launched ballistic missile, which Pyongyang successfully test-fired last August, reports and analysts said. The rockets carried on articulated trailers appeared to be longer than the North's existing KN-08 or KN-14 missiles, analysts said.

Chad O'Carroll, managing director of specialist service NK News, told AFP they could be a liquid-fuelled intercontinental ballistic missile, or an early version of one, even though Pyongyang has yet to formally announce it has an operational ICBM. "It will be a big game-changer once it is deployed in service but they have got a long testing schedule ahead," he said. "We'll probably see more engine tests or component tests building up eventually to an actual test of the full unit."

Pyongyang could use the parade as a show of strength in preference to a nuclear test, analysts said. It wanted to send "a tough message to the United States in response to the Trump administration's recent rhetoric and the military steps the United States has taken", said Evans Revere of the Brookings Institution in Washington. Another missile launch or nuclear test "can't be ruled out", he said, but the recent US cruise missile strike on Syria and Washington's tough stance "may give Pyongyang some pause". "A parade is a highly visible but non-kinetic way of showing off capabilities," he told AFP. Kim did not address the rally himself yesterday, instead waving and smiling as ecstatic crowds of flag- and flower-bearing civilians - men in suits, women in traditional hanbok dresses - filed past him behind the military display. "Long live!" they chanted, some in tears. — AFP

BLACK US MUSLIMS AIM FOR UNITY

Continued from Page 1

endured for generations in this country," said Syed, who volunteers at Townhall Dialogue, a nonprofit fostering discussions about US Muslim identity. "I can't really think of a better time for non-black Muslims to start examining how we got here, and what lessons we can learn from the hard-won victories of black communities from the civil rights movement."

Organizer Shamar Hemphill, a black Chicago native who works for the Inner-City Muslim Action Network, said Republican President Donald Trump's executive orders such as the travel ban have made organizers "quadruple" efforts to form alliances, including recent calls for Muslim groups to attend and organize around Martin Luther King Jr. Day events. "We're not going to allow any policy or federal piece of legislation to separate us and isolate us. We're going to come together and protect each other," he said. "It's also a great opportunity because it brings us out of our silos."

Other attempts at unity have been made over the years. Imam Zaid Shakir at the California-based Zaytuna

Institute, a liberal arts Muslim college, has delivered lectures about similarities between the Prophet Muhammad's farewell sermon and King's "I Have a Dream Speech." The Council of American-Islamic Relations holds events around the birthday of Malcolm X, a Nation of Islam member who came into mainstream Islam. And IMAN in Chicago has celebrated hip hop, featuring Muslim rappers like Grammy-winner Rhymefest.

Aisha Noor, whose family fled Somalia's civil war when she was a baby, helped organize a town hall after Trump announced his first travel ban in February, which blocked travelers from seven predominantly Muslim countries and put the US refugee program on hold. That ban has since been replaced with a newer version. Noor said she feels there's less attention paid to the plight of refugees from her native Somalia and Sudan, the two African countries in Trump's executive order. She sees it as part of a "continuous erasure of the black Muslim experience." "Black Muslims often face a two-front challenge, both within the community and the larger American society," said Noor, who worked for Take on Hate, a campaign challenging discrimination against Arabs and Muslims. — AP

TURKEY RIVALS IN LAST POLL PUSH

Continued from Page 1

But he urged people not to succumb to "lethargy" in voting, saying "the stronger result the better". "A 'Yes' that emerges from the ballot box with the highest margin will be a lesson to the West," added the president, who has frequently railed against the European Union in the campaign.

Erdogan, who has dominated the airwaves in recent weeks with multiple daily rallies and interviews, gave no less than four rallies in Istanbul districts. The standard-bearer of the 'No' camp, Republican People's Party (CHP) leader Kemal Kilicdaroglu, warned at a meeting in the Ankara region that Turkey was deciding if "we want to continue with the democratic parliamentary system or one-man rule". He described the new system as "a bus with no brakes and whose destination is unknown."

The opposition has cried foul that the referendum has been conducted on unfair terms, with 'Yes' posters ubiquitous on the streets and opposition voices squeezed from the media. The two co-leaders of the second opposition party the pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP), Figen Yuksekdag and Selahattin Demirtas, have been jailed on charges of backing Kurdish militants in what supporters say was a deliberate move to eliminate them from the campaign.

The poll is also taking place under a state of emergency that has seen 47,000 arrested in an unprecedented crackdown after the July 15 failed coup. "The last messages," headlined the Hurriyet daily. "With one day remaining to the historic referendum the leaders are making the final calls to influence undecided voters." Despite the clear advantages enjoyed by the 'Yes' campaign, opinion polls have predicted drastically different

outcomes and analysts are expecting a close result.

The campaign has not been plain sailing for Erdogan, and some heavyweight figures within the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) have been conspicuously silent on the new system. Former prime minister Ahmet Davutoglu spoke before Erdogan at a 'Yes' rally in the Anatolian city of Konya on Friday but, to the amusement of opposition commentators, failed once to endorse the presidential system.

The 'Yes' campaign also hit a last-minute hitch when the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP), the AKP's partner in promoting the changes, reacted angrily to comments by a presidential adviser suggesting a federal system could be imposed in Turkey. Such a system is an anathema to nationalists who believe in the indivisible unity of Turkey and particularly fear the creation of any Kurdish region in the southeast. Erdogan moved rapidly to say that no such plan was on the agenda and MHP leader Devlet Bahceli said the issue was now closed.

Turkish media said all AKP advisers and ministers had been told to cancel TV interviews scheduled for the last hours of the campaign to prevent further slip-ups. After a slew of attacks over the last year blamed on Kurdish militants and jihadists, security is set to be a major issue on polling day. Authorities in Istanbul on Friday detained five people suspected of planning an attack on polling day, following the arrest of 19 alleged Islamist extremists in the Aegean city of Izmir earlier in the week. The Dogan news agency said a total of 49 IS suspects had been detained in Istanbul alone over the last week. More than 33,500 police officers will be on duty in Istanbul alone on referendum day, according to Turkish media. — AFP



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Focus

RUSSIA'S ASSAD STANCE DIMS HOPES FOR THAW

resident Vladimir Putin's intervention in Syria has saved President Bashar Al-Assad's government from imminent collapse and raised Russia's global clout. But after last week's chemical weapons attack their relationship is increasingly becoming a burden for Putin, jeopardizing chances for improved relations with the US. Still, the Russian leader has made clear he will not abandon Assad. It's hard to imagine how Russia and the US could agree on Syria after President Donald Trump called Assad "an animal" over the deadly chemical attack, while Moscow has insisted on the Syrian leader's innocence.

Putin hasn't lost hope of making a "grand deal" with Trump, but the Russian leader's unflinching support for Damascus indicates that he doesn't see dumping Assad as part of it. The tense talks US State Secretary Rex Tillerson held in Moscow on Wednesday didn't seem to narrow the gap. Even though the Kremlin said last week that its support for Assad isn't unconditional and emphasized that it can't control the Syrian leader's every move, such statements sound more like rhetoric aimed at deflecting Western criticism than a signal of Moscow's readiness to bargain over Assad's fate.

The Russian president can't accept the Syrian ruler's demise for a variety of reasons. It would deprive Moscow of its only ally in the Middle East that hosts Russian air force and naval assets. But even more crucially, it would cast Russia as a loser in the six-year Syrian conflict, dealing a blow to its aspirations to regain Soviet-era global clout and prestige. Putin has now found himself in a trap: Abandoning Assad would amount to recognition that the Kremlin's policy was wrong, while maintaining support for the Syrian ruler could risk destroying any chance for a detente with the US and raise the threat of a military confrontation.

Russia has argued that civilians in the northern Syrian town of Khan Sheikhoun likely died of toxic agents released from a rebel arsenal hit by a Syrian airstrike - a theory categorically rejected by the US and its allies. Putin cited intelligence he said showed the Syrian opposition was preparing new "provocations" with toxic agents to cast blame on the Syrian government. He likened the US response in bombing a Syrian air base to the 2003 invasion of Iraq, arguing that now just as then Washington relied on false data about chemical weapons.

The Russian leader also accused the West of playing the Syrian card to try to consolidate the solidarity shaken by Trump's election victory by casting Russia as a common enemy. Putin's statements signal that he doesn't see dropping Assad as a viable option. Just the opposite, Moscow's decision to suspend a vital communications link with the US military in Syria has signaled its readiness to raise the stakes. Neither Syria nor Russia used their air defense assets to try to fend off last week's US attack on the Shayrat air base, which Washington said had served as a platform for the chemical attack. The US issued advance notice to Russia to avoid hitting its personnel before unleashing a volley of 59 Tomahawk cruise missiles from US warships in the Mediterranean.

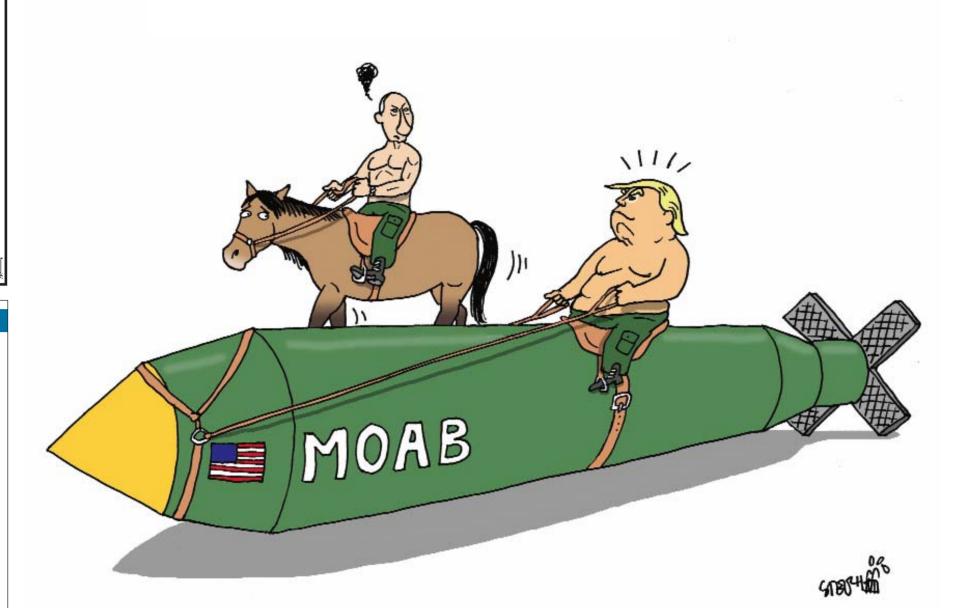
Stark Warning

In a paradoxical response to the strike, Moscow froze the military hotline with the US. The Russian move amounted to a stark warning: Don't launch any more strikes or risk unpredictable consequences. Konstantin Kosachev, the head of the foreign affairs committee in the upper house of the Russian parliament said Moscow would only agree to restore the link on condition that the "US abandons any action against the Syrian army."

In another warning to Washington, the Russian military has pledged to help Syria beef up its air defenses. In some ways, Russia's official military presence in Syria could make the situation potentially even more menacing now compared to what it was during the war in Vietnam, when the Soviet Union never officially acknowledged its military involvement. If Russia or Syria were to use their military assets to fend off any future US strike, it may put Moscow and Washington on the brink of a head-on confrontation, and the Kremlin's decision to cut the crucial communications link between the militaries could make matters worse.

The Pentagon has insisted that no such danger exists. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said US-Russian tensions over Syria "will not spiral out of control," arguing that Moscow has no interest in allowing the current disagreements over Syria to lead to a broader confrontation. He said that the two countries are maintaining military and diplomatic communications. — AP

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Washington Watch

THE ARAB WORLD'S CHRISTIANS: EASTER, 2017

By Dr James J Zogby

This year there will no Easter celebrations for Coptic Christians in Upper Egypt. Out of concern for their security and out of respect for the 45 Christians who were victims of two horrific suicide bombing attacks on Palm Sunday, their bishop declared that Easter services would be limited in his diocese to mass, "without any festivities".

That Holy Week began for Egyptians with news of those bombings served as a powerful reminder of the threats faced not only by Egypt's Copts but by other Christian communities in the Arab World. It is only in Lebanon where, both because of their numbers and the unique characteristics of that country's political system, Christians live in relative security. But in Egypt, Iraq, Syria, or Palestine, 2,000 year-old Christian communities are at risk.

The situation in Palestine is unique. There, Christians and Muslims alike, are being strangled by the harsh Israeli occupation. They've lost land, livelihood, and the freedom of movement. This Holy Week, for example, only with great difficulty will Christians from Bethlehem, Bir Zeit, or Ramallah be able to make pilgrimage to Jerusalem to walk the Stations of the Cross or to pray at the Church of the Sepulcher. Many Palestinians can see Jerusalem from their homes, but they are separated from the city by a 28' high wall, restrictions imposed by occupation forces, and humiliating checkpoints. As a result of these near unbearable hardships, many Palestinian Christians have emigrated to the West causing a precipiture decline in their presence in the Holy Land.

tous decline in their presence in the Holy Land.

The situation faced by Christians in Iraq and Syria is quite a different story. In Iraq, the remnants of that country's once thriving Christian church live in fear. Americans who only recently discovered Iraq's ancient churches, do not realize that before the Bush Administration's disastrous 2003 invasion, there were 1.3 millions in Iraq. Despite assuming some religious trappings, Saddam Hussein's ruthless dictatorship was secular and, therefore, provided Christians some degree of religious freedom.

One result of the US invasion that overthrew Saddam's regime and the dismantling of Iraq's state apparatus was to unleash a civil war of armed sectarian militias, a feature of which was the "ethnic cleansing" of entire neighborhoods of Sunni and Shia Muslims and, of course, vulnerable Christians - who had no militias to protect them.

During the first five years of the Iraq war, the Christian population of Iraq declined from 1.3 million to 400,000 - with no one in the Bush Administration attending to their plight. Only with the emergence of bloody ISIS, did the West pay attention to the fate of Iraq's Christians.

The Íraqi Christian hierarchy continues to urge those who remain to stay put, fearing that should their numbers continue to decline it could spell the end of their ancient communities. ISIS may soon be defeated and Christians and other minorities may receive protection in Ninewah Province, but fear remains and many are listening to the voices of despair suggesting that there is no future for Christians in Iraq.

The Syrian situation is a variation on this theme. The no less brutal Assad regime is also secular and has provided protection for that country's Christian communities, earning it the support of many Christian leaders who have a greater fear of both ISIS and many of the opposition Syrian militias who have an extremist sectarian bent. Most Christians have remained in regime-controlled areas, but they are concerned - caught between two evils and facing an uncertain future.

Egypt's Copts

Egypt's Coptic Church is the largest in the Middle East - numbering between 8 to 10 million. Despite their size or maybe because of it, they are vulnerable to attacks, especially with the unrest that has shaken the country during the past six years. During the period of Muslim Brotherhood rule, Christians felt threatened by what they saw as an effort to politicize religion and Islamize the state, at their expense. In 2013, the military ousted the elected Muslim Brotherhood government resulting in

bloody confrontations in which upwards of 800 Brotherhood supporters were killed. In response, violent extremist partisans of the deposed leadership took out their anger on the Christian community - in part because the Coptic leadership had joined with the sheikh of Al-Azhar in supporting the military takeover, out of their fear of the direction Egypt was taking under the Muslim Brotherhood. During this time, churches were burned and Christians were brutally murdered and terrorized.

Since then, the government of President Al-Sisi and the sheikh of Al-Azhar have made significant gestures of support for Egypt's Christians. Both have condemned the attacks and intolerance. They have called for and implemented a review of educational and other religious materials. The president has gone to Christmas mass for the past three years, and in two weeks the head of Al-Azhar will host a historic meeting in Egpyt with Pope Francis, as part of a conference on interfaith dialogue.

All of these constructive efforts, however, are in danger of being undercut by the government's massive crackdown, not only on the Brotherhood, but on the Egyptian media and a number of human rights organizations and other secular political groupings. Tens of thousands have been imprisoned. Instead of making Christians more secure, the arrests and pervasive climate of fear created by the repression have undercut efforts to promote tolerance and stability - with Christians being the "soft targets" for religious extremists.

The lesson should be clear. Repression may produce some short term satisfaction, but it doesn't create the long-term conditions that promote the security and tolerance needed to protect vulnerable minority communities. Christians in Iraq and Syria may have benefited, for a time, from brutally imposed secularity, but the resentment that resulted from prolonged oppression unleashed a deadly extremist wave drowning everything in its verse.

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

FRENCH ABSTAINERS, UNDECIDEDS ALARM HOPEFULS

Pensioner Jeannine Delaplane, care-worker Cecile Lungeri, and millions like them are giving French presidential candidates and pollsters nightmares. Less than two weeks before the first round of the election, they still do not know who to vote for, and may not show up at the polling station at all. Opinion polls show around a third of France's 45.7 million voters might abstain, an unprecedented number in a country with a long tradition of high turnouts. Even among those who intend to vote, about one third have yet to make up their mind on how to cast their ballot.

Reasons range from disgust over scandals involving established politicians to dislike among many voters of all the candidates' personalities or platforms. Added to this is simple confusion: What once looked like a straightforward two-horse race between conservative Francois Fillon and far-right leader Marine Le Pen has produced many surprises. nWith voters' intentions so fluid, four candidates are now in with a fighting chance of coming first and second in the April 23 first round, thereby qualifying for the runoff on May 7. By contrast, support for the candidate of the ruling Socialists has collapsed.

All this has cast extra doubt over a campaign whose unpredictability is unnerving financial markets. Delaplane, 81, is among those agonising over how to vote. "I just can't choose. I've never seen a campaign like this," she said as she waited to catch a glimpse of Fillon at a rally in the town of Provins, a conservative stronghold east of Paris. She is hesitating between backing Fillon or far-right National Front leader Marine Le Pen. However, the mainstream conservative is tainted by scandal - he is under formal investigation on suspicion of financial impropriety, although he denies doing anything illegal - and has slid to third. On the other hand, many voters regard Le Pen as an extremist, along with the far-left's Jean-Luc Melenchon.

A fourth contender, the centrist and new favorite Emmanuel Macron, has never held elected office, was unknown to most of the electorate until nearly three years ago when he became economy minister, and runs a party that is just a year old. For dental technician-turned-painter Herve Gass, the entire field is unappealing. "I'm in a complete bind," he said at his studio in an historic part

of Provins. "I've been put off politics like never before." Gass, 63, previously voted conservative but said he had gone off Fillon due to the scandal, while he regarded Le Pen as too radical and 39-year-old Macron as too young and untested. As a result, Gass said he might abstain or enter a blank vote.

Abysmal Ratings

The past six months have seen veteran politicians from the two mainstream parties that have governed France for decades kicked out of the race one after the other, losing party primaries or throwing in the towel because of abysmal ratings. Instead, Le Pen and Macron are forecast to contest the run-off, with the ex-banker seen winning easily. Still, the first round is no forgone conclusion; Fillon is making a tentative comeback and Melenchon is emerging as the latest sensation thanks in part to his strong TV debating skills. In percentage terms, support for Macron and Le Pen is in the low twenties and falling, while Melenchon and Fillon are in the high teens and rising; daily polls put as little as 6 percentage points between all four. Across France, voters of all political stripes have been telling Reuters they're not sure what to make of it all. "I don't even know if I will vote at all this time," said Lungeri, the 38-year-old carer from Nice who was traditionally a mainstream right voter. "They're all corrupt."

The level of undecided voters has been falling but remains high. While about 80 percent of voters turned out for both rounds of the 2012 presidential elections, predictions for this time remain low, creating a headache for pollsters. "There is uncertainty for all the candidates," said Francois Miquet-Marty of Viavoice. "If voting intentions remain that close, abstention will play a key role."

Impossible Forecasts?

Macron, who launched his campaign only in November, has the extra handicap of lacking the support of a well-established party. Polls consistently show Le Pen as having the most decided supporters, with over 80 percent being sure of their choice, but recent surveys have seen the level of certainty of the Macron vote rise, in one case to over 70 percent. Miquet-Marty said Le Pen could

yet be vulnerable as she relies heavily on support among young and working class voters, two groups where abstention is forecast to be high.

The one election in recent history when turnout was far below average was in 2002. Then, a 28 percent abstention rate helped propel Le Pen's father, National Front founder Jean-Marie Le Pen, into the run-off with only 17 percent of the first round vote. Mainstream voters then rallied behind the centre-right candidate Jacques Chirac in the second round, returning turnout to its habitual 80 percent and giving him a decisive victory.

Today the political landscape is more blurred. Analysts say much will depend on who makes the second round. For instance, many leftwing voters would find it hard to back Fillon. "It's a real challenge for the candidates, they really need to convince voters to go out there and vote," said Frederic Dabi of Ifop pollsters, stressing there was a growing feeling among many that voting "has become pointless".

Voters' loyalty to parties is much more tenuous than it used to be, and some are swinging across the spectrum. Camille Diener, a physiotherapist from Strasbourg, backed Nicolas Sarkozy, a conservative president from 2007 to 2012, in past elections. This time she is so disappointed by Fillon she has even contemplated a protest vote for Melenchon. "I don't have a candidate anymore," the 28-year-old said, adding that she was ultimately leaning towards Macron.

"This election is just unbelievable," a minister in the Socialist government said on condition of anonymity. "What strikes me, even beyond the high abstention, is how impossible it is to make forecasts: People waver between Fillon and Melenchon, between Le Pen and Macron, based

on the most bizarre reasoning."

With the second round to be held in the middle of a long, holiday weekend, many voters might just opt to go to the beach or fishing rather than address their tricky, and in some cases distasteful, election dilemma. "I'm telling people enough is enough, screw it, stay home!" said Doriane Slamani, a resident of Villeneuve-Saint-Georges near Paris, who for the first time will skip a presidential election. "No candidate deserves my vote." — Reuters

TOP-FLIGHT FOOTBALL

RETURNS TO INDONESIA

JAKARTA: Top-flight football returned to Indonesia yesterday as a new

SOCK AVOIDS UPSET TO **REACH HOUSTON SEMIS**

HOUSTON: High seeds John Isner and Sam Querrey were sent packing in three sets, while No 1 seed Jack Sock survived a scare at the ATP Tour's Houston event Friday, Second-seeded Isner was ousted by fellow American Ernesto Escobedo 7-6 (8/6), 6-7 (6/8), 7-6 (7/5) and third-seed-

ed Querrey lost 6-4, 3-6, 6-3 to Brazilian eight-seeded Thomaz Bellucci in the quarter-finals. Sock avoided an upset, advancing to the semi-finals with a 7-6 (8/6), 1-6, 6-4 victory over Feliciano Lopez of Spain. The 20-year-old Escobedo beat former tournament winner Isner despite posting just 10 aces to his opponent's 35. Fourth seed Steve Johnson eased through to the semis with a 6-2, 6-4 victory over Spanish fifth seed Fernando Verdasco. Escobedo, who is ranked No. 91 in the world, will face Bellucci in the semi-finals. Escobedo is competing in his first clay-court tournament and just his ninth ATP Tour event overall. "I

can't believe it," Escobedo said. — AFP

league kicked off after a two-year absence sparked by a major crisis, with big-name signings adding a bit of stardust. Liga 1 replaces an old top-lev-

el league, which was halted in 2015 due to a row between the government and local FA that triggered turmoil and led to the country being hit with a one-year ban by FIFA. The league is long-awaited and seen as a major boost for football in Southeast Asia's biggest nation, with supporters hoping it could mark a turning point for the sport after years of problems. Adding to fans' excitement, Indonesian football has in recent weeks seen its most high-profile signings for years with former English Premier League stars joining local teams. Former Chelsea stars Michael Essien and Carlton Cole have signed for Persib Bandung, while ex-West Bromwich Albion forward Peter Odemwingie joined Madura United. The season got under way Saturday with two matches. All eyes were on the clash between leading sides Persib and Arema FC, which kicked off at 6:30 pm (1130 GMT) and Essien was part of the squad playing. Eighteen teams are competing in Liga 1 and the season runs until November. — AFP

UMPIRE SCOTT SUSTAINS CONCUSSION ON FOUL TIP

TORONTO: Plate umpire Dale Scott was out of the hospital early yesterday, hours after sustaining a concussion when he was hit in the mask by a foul tip from Baltimore slugger Mark Trumbo during a game in Toronto. Scott told The Associated Press by text that he was feeling OK and that the results of a CT scan were normal. The veteran crew chief left the field on a spinal board in the eighth inning after being struck Friday night. He was taken to Mount Sinai Hospital. Scott recoiled after the ball struck the bottom of his mask and knocked it off, staggering backward before going down on one knee. After being examined by Blue Jays trainer George Poulis, Scott lay down on his back on the turf behind home plate and received further attention from paramedics and Toronto's team physician. Once his neck was immobilized, Scott was lifted onto a cart and

driven off the field, exiting through a

gate in the left field corner.—AP



ATLANTA: United States Navy fighter jets fly over SunTrust Park during the national anthem before a baseball game between the Atlanta Braves and the San Diego Padres.— AP

Atlanta Braves open new park in style

ATLANTA: Ender Inciarte hit the first home run in baseball's newest stadium and local product Nick Markakis drove in the first two runs as the Atlanta Braves beat the San Diego Padres 5-2 Friday night in the regular-season debut for SunTrust Park.Before a sellout crowd of 41,149 that included former President Jimmy Carter, Commissioner Rob Manfred and one-time home run king Hank Aaron, the Braves won their second straight game after a 1-6 start. Julio Teheran (1-0) was a bit wild but lasted six innings. He gave up both San Diego runs, working around four walks and two hit batters. Jim Johnson worked the ninth for his second save. Markakis, who grew up in nearby Woodstock, put the Braves ahead in the first with a two-run double off Jhoulys Chacin (1-2). Inciarte gave Atlanta some breathing room in the sixth with a two-run shot to right.

DODGERS 7, DIAMONDBACKS 1

Clayton Kershaw outpitched former teammate Zack Greinke, leading Dodgers to the win. Kershaw (2-1) allowed four hits, struck out eight and walked one in 8 1/3 innings. The left-hander lost his bid for a shutout when Chris Owings doubled in a run in the ninth. Greinke (1-1), who left Los Angeles for a big free-agent deal with Arizona after the 2015 season, lasted just five innings. He was charged with five runs and 10 hits. Andrew Toles hit a two-run homer for Los Angeles in the eighth.

MARINERS 2, RANGERS 1

Felix Hernandez pitched 7 1/3 innings for Seattle, and Mitch Haniger settled for a matchwinning RBI single instead of an apparent home run. With the score 1-1 in the seventh, Haniger hit a drive that appeared to clear the left-field wall for a three-run homer, before bouncing back into the field of play. After an umpire review of more than two minutes, the call was overturned, giving Haniger a single off Jose Leclerc (0-1), scoring Jarrod Dyson to put Seattle up 2-1. Hernandez (1-1) allowed one run and six hits. Edwin Diaz pitched the ninth, stranding the tying run at third for his second save.

YANKEES 4, CARDINALS 3

Masahiro Tanaka pitched into the seventh inning before Aroldis Chapman escaped his own jam for his third save in three days as the Yankees earned their fifth straight win. Chapman allowed a two-out walk to Randal Grichuk and a double to pinch-hitter Jose Martinez before Dexter Fowler - the closer's teammate on the World Series champion Cubs last year - grounded out to second. Tanaka (1-1) entered with an 11.74 ERA over his first two starts, but recovered nicely after Matt Carpenter's two-run homer in the first. The Japanese right-hander was charged with

three runs and five hits in 6 1/3 innings. Starlin Castro and Austin Romine homered for New York, which is 4-0 to begin its nine-game homestand. Michael Wacha (1-1) struck out eight for struggling St. Louis but allowed two homers and four runs over six innings.

ORIOLES 6, BLUE JAYS 4

Home plate umpire Dale Scott sustained a concussion when hit in the face mask by a foul tip from Baltimore slugger Mark Trumbo, casting a shadow over the Orioles' victory. Scott recoiled after the ball struck the bottom of his mask and staggered backward before going down on one knee in the eighth inning. Once his neck was immobilized on a spinal board, Scott was lifted onto a cart and driven off the field. The Blue Jays relayed information from Major League Baseball

runs and six hits while winning his third straight start to begin the season. The right-hander struck out six and walked one. The Giants jumped in front on Marrero's first career homer in the second, a drive to left off Tyler Anderson (1-2) after Eduardo Nunez walked with two out. Anderson lasted just four innings. The left-hander allowed four runs and five hits, and also was charged with two balks - matching a franchise record.

RAYS 10, RED SOX 5

Logan Morrison hit a grand slam for Tampa Bay and Shane Peterson homered in his first big league at-bat since 2015. These were two of the career-high four homers allowed by Cy Young Award winner Rick Porcello. Chris Archer (2-0) gave up one run in 5 2/3 innings, ending his 11game losing streak against the Red Sox. Brad

around a walk in a scoreless ninth. Miguel Cabrera hit a three-run homer in the

TIGERS 7, INDIANS 6

innings, and his ERA soared to 0.95. Syndergaard

struck out four and still hasn't walked a batter in

19 innings this season. Miguel Rojas had three hits

for Miami and walked to lead off the ninth against

Josh Edgin (0-1). Realmuto hit a 3-2 pitch into the

right-center field gap, and Rojas scored without a

play. AJ Ramos (1-1), Miami's sixth pitcher, worked

fifth inning after being brushed back in the first, and the Tigers handed the Indians their sixth loss in seven games. Tensions mounted three batters into the game when Cabrera yelled and gestured at the Indians dugout after an inside pitch from Trevor Bauer, Cabrera shouted at the dugout again when the inning ended, resulting in warnings to both teams. Cabrera responded in the fifth, lining a 1-1 pitch from Bauer (0-2) into the right-field seats to give Detroit a 4-0 lead. Alex Avila added a two-run homer in the sixth for Detroit, which played its first night game of the season. Daniel Norris (1-1) allowed two hits in six scoreless innings. Francisco Rodriguez allowed pinch-hitter Lonnie Chisenhall's grand slam in the ninth, but struck out Austin Jackson for his fourth save.

ASTROS 7, ATHLETICS 2

Japan's Nori Aoki homered and drove in two runs to help Houston to its third straight win. Brian McCann drove in three runs for Houston and Dallas Keuchel (2-0) pitched seven crisp innings. Khris Davis homered - his fifth of the season - in his first at-bat for the A's, who lost their second straight. Oakland starter Kendall Graveman pitched five innings of one-run ball. Ryan Madsen (0-1) got the loss.

ROYALS 7, ANGELS 1

Danny Duffy pitched seven innings for Kansas City and Mike Moustakas hit a two-run homer. Duffy (2-0) gave up a run on Mike Trout's firstinning single, but retired 15 of the last 16 batters he faced. He improved to 8-0 in his past 16 Kauffman Stadium starts. Salvador Perez also homered, his fifth of the season, and drove in two runs for Kansas City. JC Ramirez (2-1), making his first start in the majors after 111 relief appearances, allowed five runs in five innings for

WHITE SOX 2, TWINS 1

Dylan Covey allowed one run while pitching into the sixth inning of his big league debut and Matt Davidson hit a solo home run in the seventh, lifting the White Sox to the road win. Covey walked three and struck out one in 5 1-3 innings. Davidson's third homer of the year reached the upper deck in right field off Ryan Pressly (0-1), and David Robertson picked up his second save. Dan Jennings (1-0) pitched one inning of scoreless relief. The start of the game was held up 36 minutes by rain. Steady showers fell again in the second and third innings, but the teams were able to keep playing.

BREWERS 10, REDS 4

Eric Thames homered for the second straight night and drove in three runs, helping Milwaukee to its fourth straight victory. Thames' third home run of the season capped Milwaukee's four-run sixth inning against a Cincinnati bullpen that went into the game with a National League-best 1.13 ERA. Blake Wood (0-1) allowed three hits and three runs, including Jonathan Villar's tiebreaking double off the glove of right fielder Patrick Kivlehan. Thames followed with a two-run shot into the right field seats off left-hander Wandy Peralta. Zack Cozart hit a tworun homer in the second inning and Joey Votto added a solo shot in the third to give the Reds a 3-0 lead against Tommy Milone (1-0), who allowed three runs and six hits in five innings with no walks.

PIRATES 4, CUBS 2

David Freese and Francisco Cervelli each drove in two runs as the Pirates stopped a fourgame skid. Pittsburgh right-hander Gerrit Cole (1-1) allowed two runs in six innings, striking out five. The Cubs loaded the bases with two outs in the ninth inning before Tony Watson retired Ben Zobrist on a bouncer to shortstop for his third save. Freese doubled twice and scored two runs. The 33-year-old third baseman has reached safely in 12 of his last 15 plate appearances. The Pirates trailed 2-1 in the sixth when Freese hit a tying single and Cervelli had a two-run double. Cubs right-hander Kyle Hendricks (1-1) pitched five-plus innings and was charged with three runs and six hits. He allowed just one run during three wins against Pittsburgh last year.

NATIONALS 3, PHILLIES 2

Daniel Murphy hit a game-ending RBI double, sending Washington to the win. Bryce Harper opened the 10th with a single off Jeanmar Gomez. Murphy then hit an opposite-field double to left on his bobblehead day, and Harper came around to easily beat the throw. The Phillies lost their fourth in a row. They took two of three from the Nationals in Philadelphia last weekend. Shawn Kelley (1-0) pitched a perfect 10th inning. Gomez (1-1), who was removed from the closer's role this week after filling it last season, threw a scoreless ninth before Washington broke through. Murphy extended his hitting streak to 10 games with a third-inning single. — AP

MLB results/standings

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

A	\merica	n Leag	ue			Nationa	ıl Leag	ue	
I	Eastern	Divisio	n			Eastern	Divisio	on	
	W	L	PCT	GB	NY Mets	7	4	.636	-
Baltimore	7	2	.778	-	Washington	6	4	.600	0.5
NY Yankees	6	4	.600	1.5	Miami	5	5	.500	1.5
Tampa Bay	6	5	.545	2	Atlanta	3	6	.333	3
Boston	5	5	.500	2.5	Philadelphia	3	7	.300	3.5
Toronto	1	9	.100	6.5		Central	Divisio		
	Central	Divisio	n		Cincinnati	7	4	.636	_
Detroit	7	3	.700	-	Chicago Cubs	6	4	.600	0.5
Minnesota	6	4	.600	1	Milwaukee	6	5		1
Chicago White Sox	5	4	.556	1.5		•	_	.545	•
Kansas City	4	6	.400	3	Pittsburgh	4	6	.400	2.5
Cleveland	4	6	.400	3	St. Louis	3	7	.300	3.5
1	Nesterr	Divisio	on			Westerr	Divisi	on	
Houston	7	4	.636	-	Arizona	7	4	.636	-
LA Angels	6	5	.545	1	Colorado	7	5	.583	0.5
Oakland	5	6	.455	2	LA Dodgers	6	5	.545	1
Texas	4	6	.400	2.5	San Diego	5	6	.455	2
Seattle	3	8	.273	4	San Francisco	5	7	.417	2.5

that Scott would miss the rest of the series. JJ Hardy hit a two-run homer for Baltimore, and Chris Davis, Jonathan Schoop, and Seth Smith also connected. Wade Miley (1-0) pitched six innings for the win, and Zach Britton got three outs for his fifth save. Toronto has dropped seven in a row, extending its franchise-worst start. Blue Jays ace Aaron Sanchez (0-1) allowed five runs and seven hits in 5 1/3 innings.

GIANTS 8, ROCKIES 2

Johnny Cueto pitched seven effective innings for San Francisco, while Brandon Crawford and Chris Marrero homered. Cueto (3-0) allowed two

MARLINS 3, METS 2 JT Realmuto hit a game-ending RBI double with two out in the ninth inning as the Marlins snapped the Mets' five-game win streak. The Marlins avoided extra innings after a 16-inning loss to the Mets on Thursday. New York's Noah Syndergaard allowed two runs, one earned, in six

Miller and Steven Souza Jr. also homered for the

Rays, who were coming off losing three straight

at Yankee Stadium. Mookie Betts had four hits for

the Red Sox. Porcello (1-1) gave up eight runs in 4

1/3 innings, halting the majors' longest active

streak of pitching at least six innings at 20 games.



YOUNG BUCKS BATTLE HISTORY AGAINST RAPTORS IN PLAYOFF

LOS ANGELES: Giannis Antetokounmpo could be the key to the Milwaukee Bucks' bid to reverse their recent history against the Toronto Raptors in the first round of the NBA playoffs. The 22-year-old Greek has emerged as a force this season, becoming the first player in NBA history to finish a campaign in the top 20 in total points, rebounds, assists, blocks and steals.

He led the Bucks in all five of those statistical categories, emerging as the leader of a young franchise that grabbed the sixth seed in the Eastern Conference despite coping with injuries to Khris Middleton and Jabari Parker during the season. Ready to relish the role of underdog, he's not bothered by the Bucks' 2-13 record against the Raptors over the past four seasons-their worst against any Eastern Conference rival.

"I haven't thought anything about that," Antetokounmpo said. "All regularseason that's what it's been for us, just chasing. We love when we chase. Just ple down and try to get as much from we can from every game." Antetokounmpo finished the regular-season with 1,832 points, 700 rebounds, 434 assists, 151 blocks and 131 steals.

That put him 14th in total scoring, 15th in rebounding, 18th in assists, fifth in blocks and ninth in steals. He added six points and more than one assist per game to his prior career averages, earning an All-Star nod along the way. If it weren't for

Oklahoma City Thunder star Russell Westbrook, not to mention the 22 of the Houston Rockets' James Harden, Bucks coach Jason Kidd believes Antetokounmpo would be squarely in the

Most Valuable Player discussion. "A guy who leads the team in every category, who can finish in the top 20 in every category, it's just unheard of," Kidd said. "This is a historical season for stats for a lot of players, as we know. He would be

coming in there just chasing-chase peothe amazing 42 triple-doubles of in for the MVP, but unfortunately there's a lot of history being written right now. He's not (in the MVP race), but if it were a normal year, yes." Antetokounmpo's nickname of "The Greek Freak" originated with his seven-foot frame, impressive wingspan and explosive athleticism. But as his second trip to the playoffs looms, he boasts a freakish level of skill as well, as Raptors coach Dwane Casey knows all too well. "He's totally different than anything else in our league," Casey said. —AFP

ROD CAREW'S NEW ORGANS CAME FROM AN NFL PLAYER

SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO: Baseball Hall of Famer Rod Carew received a new heart and kidney from the late NFL player Konrad Reuland in what is believed to be the first such transplant involving pro athletes. Carew underwent the procedure last December and met Reuland's family in March after mutual friends connected Reuland's death with news of Carew's transplant on Dec 16. Reuland had died four days earlier after a ruptured brain aneurysm at age 29. Reuland attended middle school in Southern California with Carew's children, and he met Carew when he was 11. "The whole thing is just unbelievable," Carew told American Heart Association News. "I've been given a second chance so I'm going to take advantage of it, and I've got another family."

Reuland played for the New York Jets and Baltimore Ravens. He also spent time with the San Francisco 49ers and Indianapolis Colts, who released him last August. The only details the Carew family received before the transplant were that the donor was "male, late 20s, local, exceptionally healthy." The Reulands were told the recipient was a 71-year-old man from Orange County. The two men's blood type was the same, but the key factor was both were immune from Hepatitis B. No one ahead of Carew on the transplant list was

Reuland's parents, Ralf and Mary, and their youngest son Austin took turns listening through a stethoscope to Konrad's heart beating inside Carew's chest when they met the former baseball star and his wife Rhonda, according to the American Heart Association News. "We are so thankful, so grateful, so there aren't adequate words," Rhonda Crew told the Reulands. Last fall, Reuland was on a treadmill when he experienced a severe headache. The aneurysm, a ballooning in an artery in his brain, burst a few days later. He underwent surgery, but never woke from a coma and his brain activity stopped a few weeks later. During the final hours Mary Reuland spent with her oldest child, she kept her right ear on his chest. Her final words to the representative of the organ procurement network were, "Make sure his heart goes to a really good person because Konrad was a really good person."

Health issues

Last April, Konrad Reuland was renewing his driver's license in his parents' home. He asked his mother whether he should become an organ donor. She'd signed up to do it, so he did, too. Carew's health issues began in September 2015 when he had a near-fatal heart attack while playing golf. He spent a year with a left ventricular assist device in his chest handling the work of his damaged heart. Last fall, blood thinners he took as part of his protocol led to bleeding in his brain, making it more urgent for him to get a new heart.

Carew went on the transplant waiting list the Friday before Thanksgiving and moved higher a few weeks later. He got the call that a match was found on Dec. 14. He received the heart and kidney two days later. Heart disease has touched the Reulands, too. Mary lost her father and a 31-year-old brother to heart attacks; Ralf's father has received a stent and battles atrial fibrillation. Both families want to encourage more people to become organ donors. Carew's family has long been signed up as organ donors in memory of his daughter, Michelle, who died of leukemia when she was unable to get a match for a bone marrow transplant. The families plan to work together, especially on "Heart of 29," the campaign Carew started last year with the American Heart Association. The program's name came from Carew's jersey number. Because Konrad Reuland died at 29, the name carries added meaning. —AP



MONTREAL: Montreal Canadiens' Steve Ott, left, is checked into the boards by New York Rangers' Brady Skjei during first-period Game 2 NHL Stanley Cup first-round playoff hockey game action. — AP

RADULOV LIFTS CANADIANS PAST RANGERS IN OVERTIME

MONTREAL: The Montreal Canadiens were in serious trouble until Tomas Plekanec gave them new life with a tying goal with 18 seconds left. And when Alexander Radulov scored 18:34 into overtime, it gave a whole new look to their playoff series with the New York Rangers. Instead of heading to New York trailing by two games, the Canadiens won 4-3 on Friday night to even the best-of-seven Eastern Conference quarterfinal 1-1 with Game 3 set for Sunday night at Madison

Square Garden.

"Every time you win you kind of change the momentum," Plekanec said. "You feel better about yourself and your game. But it's just one game. We have to get better because we haven't played a great game yet." Plekanec was put out for the final shift of the third period, with goalie Carev Price pulled for an extra attacker, because coach Claude Julien felt it was important to get the puck right away. Plekanec had a 63 percent win rate on faceoffs. The veteran ended up redirecting Radulov's feed past goal Henrik Lundqvist to send the Bell Centre crowd of 21,288 into a frenzy. The goal was the latest tying playoff goal in Canadiens history, beating Jacques Lemaire's goal in 1975 with 24 seconds remaining. Then Radulov, with his third point of the night, jammed the puck under Lundqvist from the edge of the crease in OT.

For a team that couldn't buy a goal in a 2-0 loss in the series opener, finally getting some offense was huge. "I sat here and had to answer questions I felt we didn't deserve (after Game 1) and it gave is a little chip on our shoulder," captain Max Pacioretty said. "Obviously, we didn't want to go down 2-0 going on the road, but every shift you have a chance to make a difference in a game and everyone had that same mindset.

"The coach came in here after two and after three and just said the right things to everybody. It was such a good feeling to see everyone stop what they were doing and be completely still and listen to what the coach had to say. Everyone just bought in so well and it showed in our game and our resilience." Jeff Petry and Paul Byron also scored for the Canadiens. They outshot New York 45-30 in regulation time and 58-38 overall.

The Rangers looked to be protecting their lead in the third period, when they were outshot 18-9, and gave up most of the scoring chances in OT, including Shea Weber's shot that clanged off a goalpost. "It was a good game," Rangers coach Alain Vigneault said. "Both teams battled hard and got some looks. Both teams' goalies made some good saves." Asked if losing the lead and the game may affect his team, Vigneault said: "When the puck drops on Sunday, we won't remember that." Michael Grabner, Mats Zuccarello and Rick Nash scored for the Rangers as they fought back from early 1-0 and 2-1 deficits.

PENGUINS 4, BLUE JACKETS 1

Sidney Crosby had a goal and two assists, Marc-Andre Fleury stayed sharp in his second straight playoff start and Pittsburgh pulled away to beat Columbus in Game 2. Jake Guentzel added a goal and an assist to help the defending Stanley Cup champions take a 2-0 lead in the best-of-seven series. Evgeni Malkin scored his first goal of the postseason, and Patric Horngvist pushed in an empty-net goal. Fleury finished with 39 saves while filling in for the injured Matt Murray, and received plenty of help. Pittsburgh blocked 23 shots before they even got to Fleury. Brandon Saad scored for Columbus, and Sergei Bobrovsky stopped 28 shots.

BLUES 2, WILD 1

Jaden Schwartz scored with 2:27 remaining during a 4-on-4 situation and St. Louis beat Minnesota to take a 2-0 series lead. Joel Edmundson had the first goal for the Blues after winning Game 1 in overtime, Jake Allen made 23 saves, and coach Mike Yeo devised another shrewd plan against his former team. Zach Parise scored again for the Wild, on a 5-on-3 late in the second period, but goalie Devan Dubnyk simply hasn't been as dominant as Allen at the other end. Screened by David Perron, Dubnyk didn't track Schwartz's deep shot from the slot. He

OILERS 2, SHARKS 0

Connor McDavid and Zack Kassian scored shorthanded goals to help the Edmonton Oilers beat the San Jose Sharks, levelling their first-round series at one game apiece. Cam Talbot stopped all 16 shots he faced for his first career playoff shutout and Edmonton's first postseason win since 2006. The Oilers missed the playoffs in each of the last 10 years. Kassian scored early in the second period and McDavid doubled the lead midway through the third period. It was a dominant performance by the Oilers and particularly by Kassian, a fourth-line winger who drove the net effectively and delivered bone-jarring hits on the Sharks' Brenden Dillon and Logan Couture. By the end of the second period, the Rogers Place fans were chanting "Kass-ee-ann! Kass-ee-ann!" It was a reversal of Game 1, when the Oilers were outshot 44-19 en route to a 3-2 overtime loss. —AP

tight end choked back tears as the verdicts

NFL STAR HERNANDEZ, SERVING

LIFE, ACQUITTED IN 2 SLAYINGS

Hernandez, already serving a life sentence for a 2013 murder, was acquitted Friday in a 2012 double slaying prosecutors said was fueled by his anger over a drink spilled at a nightclub. The former New England Patriots were read in court. A few moments later, he looked back at his fiancee and nodded somberly as relatives of the victims sobbed loudly. A defense attorney hugged him.

After six days of deliberations, the jury found Hernandez not guilty of first-degree murder in the killings of Daniel de Abreu and Safiro Furtado but convicted him of unlawful possession of a gun. The judge sentenced him to an additional four to five years in prison, separate from his existing life sentence. Suffolk District Attorney Daniel Conley said the victims' families were devastated by the verdicts and by the defense's portrayal of the men as "gang bangers" and "drug dealers." "These were two hardworking, humble, Cape Verdean immigrants," Conley said. "It was unnecessary, and it was wrong, and it shouldn't have been done."

Conley said prosecutors and the families take solace in the fact Hernandez is serving a life sentence in the killing of Odin Lloyd, a semi-professional football player who was dating the sister of Hernandez's fiancee. Prosecutors in the double murder trial weren't allowed to mention his conviction in Lloyd's case. Conley said one of the victims' relatives said, "At least he's not walking out the door today."

The defense team had pointed the finger at Alexander Bradley, a drug dealer and close friend of Hernandez, who was with him the night of the shootings. The defense hammered at Bradley's credibility, citing his immunity deal with prosecutors to testify against Hernandez, his role as the driver of their car the night of the shootings and his

BOSTON: Former NFL star Aaron criminal record. Bradley is serving a fivevear prison term in Connecticut for firing shots at a Hartford nightclub in 2014.

Silencing the witness

Bradley testified that Hernandez became enraged after de Abreu bumped into him while dancing at the Boston nightclub, spilling his drink. He said Hernandez later opened fire on the men's car as they waited at a stoplight. Prosecutors charged Hernandez with shooting Bradley in the face months after the double slaying to try to silence him as a witness. Bradley lost his right eye. Hernandez was acquitted of witness intimidation in that shooting.

Defense attorney Ronald Sullivan Jr said the jury was able to see through the "smoke and mirrors" that made up the state's case. He described Hernandez as a very good young man who happened to hang out with a very bad guy in Alexander Bradley." Conley said prosecutors would not go after Bradley in the killings because they believe they already charged the right person. "Our theory of the case stands," Conley said. "In our minds, (the evidence) points inescapably to Aaron Hernandez." Jury forewoman Lindsey Stringer read a statement noting the more than 70 witnesses and 380 exhibits presented in the case. "We based our decision on the evidence presented and the law," said Stringer, who took no

Prosecutors had introduced evidence Hernandez got a tattoo that memorialized the double slaying. California tattoo artist David Nelson testified Hernandez requested an image of a revolver with the gun barrel facing forward. Hernandez wanted five bullets visible in the cylinder of the gun and one cylinder empty, Nelson said. Authorities said Hernandez fired five shots from a revolver into the car carrying de Abreu and Furtado.— AP

BOSTON: In this still image from video, Aaron Hernandez, center, is hugged by defense attorney Ronald Sullivan Friday, April 14, 2017, in court in Boston, after being found not guilty of murder in the 2012 shootings of two men in a drive-by shooting in Boston. — AP

JACKSON SAYS THAT A TRADE MAY BE BEST FOR CARMELO

GREENBURGH: Phil Jackson thinks Carmelo Anthony and the Knicks might be better off going their separate ways. "We have not been able to win with him on the court at this time and I think the direction with our team is that he is a player that would be better off somewhere else and using his talent somewhere he can win or chase that championship," Jackson

Jackson stopped short of saying he wanted to trade his All-Star forward, but certainly seems eager to explore a deal that would help the Knicks get younger and more athletic. "Right now we need players that are really active, can play every single play, defensively and offensively," Jackson said. "That's really important for us." Jackson spoke to the local media Friday for the first time since September. The Knicks finished 31-51 in their fourth straight season out of the playoffs.

He met with Anthony a day earlier, a meeting he said was cordial. The 32-year-old veteran wants to play for a winning team, and Jackson explained that it may be time for Anthony to go looking for one elsewhere because the Knicks can't provide it. "We just talked about how we could make things the best possible things for both of us," Jackson said, "(find) a place where he could go to be competitive and to be back in the hunt, and something that would benefit us moving forward as a young, developing team."

Rebuilding the team

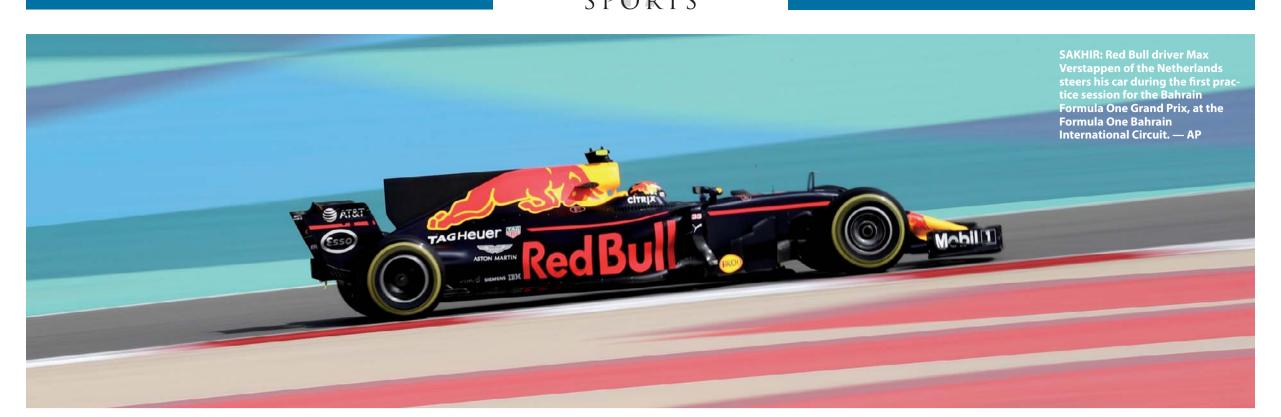
The team's president of basketball operations says he believes there's been progress, but signaled he will start another rebuilding of the team, a year after acquiring a number of veterans he hoped would join Anthony in becoming a playoff squad. Moving Anthony will be difficult, given his age and the \$54 million remaining on the five-year deal Jackson gave him in 2014. He also granted Anthony a no-trade clause in that contract, but said he doesn't regret it.

"He's carried the basic load for this team. I thought he stood up well this year in a lot of tough situations. I can't regret it. I can't go back and regret that," Jackson said. "Obviously it hasn't worked out, this partnership together. Somehow or other it didn't click here with this team, but he's done his role and played his role quite well." Jackson said he warned Anthony after last season the Knicks wouldn't be able to provide him a winning team, but Anthony opted to stay. The Knicks had trade talks during the season but couldn't find anything workable, and it was during that time that their relationship suffered, along with the team's record.

"So in our talks this time we talked about how we're going to go about doing what we have to do," Jackson said. "We will take into account his consideration. I told him this is not a situation where we're going to dump you or do anything like that, but we're looking to improve ourselves however we can." Jackson said he we would want back a "significant player" to replace Anthony, who remains the Knicks' leading scorer, and was vague on whether he thought Anthony could return if there was no trade. "That's a long way down the road, but there's very few options at that level," Jackson said. "But there are options." — AP



GREENBURGH: New York Knicks president Phil Jackson answers questions during a news conference at the team's training facility. — AP



F1: VERSTAPPEN ON TOP FOR RED BULL

MANAMA: Max Verstappen topped the times for Red Bull in yesterday's hot, windswept and closely-contested final free practice ahead of today's Bahrain Grand Prix. In a session that was halted briefly after Frenchman Romain Grosjean crashed in his Haas-Ferrari car, the 19-year-old Dutchman clocked a best lap in one minute and 32.194 to finish onetenth of a second clear of nearest rival Lewis Hamilton of Mercedes.

Sebastian Vettel, who shares the lead in this year's embryonic drivers' championship with Hamilton, was third fastest for Ferrari ahead of Valtteri Bottas in the second Mercedes. Kimi Raikkonen was fifth in the second Ferrari ahead of Felipe Massa of Williams, Australian Daniel Riccirdo in the second Red Bull and German Nico Hulkenberg of Renault. Carlos Sainz was ninth ahead of his Toro Rosso team-mate Russian Daniil Kvyat.

The top eight cars were separated by less than eight-tenths of a second in conditions that are not expected to be repeated in qualifying scheduled for later on Saturday as the sun, and the wind, goes down. In marginally cooler conditions with an air temperature of 35 degrees Celsius and track of 39, the session began slowly. After early installation laps, Frenchman Esteban Ocon of Force India was briefly quickest before Spaniard Carlos Sainz planted his Red Bull on top of the times.

By the half-hour mark, both Ferrari and Mercedes were doing little bar check out their cars with slow uncompetitive laps as a strong wind arrived. There was little for the fans, enduring the scorching sunshine, to enjoy before the session was halted by a red flag after 38 minutes when Frenchman Romain Grosjean spun and crashed at Turn Four, damaging the front of his Haas car.

In the severe heat, the tyres were overheating and this caused a wild moment from Verstappen on his way to the quickest lap, at the time, of 1:33.249. Three minutes later, after clearing up behind Grosjean's exclusion, Verstappen remained quickest ahead of Massa with 18 minutes remaining. Both Ferrari and Mercedes decided it was time to join the action. Vettel ran wide on his first lap as Raikkonen, and then Bottas, clocked fastest laps before Hamilton, who had suggested on Friday that the 'daytime' sessions were pointless ahead of a floodlit race, came out.

Before the Englishman had a chance to go for a genuine quick lap, Vettel took over on top with a lap in 1:32.750 - just 0.004 seconds quicker than Bottas - to confirm that a tight qualifying scrap was in prospect. The twoteam battle was extended to three when Verstappen clocked his fastest lap with three minutes remaining before Hamilton secured second for the session, one-tenth adrift of the Dutchman, but nearly half a second clear of

RUSSIAN LIGHTNING SHMELEVA STRIKES TWICE IN HONG KONG

HONG KONG: Russia's Daria Shmeleva won her second title at the Track Cycling World Championships yesterday with a breakneck ride in the women's time trial which shattered the hopes of home favorite Sarah Lee. Shmeleva clocked the fastest time over 500m of 33.282sec, 0.1sec faster than Germany's Miriam Welte, while Russian defending champion Anastasia Voynova took bronze.

Hong Kong's Lee briefly led the timings before the last three riders went out and relegated last year's silver-medalist, who won sprint bronze on Friday, to fourth place. Shmeleva, 22, moves on to three career rainbow jerseys after she successfully defended her team sprint title alongside Voynova earlier this week at the Hong Kong Velodrome. "I know that I'm a world champion in two events here, but it hasn't sunk in yet," Shmeleva said. "If you ask me tomorrow morning probably I can tell you

Spain's Albert Torres led the men's omnium standings ahead of Benjamin Thomas sey of the week in Hong Kong. —AFP

after a crash-filled elimination race, the third of the event's four disciplines. Poland's Szymon Sajnok went down twice before being eliminated, while Denmark's Casper Pedersen and Lindsay De Vylder of Belgium also hit the deck. Midway through the fourth night of competition, Australia top the medals table with three golds, one ahead of Russia.

Belgium won their inaugural women's madison world title after a thrilling race over 120 laps at the Championships. Belgium's Lotte Kopecky and Jolien D'Hoore finished with 45 points, ahead of Britain on 33 and 26 for Australia, who survived two crashes to claim bronze. While The United States' Chloe Dygert won her first individual world title by a whopping 7.143 sec in the women's individual pursuit. The 20-year-old two-time team pursuit champion enjoyed an ever-widening lead during the 3,000m race against Australia's Ashlee Ankudinoff, clocking 3min 24.641sec to claim her second rainbow jer-

OKLAHOMA CITY: In this Saturday, March 11, 2017, file photo, Oklahoma City Thunder guard Russell Westbrook, center, goes up for a dunk in front of Utah Jazz guards Alec Burks (10) and Raul Neto (25) during an NBA basketball game. —AP

MAUI SNOWBOARDER EYES **OLYMPICS IN SOUTH KOREA**

HONOLULU: On the island where Lyon Hamilton's brother is Lyon, the inspiration Farrell comes from, they cherish the golden sand and hanging 10. In the place where he'd love to land next winter, he'll need a snowboard, not a surfboard, and will get more mileage out of a backside 1260 than riding waves. Farrell is that rarest of birds an elite snowboarder who hails from, of all places, Maui. It certainly makes for quite an icebreaker when he shows up at contests. "I definitely get some funny looks," Farrell said with a laug h. "It's the last place you'd hear that a snowboarder is from."

His goal is to end up at the Olympics in South Korea next February, the most unlikely of destinations for an 18-year-old who grew up skateboarding and surfing. "At first, it's a bit of a shock, in a way, when you hear he's from Hawaii. For me, I only see what I see in front of me and I see an incredibly driven athlete," US snowboarding coach Mike Jankowski said of Farrell, who is part of the rookie slopestyle roster. "We've seen some amazing snowboarders and skiers come from many unlikely places. "It won't surprise me to see him get to the top. He's got what it takes."

Different level

It's easy to see where he gets his talent: His father, Campbell Farrell, is a big-wave surfer who's good friends with surfing icon Laird Hamilton (important because



In this Feb 21, 2017, photo provided by Red Bull, Lyon Farrell poses on a beach in Waipo Valley on the island of Hawaii. —AP

behind Farrell's first name). His mother, Angela Cochran, is a renowned wind-surfer who captured a gold medal at the Summer X Games in 1995. Turns out, Farrell's first love was skateboarding, which was only enhanced by meeting Shaun White at a skate park. A 10-year-old Farrell watched in fascination as White honed a new trick.

"I was blown away by just even being in his presence," Farrell recounted. "Because I was the kid that watched him all the time on TV." Farrell wanted to follow White's footsteps into the realm of skateboarding. But after he went to a contest in California, he quickly realized it was a totally different level. "That hit me hard," said Farrell, a homeschooled high school senior whose family relocated to Hawaii when he was an infant. "It made me realize how hard it would be to become one of better skateboarders in the world."

Surfing was really nothing more than a hobby (although, he was extremely good). And being a wind-surfer, like mom, was out of the question because, "there was too much gear and we had to drag it all over the beach." His family took frequent trips to New Zealand, where his dad was from. While there, they would typically squeeze in some skiing. During one visit, his brother tried snowboarding and it looked so fun that Farrell decided to give it a go as well.

This is how good he became: When he was around 13, an instructor who happened to be in New Zealand from Colorado spotted Farrell and invited him to Breckenridge for some pointers. He jumped at the chance and, accompanied by his mom, went there for three weeks. He's been going back to the mountain ever since. In between trips, Farrell mimics the snowboarding moves he learns on his skateboard or while he's surfing . It's the best he can do in, well, paradise.

Quick study

"Most of the (snowboarding) transition features, they relate pretty well to surfing. But it's so hard, because surfing relies so much on wind," Farrell said. He's proven to be a quick study, perfecting three different versions of 1080s in no time. "I caught up to all these kids who had been snowboarding forever," said Farrell, who's sponsored by Red Bull and is concentrating on slopestyle - where riders negotiate a course featuring rails and jumps - over the halfpipe. "That made me think I could really do this. I could hang with these kids who have lived in the mountains their whole life."—AP

WESTBROOK FOCUSED ON PLAYOFFS, NOT SEASON

OKLAHOMA CITY: Shortly after the Thunder wrapped up their regular-season finale, Russell Westbrook grew weary of talking about individual accolades. The Thunder guard happily answered questions about Oscar Robertson's MVP endorsement, and he answered a few questions about his record 42 triple-doubles in the regular season before his mood soured. When he was asked about winning his second scoring title in three years, he hesitated, then simply replied: "Next question."

Westbrook understands none of that matters now. He is squarely focused on what's ahead: the Thunder's playoff series with Houston that begins Sunday night - and postseason success. "The group of guys that we have, especially going into the playoffs - we've got to make sure we come ready to play, because we know they're (Houston) going to be ready," he said.

Westbrook has gone into most of the highstakes games in his career with Kevin Durant and Serge Ibaka at his side. But Durant left for Golden State in free agency last summer, and Ibaka, one of the league's best defensive players for much of his career in Oklahoma City, now plays for Toronto. Westbrook will have to help one of the youngest teams in the NBA get acclimated to playoff basketball. He said there won't be any special conversations about what to expect.

"Just play, man," Westbrook said. "Best thing you can do. It's what I did. Just go out and compete at a high level, and the game will tell you what to do. Obviously, the stakes are higher, but at the same time, still got to put the ball in the hole. Still the same basketball, same court. I just go out and compete." Still, this journey will be much different for Westbrook. "I think he's excited from a leadership role to try to help guys that don't have that kind of experience, haven't been through it or are going through it for the first time, to try to help those guys," Thunder coach Billy Donovan said. "I think he'll be the same as he always is. As the season's gone on, I really haven't seen a whole lot of change in Russell from the first day of training camp to now."

MVP front runner

Westbrook doesn't want to talk about the triple-doubles, but they are a critical component for the Thunder. Oklahoma City went 33-9 this season when Westbrook registered a triple-double and 13-26 when he didn't. The Thunder are 4-1 all-time in the playoffs when Westbrook gets a triple-double. He's facing another player who gets triple-doubles in bunches. James Harden, Westbrook's former teammate in Oklahoma City, collected 22 this season. It's the most intriguing

first-round series of the playoffs. Westbrook said the fact that Oklahoma City is matching up Harden does add a little something to the matchup. They are the front-runners for the MVP award, and they last played together for the Thunder in 2011-12, when Oklahoma City lost to Miami in the NBA Finals. "It's definitely cool," Westbrook said. "It's a great experience. Something that we can talk about later on down the line. Definitely, it's good."

The Thunder have played relatively well against Harden this season, holding him to 20.5 points per game on 34 percent shooting in the four meetings. Westbrook said there are other threats for the Rockets, who set the NBA record for 3-pointers made this season. Harden, Lou Williams, Eric Gordon, Ryan Anderson, Patrick Beverley and Trevor Ariza each made at least 110 3-pointers this season.

"Obviously, they're a great offensive team," Westbrook said. "Transition, they do a great job of getting threes. You've got to protect the 3point line." Westbrook has lit up the Rockets, averaging 36.3 points, 9.0 rebounds and 9.3 assists in four meetings, but Houston has won three of the four games. Westbrook averaged 34.6 minutes per game in the regular season and shouldered a large amount of the load for the team, especially late in close games. He isn't sure how Donovan will manage his minutes in the playoffs. "I just go out when my name is called," he said. "I go on the floor and play." — AP

DOCUMENTARY CHRONICLES BOSTON, GRANDDADDY OF ALL MARATHONS

BOSTON: What's the planet's most legendary marathon? Probably that fabled first one Pheidippides ran in 490 BC, breathlessly proclaiming a great military victory before perishing from his effort. Next in line? Surely the Boston Marathon, whose colorful 121-year history is captured in a movie premiering Saturday in its host city. Narrated by Matt Damon, "Boston," the first feature-length documentary about the race, tells how it grew from 15 runners in 1897 to become the globe's most venerable footrace.

The world premiere at the Boch Center's Wang Theatre, where the Boston Pops Esplanade Orchestra will conduct a live performance of Emmy-winning composer Jeff Beal's score, comes two days before Monday's running of the marathon. The film will be screened at 450 theaters around the U.S. on Wednesday. "The Boston Marathon is a truly iconic sporting event," said director Jon Dunham, a marathoner who calls it "the granddaddy of all marathons." "It's unique in the world of marathons, and in fact it transcends the world of marathons," he said.

The 2013 bombings near the finish line that killed three spectators and wounded more than 260 others aren't the focus of the film, but neither are they a footnote. Dunham had 56 cameras rolling along the course in 2014 to record the euphoria of athletes from around the world essentially reclaiming the marathon. paced by Meb Keflezighi, the first American winner in 31 years.

Mostly, though, the documentary is devoted to the Boston Marathon's rich lore. The Boston Athletic Association, which organizes the race, gave Dunham exclusive rights to its archive of photos, video and marathon memorabilia. Through the ages, the marathon has mirrored society's idiosyncrasies: Some of the first to run it - all men thought steak and whiskey gave them a competitive advantage. Chuck Mellor, the 1925 winner, ran the entire race with a cheek full of chewing tobacco.—AP



Italian Serie A results/table

Inter Milan 2 (Candreva 36, Icardi 44) AC Milan 2 (Romagnoli 83, Zapata 90+7); Cagliari 4 (Borriello 11, Sau 15, Pedro 40, 90) Chievo 0; Fiorentina 1 (Tello 64) Empoli 2 (El Kaddouri 37, Pasqual 90+3-pen); Genoa 2 (Simone 10, Pandev 78) Lazio 2 (Biglia 45+2, Alberto 90+1); Palermo 0 Bologna 0; Pescara 0 Juventus 2 (Higuain 23, 43); Roma 1 (Dzeko 50) Atalanta 1 (Kurtic 22); Torino 1 (Belotti 66-pen) Crotone 1 (Simv. 81)

Playing later

Sassuolo v Sampdoria, Napoli v Udinese.

Italian Serie A table after yesterday's early fixture (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):

Juventus	31	25	2	4 62	20	77	Udinese	31	11	7	13 41	40	40
Juvenitus	31	23			20	//		31	11	,			
Roma	31	23	2	6 69	26	71	Chievo	31	11	5	15 35	45	38
Napoli	31	20	7	4 72	33	67	Cagliari	31	10	5	16 41	62	35
Lazio	31	18	6	7 52	34	60	Bologna	31	9	7	15 29	46	34
Atalanta	31	18	5	8 52	34	59	Sassuolo	31	9	5	17 38	49	32
AC Milan	32	17	7	8 49	35	58	Genoa	31	7	8	16 30	51	29
Inter Milan	32	17	5	10 59	37	56	Empoli	31	5	8	18 18	49	23
Fiorentina	31	14	10	7 49	39	52	Crotone	31	5	5	21 25	51	20
Sampdoria	31	12	9	10 39	37	45	Palermo	31	3	6	22 25	67	15
Torino	31	11	11	9 59	52	44	Pescara	31	2	8	21 31	68	14

NOTHING TO FEAR FOR LYON IN TURKEY, SAY BESIKTAS

ISTANBUL: Turkish side Besiktas yesterday told France's Lyon they had nothing to fear from the Istanbul return leg of their Europa League quarter-final after ugly clashes marred the tie in France. The first leg match on Thursday in Lyon was scarred by violence and a pitch invasion, with European football's governing body UEFA opening an inquiry.

Lyon president Jean-Michel Aulas expressed fear for the safety of his team and fans in Thursday's return leg in Istanbul and raised the possibility of the tie being played behind closed doors. But Besiktas chairman Fikret Orman said that Lyon had nothing to be scared of at Besiktas' waterside stadium on the shores of the Bosphorus, distancing the club's fans from responsibility in the violence. "Here is our home," he said at a club meeting inside the Vodafone Arena stadium. "Don't be afraid. We are everyone's defender so come here and watch the match in a really nice way." "We will take pleasure hosting them (Lyon) here," he added.

He implied it was outside forces, rather than travelling Besiktas fans, who had been

behind the trouble. "They are trying to put on us all the blame of misbehavior by the fans," he said. Orman said that the team would give the "necessary response"-but on the pitch. Lyon were hit with four charges by UEFA, including "insufficient organization" concerning the segregation of supporters, while Besiktas were charged with throwing projectiles and crowd disturbances.

Lyon's deputy chief legal director Vincent Ponsot said on Friday "it's clear we were victims of aggression from Turkish supporters." But Besiktas have said the troubles were Lyon's responsibility as home side. Lyon won the game 2-1, leaving all at stake for a tense return encounter for a place in the semi-finals. Turkish football has been notorious for giving hostile welcomes to visiting foreign teams notably the November 1993 clash between Istanbul's Galatasaray and Manchester United when Turkish fans welcomed the English team with "Welcome to Hell" banners. But the Turkish football authorities would like to think standards of fan behaviour have improved considerably since then. — AFP



ISTANBUL: Besiktas' football club President Fikret Orman gives a press conference on April 15, 2017 at Vodafone Arena stadium. — AP

DI MARIA SENDS PSG LEVEL WITH MONACO

PARIS: Angel Di Maria scored a brace to keep Paris Saint-Germain hot on Ligue 1 leaders Monaco's heels with a 2-0 win at Angers on Friday. The Argentina international showed his class with one sublime and another clinical finish as PSG moved level on points at the top of the table. "We are happy because it was a difficult match at Angers," said PSG coach Unai Emery. "We're content with three points. We were well-prepared, concentrated and worked well." Monaco can reclaim their three-point advantage with victory at home to relegation threatened Dijon but with one eye on next week's Champions League quarterfinal second leg against Borussia Dortmund, they could be vulnerable. What's more, Monaco have had one less day to prepare for their game after their first leg in Germany, which the Principality outfit won 3-2, was postponed 24 hours after a triple bomb blast damaged the home side's team bus and left Spanish defender Marc Bartra with a broken wrist.

How much that incident has affected Monaco's already weary players remains to be seen while PSG-knocked out of Europe themselves in dramatic circumstances in the previous round when Barcelona came back from a 4-0 first leg deficit to triumph

6-5 on aggregate-have only domestic mat-

ters to concentrate on now. Di Maria's first goal was a rare bright spark in an otherwise tight first half, but there was no doubting the quality of the Argentine's placement as he bent a sumptuous free-kick from 25 yards over the defensive wall and beyond the despairing reach of Alexandre Letellier in the Angers goal on 28 minutes. The home side had the ball in the net on 39 minutes through captain Cheikh Ndoye but it was controversially disallowed for a foul by Famara Diedhiou on Serge Aurier when television replays proved inconclusive as to which of the two was the true offender as they wrestled in the area. Ndoye came close again 18 minutes from time when his powerful header appeared destined for the top corner until goalkeeper Kevin Trapp acrobatically tipped the ball over the bar. For a team in mid-table safety, Angers were played with real purpose but lacked the quality to break down a stubborn away defence. And six minutes form time, PSG struck with rapier speed and efficiency on the counterattack mas Lucas Moura fed Di Maria to slot home his second at the near post, although Letellier's positioning was highly questionable. —AFP



ANGERS: Paris Saint Germain's midfielder Marco Verratti of Italy, right, is tackled by Angers' defender Vincent Manceau during their French League One soccer match. —AP



MILAN: AC Milan's defender from Colombia Cristian Zapata celebrates with teammates after scoring a goal during the Italian Serie A football match Inter Milan vs AC Milan at "San Siro" Stadium. — AFP

ZAPATA 96TH MIN STRIKE HELPS MILAN SALVAGE DERBY DRAW

MILAN: Cristian Zapata hit a dramatic late leveler as AC Milan snatched a 2-2 draw with Inter Milan at the San Siro yesterday in the city's first Chinese-owned derby. Long-suffering Milan fans had reason to feel positive on Easter weekend after the club was taken over by Chinese-led consortium Rossoneri Sport Investment Lux two days ago in a multi-million euro deal. But until Zapata's bundled effort hit the crossbar and bounced over the line following a corner in the seventh minute of added-on time, the Rossoneri were on their way to defeat.

Despite a brilliant start from Vincenzo Montella's visitors to the clubs' shared ground-Carlos Bacca firing just over and on-loan Everton man Gerard Deulofeu hitting the upright in the opening minutes-Inter were more clinical when it mattered. Antonio Candreva did well to hold off his marker and chip a long ball past goal-keeper Gianluigi Donnarumma on 36 minutes. Inter captain Mauro Icardi had the hosts 2-0 up on 44 minutes when he strolled in unmarked to poke Ivan Perisic's cross past the 18-year-old goalkeeper.

Inter, owned by Chinese group Suning since June 2016, had further chances early in the second half and although keeper Samir Handanovic was decisive more than once, the big Slovenian was left stranded when Alessio Romagnoli met Suso's cross at the back post to hit what initially seemed a late consolation on 83 minutes. Inter looked nevertheless to be heading for a win that would have taken them up to sixth, one point ahead of Milan as both clubs fight for a Europa League place. But Nerazzurri hopes were dashed when Bacca got on the end of Suso's corner to set up Zapata for a messy winner bundled home from a tight angle.

"We kept on pushing till the end and maybe we were a little bit lucky, but when you consider Inter were lucky to level late in our last derby, we feel we deserved the draw," said Montella. "Our first half hour was good, we created chances, but

we weren't clinical enough. At this level you have to be clinical when you get two or three chances."

'More concentration' needed

The draw left Milan sixth, one point behind Atalanta in fifth and the final Europa League qualifying place. Atalanta travel to title-chasing Roma, who are six points behind leaders Juventus, later in the day. Inter remain seventh, still two points behind their city rivals, and coach Stefano Pioli lamented: "We didn't win because we didn't wrap up the game. "We had chances to score the third goal, and didn't take them. I think with a little bit more concentration we'd be going home with the three points."

Milan enjoyed a great start, Bacca firing over from four yards seconds into the game after a mix-up in the Inter defense. But after seeing Deulofeu hit the upright from a tight angle, the hosts took command when Candreva held off Mattia De Sciglio to beat Donnarumma with a fine chip. The red and black section of the San Siro then fell deadly silent when Icardi was allowed to run in unmarked on 44 minutes to poke Ivan Perisic's pinpoint delivery into the net. Inter were far more enterprising after the break, Icardi breaking clear and delivering for Perisic but the Croatian's effort was straight at

Afterwards, the Argentine complained: "We're very bitter. At half time we'd talked about going out and wrapping up the win with a third goal. "Sometimes we're too presumptious, we believe everything will come easy." Deulofeu, though, started exerting his influence and forced a great one-handed save from Handanovic. With seven minutes remaining Romagnoli launched the fightback with a volley from Suso's cross that beat Handanovic. And with virtually the last kick of the game, Zapata put the smiles on Milan faces with an awkward effort that required goalline technology to confirm it had gone in.—AFP



Matches on TV

(Local Timings) ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE West Bromwich v Liverpool 15:30 belN SPORTS HD 2 Manchester United v Chelsea 18:00 belN SPORTS HD 2 SPANISH LEAGUE

CD Leganes v RCD Espanyol belN SPORTS Valencia C.F v Sevilla FC belN SPORTS HD 3 belN SPORTS HD 2 Real Betis v SD Eibar belN SPORTS HD 2 Granada CF v Celta de Vigo belN SPORTS

GERMAN BUNDESLIC	GA
Werder Bremen v Hamburger	16:30
beIN SPORTS	
Darmstadt 98 v Schalke 04	18:30
beIN SPORTS	
FRENCH LEAGUE	
Nantes v Girondins de Bordeaux	16:00
beIN SPORTS	
Bastia v Olympique Lyonnais	18:00
beIN SPORTS	

22:00

MILESTONE MAN KANE KEEPS SPURS IN HUNT



LONDON: Harry Kane scored his 20th goal of the Premier League campaign as Tottenham Hotspur crushed Bournemouth 4-0 yesterday to cut Chelsea's advantage at the summit to four points. Mousa Dembele, Son Heung-Min and Vincent Janssen were also on target on a sunny spring afternoon at White Hart Lane that saw Spurs record seven successive league wins for the first time since 1967. Chelsea responded last weekend after Spurs had trimmed their lead, beating Bournemouth 3-1, but Antonio Conte's men face a less than straightforward trip to Manchester United on Sunday.

"Our job was to get three points and we got three points," said Spurs manager Mauricio Pochettino. "Now if they (Chelsea) fail, we're there. Now the pressure is on Chelsea to try to win at Old Trafford." Spurs appear the only team capable of denying Chelsea the title and will get a chance to measure themselves against the leaders in next weekend's FA Cup semi-final at Wembley. Kane, 23, is the first Spurs player to have scored at least 20 league goals in three successive seasons since the great Jimmy Greaves in the late 1960s.

In another milestone, Spurs have now won 12 consecutive home games in the top flight within the same season for the first time in their history. While Bournemouth remain seven points above the relegation zone, they will watch this weekend's remaining games involving the teams below them with a degree of anxiety. "We know we need more. We've known all along," said beaten manager Eddie Howe. "The danger is if everyone says, 'You're safe.' We've got to focus the players' minds that we're not."

Making his first start in five weeks after an ankle problem, Kane was quickly in the thick of the action with a volley that was blocked by Steve Cook. Dembele also looked in the mood, unleashing a fierce effort from Kyle Walker's lay-

off that was parried by Artur Boruc, and in the 4 with his left foot. With minute he put his side in front. With his left foot. The half-time

Wilshere injury

The goal stemmed from an error by visiting captain Simon Francis, who allowed the ball to roll behind in the mistaken belief a goal kick would be awarded. Instead a corner was indicated and from Christian Eriksen's in-swinging delivery, Dembele took a touch before ramming home his first goal since January 2016. Three minutes later it was 2-0.

Arsenal loanee Jack Wilshere, lustily booed by the Spurs faithful, saw a pass blocked by Eric Dier and Kane's clever flick freed Son to scamper in and drill a shot between Boruc's legs. Bournemouth flickered, Cook heading over at a corner and Benik Afobe threatening to apply the finishing touch to a Junior Stanislas cross, but Spurs were soon back on top. Boruc was extended by an effort from Eriksen and had to field a shot from Son, while Eriksen also thrashed over

vith his left foot.

beIN SPORTS

de Marseille v Saint Etienne

The half-time interval brought only temporary respite for Bournemouth, who found themselves a further goal behind within three minutes of the restart as Kane scored his 13th goal in 12 league games. Walker clipped a pass into Kane's feet and he took Francis out of the game with a Cruyff turn before spearing a left-foot shot past Boruc. Boruc saved from Kane three times in nine minutes as the England man continued to torment the Bournemouth rearguard.

Wilshere appeared to injure his ankle in a challenge on Kane and had to make way for Lewis Cook, the home fans' gleeful catcalls accompanying him as he limped down the tunnel. Boruc was also tested by Eriksen, Son and Ben Davies as Pochettino urged his men to keep attacking from the touchline. Bournemouth belatedly registered a shot on target in the 74th minute through Charlie Daniels, but Spurs had the last word as goal-shy substitute Janssen bundled in from a stoppage-time corner. —AFP



LONDON: Tottenham Hotspur's Harry Kane, center, shoots on goal during the English Premier League soccer match between Tottenham Hotspur and Bournemouth at White Hart Lane stadium. — AP

English Premier League results/standings

Tottenham 4, Bournemouth 0; Watford 1, Swansea 0; Crystal Palace 2, Leicester 2; Sunderland 2, West Ham 2: Everton 3, Burnley 1: Stoke 3, Hull 1

English Premier League table after yesterday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):

Chelsea	31	24	3	4	65	25	75	West Ham	33	10	7	16	44	59	37
Tottenham	32	21	8	3	68	22	71	Burnley	33	10	6	17	33	47	36
Liverpool	32	18	9	5	68	40	63	Crystal Palace	32	10	5	17	44	52	35
Man City	31	18	7	6	60	35	61	Bournemouth	33	9	8	16	45	63	35
Everton	33	16	9	8	60	37	57	Hull	33	8	6	19	34	67	30
Man Utd	30	15	12	3	46	24	57	Swansea	33	8	4	21	37	68	28
Arsenal	30	16	6	8	61	39	54	Middlesbrough		_		15			
West Brom	32	12	8	12	39	41	44	3							
Southampton	30	11	7	12	37	37	40	Sunderland	32	_	-	21		58	
Watford	32	11	7	14	37	52	40	Note: top four	qua	alify	for	Cha	mp	ions	League;
Stoke	33	10	9	14	37	48	39	teams finishing	fifth	to:	seve	enth	qual	ify fo	or Europa
Leicester	32	10	7	15	41	53	37	League: bottom	thre	ee re	lea	ated	to Cl	nami	pionship.

BARKLEY ENJOYS HOME AS EVERTON DEFEAT BURNLEY



LIVERPOOL: Ross Barkley put an awkward few days behind him by starring in Everton's 3-1 win at home to Burnley in the Premier League yesterday. Victory saw the Toffees leapfrog Manchester United into fifth place on goal difference. But United, who, have three games in hand on Everton, will regain fifth spot if they avoid defeat against Premier League leaders Chelsea at Old Trafford on Sunday.

Yesterday's match came just hours after Everton banned The Sun tabloid from their Goodison Park ground over an article about Barkley in which the England midfielder was compared to a "gorilla at the zoo". Everton captain Phil Jagielka gave the Toffees a 49th-minute lead when he scored his third goal in three games, the central defender's header going in off the post before he thumped the ball over the line to make sure there was no doubt at all. But it took Lancashire rivals Burnley just minutes to draw level at 1-1.

Everton goalkeeper Joel Robles needlessly brought down Sam Vokes as the forward headed away from goal to concede a clear penalty. Vokes himself then scored from the ensuing spot-kick. Everton, however, regained the lead in the 71st minute when Barkley's shot took a huge deflection off Burnley defender Ben Mee for an owngoal. Three minutes later, Belgium striker Romelu Lukaku scored in his ninth consecutive game at Goodison when he outmuscled Burnley defender Michael Keane

before smashing a shot past goalkeeper Tom Heaton. The last Everton player to achieve such a feat was Dixie Dean in 1934.

Sun controversy

Earlier yesterday, Everton said The Sun had been banned from both Goodison and their training ground, as well as "all areas of the club's operation". The article in Britain's best-selling newspaper concerned the 23-year-old Barkley getting into a fight in a nightclub in Everton's home city of Liverpool. Columnist Kelvin MacKenzie compared Barkley, who has a grandfather from Nigeria, to a "gorilla at the zoo" and said the only other people in Liverpool with his income were drug dealers.

The article was headlined "Here's why they go ape at Ross" alongside pictures of Barkley and a gorilla. "Whilst we will not dignify any journalist with a response to appalling and indefensible allegations, the newspaper has to know that any attack on this city, either against a much-respected community or individual, is not acceptable," said Everton. Meanwhile The Sun's publisher News UK said in a statement that MacKenzie "had been suspended with immediate effect". MacKenzie said he had no idea of Barkley's family background and added: "For the mayor of Liverpool and a handful of others to describe the article as racist is beyond parody." The Sun and MacKenzie are deeply unpopular in Liverpool. MacKenzie was the paper's editor in 1989 when it published allegations about the behavior of fans of Liverpool, Everton's local rivals, in the Hillsborough stadium disaster. Yesterday marked the 28th anniversary of the tragedy in which 96 Liverpool supporters died. Liverpool banned The Sun from their Anfield stadium and their training ground in February this year over the paper's 1989 Hillsborough coverage. — AFP



LIVERPOOL: Everton's Ross Barkley, right, and Burnley's Robbie Brady battle for the ball during their English Premier League soccer match at Goodison Park. — AP

SUNDERLAND IN DANGER DESPITE BORINI LEVELER



SUNDERLAND: Sunderland salvaged a 2-2 draw against West Ham thanks to Fabio Borini's late equalizer, but the Premier League's bottom club remain in severe danger of relegation. David Moyes' side are nine points from safety with just six games remaining after a frustrating afternoon at the Stadium of Light. Having fallen behind to Andre Ayew's early goal, Sunderland equalised through Wahbi Khazri, only to see James Collins put the Hammers back in front.

Borini rescued a point in the 90th minute, but Sunderland, now without a win in eight matches, need victories rather than draws in their desperate situation and it was no surprise to hear Moyes and his players jeered at full-time. West Ham are nine points clear of the bottom three and should be assured of beating the drop despite a troubled season on and off the pitch.

Sunderland have made a habit of staging last-ditch escape acts to avoid relegation in recent years. But there is a sense of inevitability about their fate this time and thousands of fans seemed to have accepted relegation is certain judging by the swathes of empty red seats at kickoff. It took just five minutes for Sunderland's creaky defence to be breached as Andy Carroll scuffed Sam Byram's cross back across goal and Ayew tucked the ball into the net.

Sunderland levelled in fortuitous circumstances in the 26th minute to end a home goal drought that had stretched back to January 14. Khazri's inswinging corner caught the stiff wind, evading Hammers goalkeeper Darren Randolph and his defenders before nestling inside the far post. Even so, Moyes was not allowed to enjoy the moment, with some supporters singing "Are you watching David Moyes?", a reference to his reluctance to select the

Tunisia international in recent months. Two minutes into the second half, Moyes was grim-faced on the touchline once more as Hammers defender Collins glanced Robert Snodgrass' corner wide of Jordan Pickford to restore the visitors' lead. There was already a funereal atmosphere and when Sunderland defender Billy Jones was stretchered off while being given oxygen following a collision with Arthur Masuaku the gloom deepened even further. Substitute Borini pounced on an error by Randolph to spare Sunderland another defeat, but they couldn't snatch a valuable winner despite Byram's dismissal for a second booking in 10 minutes of stoppage-time. —AFP



DORTMUND: Dortmund's players hold the jersey of Dortmund's Spanish defender Marc Bartra who was injured during the bus attack on April 11 after the German First division Bundesliga football match between Borussia Dortmund and Eintracht Frankfurt.—AFP

BARTRA TRIBUTES AS SHAKEN DORTMUND BOUNCE BACK

BERLIN: Borussia Dortmund players and fans paid tribute to defender Marc Bartra as they beat Eintracht Frankfurt 3-1 yesterday in their first Bundesliga match since the midweek bomb attack on their team bus. Germany winger Marco Reus scored on his return after six weeks out and Sokratis Papastathopoulos and leading scorer Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang were also on target in a home victory which allowed Thomas Tuchel's side to all but wrap up a top-four finish and boost morale at the end of a traumatic week.

Three bombs containing pieces of metal rocked the Dortmund bus on the way to Tuesday's Champions League home quarter-final match against Monaco and left Spanish international Bartra hospitalised. The first leg was eventually played on Wednesday but Dortmund lost 3-2, their players later admitting they were still shell-shocked by the attack. The team was buoyed before kick-off yesterday as Bartra was released from hospital following surgery on a broken wrist. The Dortmund squad held his number five shirt aloft as they celebrated in front of their home fans after the final whistle.

"During the 90 minutes it was easier than on Wednesday," said captain Marcel Schmelzer. "We had a goosebump moment in front of our south stand. We're trying to talk a lot about it (the

attack) in order to process it and I hope it will get better quickly." Reus, back from a hamstring injury, needed just three minutes to open the scoring in front of a sell-out crowd of 81,360 and a heavy police presence at Signal Iduna Park.

Frankfurt drew level on 29 minutes when Marco Fabian's speculative shot hit the topright corner, but Sokratis restored the hosts' advantage before the break with a thunderous effort that barely deviated as it flew past Frankfurt goalkeeper Lukas Hradecky. Aubameyang netted his 26th league goal this season late on to secure the points and make him the division's joint top scorer alongside Bayern Munich's Robert Lewandowski.

RB into Champions League

With runaway league leaders Bayern at Bayer Leverkusen yesterday evening, second-placed RB Leipzig trimmed the gap at the top to seven points with a 4-0 home thrashing of Freiburg. Yussuf Poulsen gave RB an early lead before putting Timo Werner in behind the Freiburg defence to net his 16th league goal this season just before the break.

Guinea midfielder Naby Keita netted with a superb shot on 51 minutes before Diego Demme hit their fourth. Leipzig, in their first topflight campaign, are now guaranteed a top-four

finish and a crack at the Champions League next season. "It was another important step. Now we want to achieve more and fulfil our next dream," said Werner with one eye on Europe.

Third-placed Hoffenheim also moved a step closer to Champions League qualification after their thrilling 5-3 win home to Borussia Moenchengladbach. Hungary striker Adam Szalai scored twice to give Hoffenheim a 2-0 lead before Europa League-chasing Gladbach clawed back with goals in quick succession by defender Jannik Vestergaard and captain Lars Stindl. Hoffenheim's Kerem Demirbay fired in a free-kick and striker Mark Uth came off the bench to make it 4-2 with 15 minutes left. Gladbach's Mahmoud Dahoud made it 4-3 before Demirbay grabbed his second. Relegation-threatened Mainz broke their fivematch losing streak with a 1-0 win over Hertha Berlin thanks to Danny Latza's winner to leave them 15th. Augsburg are one place below them, but level on points, after they beat Cologne 2-1 despite finishing with nine men. Augsburg had Koo Ja-Cheol and Alfred Finnbogason sent off in the final frantic minutes as Paul Verhaegh sealed the hosts' win. An own-goal by Markus Suttner and strikes from Yunus Malli and Mario Gomez gave Wolfsburg a 3-0 win home to Ingolstadt. — AFP

BENTEKE HEADS PALACE CLOSER TO SAFETY ZONE



LONDON: Christian Benteke's 14th goal of the season completed Crystal Palace's two-goal comeback to secure a point in a 2-2 home draw with Leicester City in the Premier League yesterday. Leicester-who face Atletico Madrid in the second leg of their Champions League quarter-final on Tuesday-took an early lead through Robert Huth with Jamie Vardy adding a second early in the second half at Selhurst Park. But Yohan Cabaye kick-started the home side's comeback with his second goal in two games before Benteke salvaged the point that moved Sam Allardyce's side seven points clear of the bottom three.

Craig Shakespeare understandably had one eye on Tuesday's meeting with the La Liga side but the Leicester manager resisted the temptation to make wholesale changes to the team that suffered a narrow 1-0 defeat in the first leg in Spain. Allardyce has attributed his side's recent run of results to much improved defensive displays but would not have been happy when Palace fell behind to a routine long-throw routine after just six minutes.

Leicester left-back Christian Fuchs directed his throw from the left wing into the heart of the Palace area where Huth rose above Joel Ward to direct his header past keeper Wayne Hennessey from six yards. The signs were not good for Palace with Leicester coming into the game backed by a record of having won every game they have scored first in, a record unmatched by any other Premier League side. But they should have drawn level in the 17th minute when Benteke was allowed to bring down a deep cross from Ward on his chest after pulling away from Danny Simpson.

away from Danny Simpson.

The Belgian international was denied, however, when Kasper Schmeichel raced off his line to close down the angle and the striker saw his close-range shot deflect to safety off the legs of the Leicester keeper. Yet for all their territorial advantage Palace struggled to make a significant impression on a Leicester defence who eased through the rest of the first half largely untroubled. The visitors had offered few signs of adding to the score but the start of the first half mirrored that of the first and Shakespeare's side doubled their lead after once again making

the most of a Palace defensive lapse. The threat appeared to lie at the other end of the pitch when Palace winger Andros Townsend swung in a corner, but a headed clearance landed at the feet of Riyad Mahrez, who set Vardy free deep into the Palace half with a long ball. Then, after working his way into the box, the Leicester striker cut inside and placed a left-footed shot wide of Hennessey that the keeper could only parry into the net. Palace struck back impressively and were back in the game inside two minutes. A right wing cross was allowed to drift through the Leicester box to former Foxes player Jeff Schlupp, whose deflected shot fell at the feet of Cabaye and the France international made no mistake with a left-foot finish. The game had fired into life and the home side worked their way back onto level terms in the 70th minute when Benteke climbed above Yohan Benalouane to head home Townsend's cross. —AFP



PESCARA: Juventus' Gonzalo Higuain celebrates after scoring during a Serie A soccer match bteween Juventus and Pescara.— AP

HIGUAIN BRACE PUTS SCUDETTO IN SIGHT

MILAN: Gonzalo Higuain's brace sent Juventus eight points clear in Serie A with a 2-0 win at struggling Pescara yesterday, and re-launched his bid for another top scorer's award. Argentina striker Higuain, who hit a new league record of 36 goals for Napoli last season, now only trails Roma's Edin Dzeko and Andrea Belotti of Torino by two goals in the 'Capocannoniere' race.

After successive braces last week over Cup and league duty that kept the Turin giants on course for a third consecutive double, Higuain was on target again at the Adriatic Stadium. He wrapped up the match before half-time after finishing off good work by Juan Cuadrado in the 23rd minute before beating Vincenzo Fiorillo in the hosts' net from Mario Mandzukic's knock-down just before the interval.

Roma's 1-1 draw at home to Atalantawith Dzeko levelling Jasmin Kurtic's 22nd minute strike five minutes after the restartallowed Juventus to extend their lead as they target a record sixth consecutive scudetto. The only blip for Massimiliano Allegri's men was seeing Argentina forward Paulo Dybala, who hit a brace in the 3-0 Champions League quarter-final first leg win over Barcelona in midweek, limp off with an ankle injury four days before the second leg at the Camp Nou.

"Dybala took a knock, but there's reason to remain optimistic," Allegri told Premium Sport. "In Barcelona, we need courage, lucidity and, above all, the desire to hit the back of the net." As far as another Serie A title is concerned, Allegri is taking nothing for granted with six games remaining. "Roma, on paper, can still get to 90 points. So we need to reach at least 91," added Allegri, whose side sit on 80 from 32 games.

Roma's slip-up at the Stadio Olimpico was not a huge surprise given Atalanta are enjoying their best season to date as the men from Bergamo defiantly look to deny AC Milan and Inter Milan a place in the Europa League. But, with a ninth runner-up place since they last won the scudetto in 2001 looming, Roma's grip on second is under pressure from Napoli, who trailed by five points before hosting Udinese later on Saturday. "We're going to have to work hard to keep Napoli at bay. They're a top side," said Roma coach Luciano Spalletti.

Atalanta's Gian Piero Gasperini was missing influential playmaker Papu Gomez, fellow forward Leonardo Spinazzola and goalkeeper Etrit Berisha for the visit to the capital. But they took the lead when Andrea Conti dribbled past Antonio Rudiger down the left flank and crossed for Kurtic to beat Wojciech Szczesny from 15 yards with a low volley. A limpid Roma resumed in move positive fashion after the break and when Mohamed Salah knocked a Mario Rui ball over the top for Dzeko, the Bosnian flirted with offside before turning in from five yards.—AFP

Zapata 96th min strike helps Milan salvagé derby draw



Bartra tributes as shaken **Dortmund** bounce back



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SUNDAY, APRIL 16, 2017

F1: VERSTAPPEN ON TOP FOR RED BULL



GIJON: Real Madrid's midfielder Isco (R) vies with Sporting Gijon's Venezuelan defender Fernando Amorebieta during the Spanish league football match Real Sporting de Gijon vs Real Madrid CF at El Molinon stadium. — AFP

ISCO WINNER TAKES REAL SIX POINTS CLEAR

points clear of Barcelona at the top of La Liga after twice coming from behind to beat Sporting Gijon 3-2 yesterday. Madrid can all but secure a first league title in five years with victory when they host Barca next weekend. But not for the first time this season they needed a late show after Duje Cop and Mikel Vesga put Sporting in front early in both halves. Isco's fine individual effort and a towering header from Alvaro Morata ensured neither lead lasted more than a few minutes. And Isco sealed the comeback when he drilled home from the edge of the box. "I am happy for him. He has the character to do what he did today," said Madrid boss Zinedine Zidane.

The Spanish international is yet to agree a new con-

MADRID: Isco struck at the death to send Real Madrid six tract with his current deal expiring at the end of next season. And Zidane insists he wants Isco to stay despite his lack of starts and interest from Barcelona. "You know what I think of Isco, he is player I like a lot and his place is here." Barca can close the gap back to three points when they host Real Sociedad later yesterday. Zidane made nine changes from the side that beat Bayern Munich in the first leg of their Champions League quarter-final in midweek. Cristiano Ronaldo and Karim Benzema were left out of the squad entirely alongside the injured Gareth Bale, while Toni Kroos, Luka Modric and Marcelo had to settle for a place on the bench. "I feel like I am unfair with those that don't play, but it is always going to happen," added Zidane. "There are 24 players that can

play in all positions. It is the difficult part of this job."

Wonder goal

Cop missed a late penalty with the chance to snatch a draw when the sides last met in November. However, the Croatian made amends when he finished off a lovely Sporting move by volleying home Vesga's scooped pass to put Sporting in front after 14 minutes. The lead lasted just three minutes as Real responded with a wonder goal of their own. Isco received Lucas Vazquez's pass inside a crowded penalty area but somehow dribbled past two Sporting defenders before curling the ball into the top corner.

Despite dominating possession for the remainder of

the first half Real had to wait until early in the second period for another clear chance to take the lead. Home goalkeeper Ivan Cuellar somehow turned Nacho's header just out of the reach of Morata, who was awaiting to apply the final touch for a tap-in. Sporting went straight up the other end to retake the lead as Vesga looped a measured header into the far corner. Once again, though, Sporting's defensive deficiencies were quickly exploited by the European champions as Morata towered above his marker to head home Danilo's cross. Madrid then peppered the Sporting goal, but didn't make the breakthrough until the final minute as Isco's effort from the edge of the area had too much power for Cuellar. — AFP

SERI SCORES TWICE AS NICE SECURE CHAMPS LEAGUE

PARIS: Pocket-sized midfielder Jean Michael Seri netted twice in the second half as Nice came from behind to beat Nancy 3-1 on Saturday and secure a crack at next season's Champions League. Junior Dale gave struggling Nancy the lead at the Allianz Riviera but Mikael Le Bihan leveled before the break and Ivory Coast international Seri took centre stage in the second half, scoring one of his goals from the penalty spot.

Lucien Favre's side have been hit by injuries to key players in recent weeks and 13-goal top scorer Mario Balotelli was absent due to another suspension, but they dug deep to extend their unbeaten run to 10 matches. Nice, who have lost just twice in the league all season, remain very much in title contention as they sit just a point behind leaders Monaco and defending champions Paris Saint-Germain.

However, they have played a game more than PSG and two matches more than Monaco, who host Dijon later on Saturday in between the two legs of their Champions League quarter-final against Borussia Dortmund. For Nice the result also means Lyon in fourth are 19 points behind them with just 18 points to play for, and so they will represent France in the Champions League for the first time next season. Again Favre's men did it the hard way as for the fifth straight game they fell behind.

Valentin Eysseric made a hash of clearing his lines following a Nancy corner on 26 minutes and the visitors took full advantage, Julien Cetout's ball across the face of goal being



NICE: Nice's Ivorian midfielder Jean Michel Seri (C) celebrates with his teammates after scoring a goal during the French L1 Football match between OGC Nice and AS Nancy Lorraine at the Allianz Riviera.—AFP

turned in at the far post by Dale. But the hosts were back level 10 minutes before the interval as Younes Belhanda's superb pass found Le Bihan, who took a touch and fired home to mark his first start since September 2015 with a goal.

Le Bihan, starting in the absences of Balotelli and the injured Alassane Plea, had been out of the game for 17 months before coming off the bench to score twice in a 2-1

win over Montpellier in February. Nice went in front early in the second half, Seri scoring from the spot after Dalbert was fouled by Issiar Dia on his way into the box. And Eysseric set up Seri to score again with five minutes left to make sure of the points. PSG won 2-0 at Angers on Friday with Angel Di Maria scoring both goals, including a majestic free-kick, to make it 14 league games unbeaten. — AFP

UNITED SUMMONS STRENGTH FOR CRUCIAL CHELSEA CLASH

LONDON: Manchester United manager Jose Mourinho must rally a fatigued and foundering team this weekend as he rekindles an increasingly thorny rivalry with his former club Chelsea, the Premier League leaders. United have drawn five of their last six home games and go into today's Old Trafford showdown on the back of a leggy 1-1 draw at Anderlecht in the first leg of their Europa

League quarter-final. They are far from ideal conditions in which to be preparing an ambush of the champions-elect, but despite his protestations that it is "just one more game", Mourinho is likely to be highly motivated. Sacked by Chelsea midway through last season's car-crash title defence, he has had two deeply unpleasant experiences on his two trips to Stamford Bridge this season. In October, he saw United thrashed 4-0 and made a public show of taking Chelsea manager Antonio Conte to task over his touchline exhortations, accusing the Italian of trying to "humiliate" him.

February's 1-0 FA Cup defeat was a closer affair, but brought with it barracking from the fans who had once sung his name. In response to their taunts of "Judas!", he raised three fingers-one for each of the Premier League titles he won over his two spells as Chelsea manager. "When they have somebody that wins four Premier Leagues for them, I become number two," he said after. "Until this moment, 'Judas' is number one."

Mourinho cannot have enjoyed watching the players who seemed to down tools under him thriving under Conte, as typified by the form of Eden Hazard. Hazard, who played like a ghost under Mourinho last season, will arrive at Old Trafford seeking to reach the milestone of 15 goals in a league campaign for the first time since he signed from Lille in 2012. For his part, Conte has sought to play down any suggestion of tension between himself and Mourinho. "I have zero problems (with Mourinho)," he said. "It's only a sporting competition between him and me. "There is a game of football. I want to try and win with my team. He wants to try and win with his team. It's normal to be at conflict during the game, but only a sporting conflict."

Mata blow

While Chelsea are no longer the freewheeling team seen in the weeks before Christmas, having gone nine league games without a clean sheet, they boast a formidable record against United. They are unbeaten in the teams' last 12 encounters, stretching back to a 3-2 home defeat against a side managed by Alex Ferguson in October 2012.

Conte also has the luxury of being able to pick from a full squad, after Victor Moses made his return from a toe problem in last weekend's 3-1 victory at Bournemouth.

Life is nowhere near as rosy for Mourinho, who must weigh his priorities ahead of Thursday's return leg against Anderlecht. David de Gea is expected to return in goal, having missed United's last two games with a hip problem. — AFP

Deadline for filing US tax returns is Tuesday this year

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Nissan Altima scoops **'Best Mid-Size** Sedan' awards

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Pick your ride with **Mercedes-Benz** compact cars

Lexus is the most dependable luxury brand 6th year in a row



MAZAR-I-SHARIF: Afghan laborers work in a sweet factory in Mazar-i-Sharif yesterday. —AFP

KIB ACHIEVES KD 7.6M NET PROFIT FOR Q1 2017

Profits increase by 13%, Total assets rise by 7%

KUWAIT: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) reported a net profit of KD 7.6 million at the end of the first quarter of 2017, registering a growth of 13 percent compared to the corresponding period of the previous year, where the Bank reported net profits of KD 6.7 million.

In this context, Sheikh Mohammed Jarrah Al-Sabah, Chairman of KIB, said that Bank's positive performance in the first quarter of 2017 has reflected positively on its key performance indicators. The Bank's financial results have revealed a growth in operating income to reach KD 15.9 million, compared to KD 15.5 million recorded at the

end of the first quarter of 2016. KIB's total assets increased by 7 percent (KD 128.5 million) to reach a total of KD 1.9 billion, compared to KD 1.78 bil-



Sheikh Mohammed

lion at the end of the same period last year. This increase comes as a result of a growth in the overall financing portfolio by KD 113.2 million, to reach KD 1.3 billion compared to KD 1.2 billion at the end of first quarter in 2016, marking 10 percent growth.

Customer deposits regis-

tered an increase of 6 percent reaching a total of KD 1.2 billion compared to KD 1.1 billion for the same period of Jarrah Al-Sabah 2016. Investment portfolio compared with the same period last year

> increased by KD 25 million touching KD 85.8 million. KIB continued to report high levels of capital adequacy ratio, in accordance with the Central Bank of Kuwait's regula-

> tions concerning Basel III, whereby capi-

tal adequacy ratio reached 20.1 percent.

The financial leverage ratio was 10.6 percent for the period ended 31 March 2017.

The annualized gross profit rate of Boushra (three years) and Arzaq Deposits in Kuwaiti Dinars reached 3.1875 percent and 2.65 percent respectively at the end of the first quarter of

2017. The annualized net profit rate of stable profit growth in profits and Savings Account in Kuwaiti Dinar offered 1.59 percent at the end of the first quarter of 2017. Al-Jarrah also mentioned that KIB's impressive financial performance during the first quarter of 2017 reflected the successful implementation of its forward-thinking strategic plan and its solid financial standing.

Al-Jarrah concluded by saying "The strategy that KIB has put in place aims to bring about a comprehensive transformation in terms of the Bank's performance, profits, assets, products and

services. The strategy adopts a future outlook which focuses on propelling the Bank forward to become the "Islamic Bank of Choice in Kuwait". The impressive performance that we have seen during the previous two years, and since the beginning of 2017, in terms of

growth in depositors accounts - especially Arzaq and Boushra - is proof that KIB is thus far successfully achieving its outlined objectives, which focus on developing and enhancing the products and services offered to customers to best suit their needs and meet the demands of the market. During the current year, KIB will focus on boosting its competitive edge within the banking sector by successful deployment of best in class digital experience to the Bank's customers."



Trump goes easy on China currency policy

WASHINGTON: The Trump administration declined Friday to label China a currency manipulator despite President Donald Trump's insistent pledge during the election campaign that he would do so as soon as he took office. Instead, the administration's first twiceyearly currency review singled out China and five other countries as needing to be monitored for their currency practices. The countries - China, Japan, Germany, South Korea, Taiwan and Switzerland - were the same six named in the last currency report issued by the Obama administration in October.

The decision not to name China a currency manipulator has marked one of the sharpest major reversals of Trump's young presidency. In its report to Congress, the Treasury Department noted that Beijing had intervened in currency markets for about a decade to depress the value of its currency, the renminbi. Keeping the renminbi low gave its exporters a competitive edge by making Chinese goods more affordable overseas and other nations' products costlier for Chinese buvers.

But reflecting the views of most economists, Treasury concluded that China has recently been intervening to do the opposite - to keep the renminbi from falling against the dollar and other currencies. Still, despite that reversal, the report said a decade of holding down the renminbi had imposed "significant and long-lasting hardship on American workers and companies" and left China with the largest trade surplus of any country against the United States - \$347 billion last year. The report said Treasury would review the currency and other trade practices of the six nations named to the monitoring list and meet with finance officials from those nations to ensure progress in shrinking their trade imbalances with the United States.

"An essential component of this administration's strategy is to ensure that American workers and companies face a level playing field when competing internationally," Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said in a statement. Treasury hasn't branded any nation a currency manipulator - a highly charged assertion - since the Clinton administration labeled China as such in 1994. The designation requires intensive talks between the United States and the designated country and can lead to penalty tariffs imposed by the United States. Such tariffs, though, could be overturned in a review by the World Trade Organization. Because it had been more than two decades since any country had been named a currency manipulator, Congress in 2015 changed the law to require Treasury to put countries on a less onerous "monitoring" list. The three criteria Treasury must use to determine whether a nation should be placed on the monitoring list are: the size of its trade surplus with the United States; the size of its current account trade surplus with the rest of the world; and the number of times it has intervened in currency markets in recent months.

Domestic demand

In its review of the practices of the other nations, Treasury said Germany, the largest single economy in Europe, should act to encourage stronger domestic demand as a way to reduce its large trade surplus. Its surplus with the United States totaled \$65

billion last year. The report also criticized Japan for failing to do more to stimulate domestic demand and thereby increase sales of US and other foreign goods. This week, in an interview, Trump had indicated that he was backing away from his campaign threat because he felt China hadn't been manipulating its currency in recent months and because labeling it as such now could jeopardize Beijing's cooperation in confronting North Korea. During the campaign, Trump had repeatedly called China a manipulator, saying, "They're killing us" by devaluing their currency to make it harder for American companies to compete against Chinese products.

But in his interview with The Wall Street Journal, Trump said he had decided that China hadn't recently been manipulating its currency after all. Trump did say he thought the dollar was "getting too strong" - a comment that sent the US currency falling, though it subsequently rebounded. The dollar's strength in the past two years has been a drag on US exports. Economists say the US currency could rise further as the Federal

Reserve raises interest rates. The reversal on branding China a currency manipulator is among several changes in which Trump has softened tough stances he had taken during the campaign. The administration has also put forward a draft proposal on renegotiating the North American Free Trade Agreement with Mexico and Canada that dropped some of the tougher positions Trump took during the campaign. —AP

CHINA'S Q1 GROWTH STABILIZES AT 6.8%

BEIJING: China's growth stabilized in the first quarter thanks to rising investments and a recovery in exports, experts said, though they warned the reprieve may be temporary. According to an AFP survey of 16 economic analysts, the gross domestic product expanded 6.8 percent in the first three months of this year-the same level of growth as in the last quarter of 2016. The official GDP growth figure will be released tomorrow. "Our expectation is stable to stronger growth in the first quarter, based on faster industrial production and investment related mostly to the housing sector bubble and increased fiscal spending on infrastructure," Brian Jackson of IHS Markit told AFP. Cheap credit has bolstered the construction sector since last year, attracting savers and speculators who have fuelled housing prices in large cities and accelerated manufacturing activity. While the country attempts to rebalance its economy around services and domestic consumption, "the question we need to ask is whether China has returned to the same old property-driven model," ANZ Bank's chief economist for greater China, Raymond Yeung, told AFP.

'Headwinds'

"Particular areas of focus for fiscal policy are infrastructure investment, public services, social welfare and social housing, and tax and fee reductions for businesses," Oxford Economics analyst Louis Kuijs said in a research briefing last month. Beijing announced in March that it will maintain a 3 percent budget deficit, with 2.6 trillion yuan (\$376 billion) invested this year in railway, road and waterway projects.

Foreign trade also showed improvement as US President Donald Trump backed down on calls for a trade war. Exports rebounded sharply in March while imports surged by 24 percent in the first quarter, reflecting strong domestic demand. But the momentum is not expected to last: according to the AFP poll's median full-year forecast, China's GDP growth will fall to 6.6 percent overall in 2017. —AFP

DEADLINE FOR FILING US TAX RETURNS IS TUESDAY THIS YEAR

WASHINGTON: Hey, procrastinators: Don't freak out if you haven't finished your taxes. The IRS is giving you a reprieve until Tuesday. The usual April 15 deadline falls on Saturday this year. That would normally push the deadline to tomorrow. However, tomorrow is a holiday in the District of Columbia, so by law, the filing deadline is extended until Tuesday.

Tomorrow is Emancipation Day in the District of Columbia. It marks the day in 1862 in which 3,100 slaves living in Washington were freed. All the states paying your tax bill. If you owe additional that usually have an April 15 deadline have delayed their filing date as well. A handful of states have later deadlines.

The IRS has already processed 101 million individual returns and has issued \$229 billion in refunds. The average refund is \$2,851. The tax agency said Thursday that nearly 40 million taxpayers have yet to file their returns. Taxpayers can request an automatic six-month extension. But there is no extension for taxes, they are still due Tuesday.

"With the tax deadline approaching, taxpayers shouldn't panic. The IRS has many options available to help people as they finalize their tax returns or if they need to get extra time to file," said IRS Commissioner John Koskinen. As lastminute filers rush to finish their taxes, their chances of getting audited have rarely been lower. The number of people audited by the IRS in 2016 dropped for

the sixth straight year, to just over 1 million. The last time so few people were audited was 2004. Since then, the U.S. has added about 30 million people.

The IRS blames budget cuts as money for the agency shrank from \$12.2 billion in 2010 to \$11.2 billion last year. Over that period, the agency has lost more than 17,000 employees, including nearly 7,000 enforcement agents. About 80,000 people work at the IRS.

In 2016, the number of people audit-

ed by the IRS dropped by 16 percent from the year before. Just 0.7 percent of individuals were audited, either in person or by mail. That's the lowest audit rate since 2003. The higher your income, the more likely you are to be audited. The IRS audited 1.7 percent of returns that reported more than \$200,000 in income. Agents audited 5.8 percent of returns that reported more than \$1 million in income. Both audit rates were steep declines from the year before. —AP

HOW TRUMP INSURANCE CHANGES COULD AFFECT COVERAGE NEXT YEAR

A MUCH TIGHTER SIGN-UP DEADLINE LOOMS

NEW YORK: A much tighter sign-up deadline and coverage delays will be waiting for some health insurance customers now that President Donald Trump's administration has finished a plan designed to stabilize shaky insurance markets.

Shoppers will have a shorter time period to choose a 2018 plan and a harder time enrolling outside that window if they lose a job or have some other special circumstance that affects their coverage. Insurers also will have more flexibility to design lower-cost coverage under a set of changes announced Thursday for the Affordable Care Act's insurance exchanges.

The exchanges, accessed by customers through the federal HealthCare.gov or state-run sites, were established as a way for people to compare and shop for insurance coverage. But insurers have raised prices sharply or abandoned markets in many regions, leaving some customers with little choice. Companies are considering leaving more markets for next year because they say they are losing money. The administration as responded with a series of changes aimed at reducing the number of insurance company defections while it pursues a broader remake of the federal law.

These changes may help convince insurers to return to the market for next year, but they also could make shopping tougher for consumers in a few ways. Customers will have 45 days to shop for 2018 coverage, starting Nov. 1 and ending Dec. 15. In previous years, they had twice that much time, and could still buy coverage until Jan. 31. The tighter time frame aims to prevent people from gaming the system by waiting until they become sick before signing up for coverage.

The smaller enrollment window could be tough on some shoppers because they often have to search for an insurance plan that includes their doctor to avoid big medical bills.

That's no quick task when a patient has several doctors, insurers are leaving exchanges, and those that remain have narrow doctor networks. Then shoppers have to figure out whether they can afford the coverage and if any tax credits are available to help.

"It's a very delicate subject when you're dealing with someone's health and if the plan doesn't work, you're stuck with it for the next vear." said Dallas-based broker Tanya Boyd. "It's not a five-minute conversation."

The administration also placed curbs on "special enrollment periods" that allow consumers to sign up or change coverage outside the normal enrollment period if they have a big change in their life like a move, divorce or the birth of a child. Insurers say loose enforcement of these periods has been an expensive problem because it also allows people to game the system.

Customers will now have to verify first that they qualify for a special-enrollment period before they can enroll. That could create coverage delays.

"For some people, the hassle or difficulty in pulling together verification could discourage them from signing up altogether," said Larry Levitt, a health insurance expert with the Kaiser Family Foundation, which studies health care issues. The administration also gave insurers more flexibility to design lower-cost coverage that may attract younger and healthier customers, which would help insurers offset the higher cost of insuring older, less healthy people. That lower-cost coverage could come with a higher deductible, though, which means those customers will need to pay more out of their own pockets for most care before the insurer starts paving.

Whether these changes help convince insurers to stick around for 2018 remains to be seen. They are weighing their options and may soon announce whether they plan to offer coverage for next year. But customers won't know for sure for months, because insurers can still back out up to a few weeks before the start of the open enrollment period.

Insurers have called the changes - most of which they had requested - a step in the right direction. But a key concern has yet to be addressed. Insurers, doctors, hospitals and the business community have asked the Trump administration to preserve "cost-sharing" subsidies that help reduce the impact of high deductibles and copayments for consumers with modest incomes. These are separate from the better-known so-called premium subsidies that most customers receive.

The cost-sharing subsidies, estimated at \$7 billion year, have been challenged in a court case that's now on hold. Without the payments, experts say, the government marketplaces that provide private insurance for about 12 million people will be overwhelmed by premium increases and insurer departures. The Trump administration has indicated that the payments will continue as long as the case is being litigated, but insurers want more of an assurance that these subsidies will be available next year.

In a Wall Street Journal interview this week, Trump raised the possibility of shutting off the money if Democrats won't bargain on health care. But the president also said he hasn't made up his mind, and that he doesn't want people to get hurt. Most communities will have competing insurers on their public marketplaces next year, but a growing number will be down to one, and some areas may face having none. Premium increases averaged 25 percent this year for standard plans in states served by HealthCare.gov.

Prices could climb another 10 percent or more next year due to higher medical expenses that affect coverage sold both on and off the public exchanges, according to Dave Dillion of the Society of Actuaries.—AP



WASHINGTON: In this March 15, 2017, file photo, Sen Bernie Sanders, I-Vt gestures during a television interview on Capitol Hill in Washington. —AP

MAKE LESS THAN \$54K? CONSIDER THIS UNDERUSED TAX BREAK

NEW YORK: You work hard, so why not take some credit for it? The Earned Income Tax Credit is one of the most overlooked tax credits around, according to many experts. But it is also one of the more generous. The IRS estimates that 26 million people received about \$65.6 billion under this tax credit last year. The average amount received was more than \$2,400 but it can be worth more than \$6,000. Yet one out of five workers who are eligible do not take advantage of it.

"It's huge. It can help people out of poverty," said Lisa Greene-Lewis, a CPA at TurboTax. "People are surprised by how big it is." The reasons for missing out vary. The rules surrounding it are complex, people may not know to apply for it and eligibility may change year by year. The IRS suggests that anyone earning less than \$54,000 a year look into their eligibility each tax season. Here is a bit more information to help you understand this complex, but compelling, benefit.

WHO QUALIFIES

The credit is designed to benefit low to moderate-income workers but income thresholds vary on many factors. To qualify, a taxpayer must have earned income from a job, self-employment or even some disability payments. They also must file federal taxes and meet a series of other eligibility requirements.

While you do not have to have children to qualify, you may get more back if you do. There are also special rules that apply to members of the military, members of the clergy, those receiving disability payments and people affected by disasters. To determine if you qualify, use the EITC assistant on the IRS website at www.irs.gov/eitc . Most major tax software or tax preparers walk you through a series of questions to determine if you're eligible.

WHO OVERLOOKS IT

People often may not realize they qualify because they fall below the income threshold that requires them to pay taxes, so they never look into it, said Kathy Pickering, executive director of the Tax Institute at H&R Block. But you can claim the credit whether or not you owe taxes or even if you aren't required to file a return at all. There are some special populations that might not realize they are eligible. The IRS says this includes people living in rural areas, the self-employed, disabled taxpayers, Native Americans, grandparents raising grandchildren and those whose earnings have recently declined, such as the recently divorced or unemployed.

People with disabilities are often concerned that a tax refund will affect their eligibility for public benefits, such as Medicaid or food stamps. But the law is clear that tax refunds, including refunds from tax credits such as the EITC, are not counted as income for purposes of determining eligibility for benefits.

Greene-Lewis also points out that qualifying children aren't always offspring. If you fully support and claim a dependent, such as a foster child, stepchild or even sibling, you may be able to claim them as a qualifying child under the rules.

WHAT ELSE

"Taxpayers' lives change constantly... just because they are not eligible in one year, they may be able to claim it in a following year," said Pickering, who estimates 5 to 6 million taxpayers missed out on the credit last year. If you think you may have overlooked it, it may not be too late. Pickering reminds people that the IRS allows them to file or amend a return up to three years after the original due date, so they can easily have a tax professional review prior returns to deem eligibility and help file an amendment as needed.

Also, if you qualify for the Federal EITC, you may also be eligible for a similar credit from your state or local government. Twenty-five states, plus local municipalities including the District of Columbia and New York City, offer residents an earned income tax credit for 2016, according to the IRS.

One word of warning: there are some delays this year in the refund for those claiming the credit. A new law, designed to cut down on fraud, requires the IRS to hold refunds for those claiming the EITC and Additional Child Tax Credit until mid-February. —AP

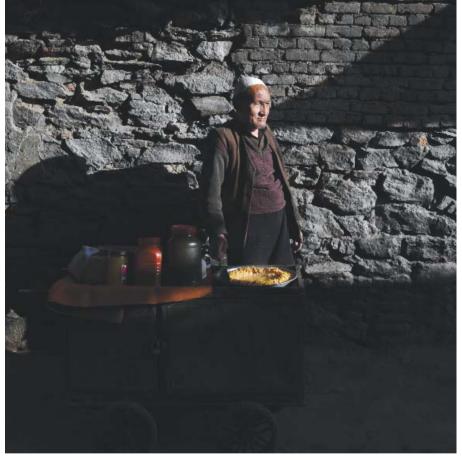
MERCOSUR TO SIGN TRADE DEAL WITH EU THIS YEAR

VIENNA: South American trade bloc Mercosur plans to sign a trade agreement with the European Union this year, the president of Argentina, which holds the rotating presidency of Mercosur, said in an interview published yesterday.

The comments by Argentine President Mauricio Macri appeared to confirm remarks by Brazil's foreign minister, who told Reuters last month that the members of Mercosur - Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay and Paraguay - would sign a framework political deal with the EU this year

"We firmly intend to sign an agreement in the second half of this year," Macri said in an interview with Swiss newspaper Neue Zuercher Zeitung. He did not elaborate on the nature of the agreement. "We also want to move towards the Pacific alliance comprised of Chile, Columbia and Mexico. It won't happen immediately and will take a couple of years," he said, adding that he believed the continent agreed on the need for closer cooperation.

Macri said he would also seek to use a meeting with US President Donald Trump in Washington this month to improve ties with the United States. Relations between the two countries were seriously damaged by Argentina's \$100 billion debt default in 2002 and have improved since Macri, who like Trump worked as a businessman before entering politics, took office in 2015. "Argentina barely has relations with the USA anymore. There is a great deal we could improve and hardly anything we could make worse," Macri said. — Reuters



KABUL: An Afghan chickpea soup vendor waits for customers on a street in Kabul. —AFP

EXCHANGE RATES

AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

	ASIAN COUNTRIES
Japanese Yen	2.812
Indian Rupees	4.751
Pkistani Rupees	2.915
Srilankan Rupees	2.008
Nepali Rupees	2.973
Singapore Dollar	220.220
Hongkong Dollar	39.309
Bangladesh Taka	3.781
Philippine Peso	6.185
Thai Baht	8.910
	GCC COUNTRIES
Saudi Riyal	81.534
Qatari Riyal	83.977
Omani Riyal	794.049
Bahraini Dinar	811.880
UAE Dirham	83.245

Egyptian Pound - Cash 16.845 1.227

Egyptian Pound - Transfer Yemen Riyal/for 1000 Tunisian Óinaı 133.720 Jordanian Dinai 430.900 Lebanese Lira/for 1000 2.037 2.179 Morocco Dirham 30.739

> **EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES** 305.550

ARAB COUNTRIES

US Dollar Transfer 327.700 Sterling Pound Canadian dollar 231.040 Turkish lira 83.260

Swiss Franc 307.090 **US Dollar Buying** 304.350 20 Gram 262.570 134.200 10 Gram

DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

70.275

Rate for Transfr	Selling Rate
US Dollar	305.200
Canadian Dolla	229.720
Sterling Pound	383.610
Euro	325.475
Swiss Frank	308.465
Bahrain Dinar	809.490
UAE Dirhams	83.490
Qatari Riyals	84.715
Saudi Riyals	82.280
Jordanian Dinar	430.367
Egyptian Pound	17.001
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.009
Indian Rupees	4.738
Pakistani Rupees	2.910
Bangladesh Taka	3.807
Philippines Pesso	6.156
Cyprus pound	168.425
Japanese Yen	3.810
Syrian Pound	2.425
Nepalese Rupees	3.960

Malaysian Ringgit

Thai Bhat 9.855 Turkish Lira 83.330

Chinese Yuan Renminbi

Indian Rupee

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL **CURRENCY** BUY

44.740

Europe	
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0.004159	0.016159
0.039567	0.044567
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America	
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0.042906	0.046406
0.037310	0.040060
	0.376892 0.004159 0.039567 0.319513 0.031589 0.084681 0.009153 0.029799 0.297938 0.077721 Australasia 0.223838 0.208005 America 0.224038 0.138004 0.301450 0.301950 Asia 0.003425 0.042906

0.004249

0.000018 0.000024 Indonesian Rupiah 0.002909 0.002729 Japanese Yen Kenyan Shilling 0.003042 0.003042 0.000259 0.000274 Korean Won 0.071600 Malaysian Ringgit 0.065600 0.002958 0.003128 Nepalese Rupee 0.002727 0.003017 Pakistan Rupee 0.006088 0.006388 Philippine Peso 0.000068 0.000074 Sierra Leone 0.223390 0.213390 Singapore Dollar 0.016767 South African Rand 0.025267 0.001639 0.002219 Sri Lankan Rupee Taiwan 0.009782 0.009962 Thai Baht 0.008532 0.009082 Arab

0.803908 0.812406 Bahraini Dinar Egyptian Pound 0.014683 0.020591 Iranian Riyal 0.000085 0.000086 Iraqi Dinar 0.000195 0.000255 Jordanian Dina 0.425601 0.434601 Kuwaiti Dinai 1.000000 1.000000 0.000157 0.00257 Lebanese Pound Moroccan Dirhams 0.020089 0.044089 Nigerian Naira 0.001266 0.001901 Omani Riyal 0.787215 0.792895 0.083116 0.084566 Qatar Riyal Saudi Riyal 0.080393 0.081693 0.001296 0.001516 Syrian Pound **Tunisian Dinar** 0.129147 0.137147 0.077721 Turkish Lira 0.088021 **UAE Dirhams** 0.081765 0.083465 Yemeni Riyal 0.000993 0.001073

CHOOSE YOUR ADVENTURE, PICK YOUR RIDE WITH MERCEDES-BENZ COMPACT CARS

MERCEDES-BENZ CARS ME, XDUBAI TEAM UP TO PULL OFF 3 STUNTS

KUWAIT: Premium automotive brand Mercedes-Benz Cars Middle East and XDubai defy limits with three jaw-dropping stunts including one world-first - at some of Dubai's most iconic landmarks.

Breaking new ground, Mercedes-Benz Cars Middle East has teamed up with XDubai to capture some of the world's most exciting athletes and thrillseekers undertake neverbefore-seen stunts for the creation of its latest film - featuring Mercedes-AMG's venturesome A 45 4MATIC, the CLA 45 4MATIC and the GLA 45 4MATIC.

In the film, launched online today but filmed earlier this year, stuntman Damien Walters showcases just why he is a Hollywood favourite; world-renowned skydiver and base jumper Noah Bahnson astonishingly taunts gravity; and Nick Jacobsen, kiteboarding and kitesurfing champion, shows the true mean-first. It took a lot of planning, precision and ing of adventure with a record-breaking and world-first feat from the Burj Al Arab Jumeirah's iconic helipad.

In the record-breaking stunt, Jacobsen drives the stylish and sporty Mercedes-AMG CLA 45 4MATIC to the world's most luxurious hotel, before fearlessly launching from the famed landmark's helipad with only his kiteboarding gear. In doing so, Jacobsen completes the highest kiteboarding jump on record - an incredible 210m above the water, smashing his own previous worldrecord of 90m.

Commenting on the groundbreaking stunt, the XDubai athlete and champion kiteboarder said: "Standing on the top of the Burj Al Arab Jumeirah helipad was a once-in-a lifetime opportunity and launching from it, a global

safety measures, but it all worked well in the end, and the experience was amazing."

Along with the unprecedented accomplishment, world record-breaking wingsuit and base jumper, Noah Bahnson also performs a unique stunt that includes an extremely low altitude launch off a Mercedes-AMG GLA 45 4MATIC compact SUV. Set against the dazzling backdrop of Dubai Marina, the SUV effortlessly pulls Bahnson into the air with a parachute, reaching a height of 131m before he releases himself into a breathtaking freefall towards the sea - opening his parachute nimbly at a mere 67m before floating to the ground.

Not to be outdone, Hollywood stuntman and YouTube sensation, Damien Walters is showcased inside the Mercedes-AMG A 45 4MATIC - the world's most powerful mid-sized car - at Port Rashid, before impressively climbing out of the car at full speed onto the sunroof and leaping to grab a rope hanging from a crane. With the Burj Khalifa in the background, Walters swings side to side as the car drifts back, allowing him to deftly jump back into the speeding car in ultimate style. Along with showcasing Walters' skills, the stunt also highlights the A 45 4MATIC's modern athletic design with dynamic curved surfaces and the ultimate confidence of this speed machine.

Lennart Mueller-Teut, Head of Marketing & Communications, Mercedes-Benz Cars Middle East commented: "It was a great opportunity for Mercedes-Benz to partner with XDubai given the spirited nature of our performance compact cars, XDubai was the natural partner for us to showcase these models through engaging world-class XDubai athletes for world-first stunts. Despite the daring nature of the stunts, the highest safety standards were implemented alongside the professional stunt-artists and the impressive performance of our automobiles. With this effort, we aim to



ignite a sense of spontaneity and adventure, to encourage people to dance to the beat of their own drum. Our partnership with XDubai has proved extremely fruitful and we are now excited to spread this sense of adventure out across the entire world."

"XDubai is known globally for pushing limits and our collaboration with Mercedes-Benz was no different," commented Mohammed Javad Khoramifar, General Manager for XDubai. "When Mercedes-Benz approached us with a brief to showcase the fascinating capabilities of their high performance AMG models, we were more than up for the challenge. Engaging our world-class athletes, the wider XDubai team and of course, our partners across Dubai, we conceptualized three remarkable stunts including one worldfirst that embodies the daring spirit of adventure that both XDubai and Mercedes-Benz are known for - they also showcase the adventurous characteristics of each car. Through extensive planning and the professionalism of our athletes and the Mercedes-Benz team, we have once again achieved the impossible and in the process, created something that is truly remarkable."

Watch the video here: Mercedes-Benz Cars Middle East and XDubai Stunts. Join the conversation on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter using the following hashtags #PickYourRide #TheBestOrNothing #MercedesBenzME #XDubai. Mercedes-AMG compact models are available in the region. Pricing starts from \$58,200 for the Mercedes-AMG A 45 4MATIC, \$66,500 for the Mercedes-AMG CLA 45 4MATIC, \$65,950 for the Mercedes-AMG

OIL PRICES RALLY ON TALKS OF EXTENDED OUTPUT CUTS

KAMCO OIL MARKET MONTHLY REPORT

KUWAIT: The oil market got a boost on reports that the ongoing production cut agreement between OPEC and non-OPEC members would be extended beyond the current deadline that ends in June-17. The news led to one of the longest running winning streak in the oil market in five years after recording the biggest weekly gain in 2017. OPEC crude was up almost 11 percent since the last week of March-17 to reach \$53.4 per barrel as majority of the OPEC producers are expected to agree to the extension in next OPEC meeting during the last week of May-17. Kuwait has expressed its support for the extension whereas Saudi Arabia is yet to take a final decision. Russia is also said to be considering to extend the production cuts after its energy minister said they would soon begin talks with domestic oil companies. Nevertheless, he added that it is too early to be affirmative on the extension and that the decision would depend on the inventory levels over the next couple of months.

Meanwhile, higher-than-expected compliance to the production agreement by OPEC members during March-17 also supported oil prices. According to the OPEC monthly report, compliance to the production cut agreement stood at 104 percent in March-17 as Venezuela reached its share of cuts while UAE moved closer to its share. Saudi Arabia continued to slash a higher than required share during the month. According to Bloomberg data, OPEC oil output declined to a 22-month low level of 32.1 mb/d during March-17 after declining by 200 tb/d as compared to February-17 (31.93 mb/d in March-17 according to OPEC secondary sources after m-o-m decline of 153 tb/d). The decline comes primarily on the back of lower production in Libya and Nigeria due to the ongoing production disruption. Output from the two producers declined by a total 210 tb/d during March-17, according to Bloomberg, further supporting the efforts to curb OPEC supply, although both Libya and Nigeria are exempt from the production cut agreement. Saudi Arabia, which lowered its output to less than 10 mb/d during February-17, raised its output slightly by 70 tb/d to 10.01 mb/d during March-17.

OPEC also pointed to a decline in oil inventory that comes on the back of the production cuts. According to the report, preliminary data for February-17 showed that commercial oil inventory in developed countries (OECD) dropped by 28.3 million barrels to reach 2,987 million barrels. That said, the inventory continues to remain 268 million barrels more than the five-year average level by almost. The inventory data from the US has also contributed to the surge in oil price over the past two weeks.

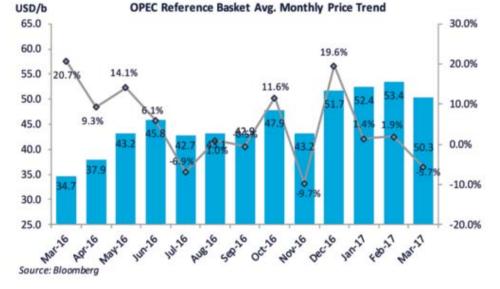
The API, in its weekly report, pointed to an inventory draw in the US for the second consecutive week. Nevertheless, in its short term energy outlook, the EIA forecasted record US crude output in 2018 on the back of shale and offshore fields. On similar lines, Baker Hughes reported an increase of 10 rigs during the first week of April-17, bringing the total rig count to a 19-month high level.

Oil prices

Crude prices had a weak start in March-17 sliding below the \$50/b level for most part of the month. Prices started recovering towards the end of the month and closed at \$50.43/b. although average prices for the month declined. OPEC crude's average monthly price dropped for the first time since November-16 to reach \$50.32 per barrel, a decline of 5.7 percent. Brent crude recorded a slightly higher decline of 6.3 percent while Kuwait crude dropped 5.6 percent during March-17. The positive trend continued during April-17 as OPEC crude reached \$53.4/b by 11-April-17. The upward trend in oil prices was triggered by talks of extending the ongoing production cut agreement between OPEC and non-OPEC producers beyond the current deadline of June-17.

Moreover, weak inventory data from the US also supported prices, according to the weekly inventory data published by the API. According to the report, US crude oil inventory declined by 1.3 million barrels during the first week of April-17 against consensus expectations of a marginal build-up in inventories. This was the second consecutive decline in inventory after the 1.8 million barrels drawn during the previous week. Meanwhile, Baker Hughes rig count data suggested a 12th consecutive week of oil rig additions in the US to take the total to 672

Mn b/d



rigs, the highest count since August-15. The company's monthly rig count data suggested an increase of 45 rigs in the US during March-17, while the Middle East region added 4 rigs.

KAMCO Research sees the current surge in oil prices as only temporary and would be capped at a near term range of \$55/b as higher prices incentivizes investment in US oil infrastructure that would have a counter impact on prices. In addition, we believe that the second phase of output reduction beyond June-17 to be smaller than the existing agreement as smaller producers in both OPEC and non-OPEC groups may not be able to support extended curbs on oil revenues. Moreover, the comeback of Libya and Nigeria with additional output would lower the OPEC's share of output curbs. We maintain our long term view of \$55-60 /b

World oil demand

in the near/medium term.

World oil demand growth estimates for 2016 remains unchanged as per the latest estimates from OPEC. The growth is expected to reach 1.38 mb/d to an average daily demand of 95.05 mb/d. Demand expectations for 2017 was revised upwards by 10 tb/d and is now expected to average at 96.32 mb/d, an increase of 1.27 mb/d as compared to 2016. The revision primarily reflected higher-thanexpected demand from China during Q1-17. Demand forecast for the OECD region was kept broadly unchanged from the last month's levels with Europe reporting strong demand during the first two months of 2017 led by higher heating oil requirements due to cold weather during Q1-17. Demand in Europe is expected to be strong also due to improving economic conditions, positive expected growth in industrial production as well as higher vehicle sales. Nevertheless, preliminary demand data for Europe's big four shows weakness on the back of decline in demand from Italy and UK that was partially offset by higher demand in Germany and France. In OECD Americas, oil demand in the US is expected to be positive in 2017 on the back of higher consumption in transportation and industrial sectors despite warmer weather conditions. Preliminary data for February-17 and March-17 also indicate continuing positive trend in the US. Canada, on the other hand had a slightly weak January-17 while Mexico witnessed another weak month in February-17 due to declining demand for LPG and kerosene. In OECD Asia Pacific, Japan reported a sharp demand decline of 5.3 percent during February-17 primarily due to warmer weather conditions and fuel substitution. For the full year, demand in Japan is expected to be weak on the back of estimated

growth coupled with nuclear plants getting operational in the country. For the non-OECD region, demand was upgraded marginally on the back of upward revisions in China during O1-17 that was partially offset by downward revisions in Other Asia and Latin America. Demand in India saw a steep decline during the first two months of 2017 (almost 3 percent during February-17) due to the demonetization policy announced at the end of 2016 thereby denting overall expectations for Q1-17. In addition, Q1-16 had seen higher demand that led to higher base effect for O1-17.

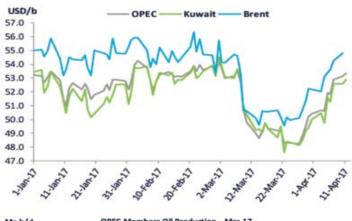
World oil supply

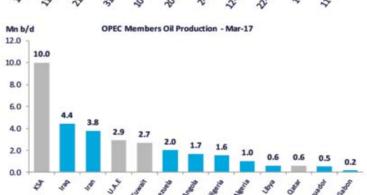
Non-OPEC oil supply estimates for 2016 was revised downwards by 26 tb/d led by revisions in historical production data for Thailand, Argentina and Colombia, in addition to lowerthan-expected growth in Canada and Congo during the last quarter of 2016. Non-OPEC supply for the year is expected to have averaged at 57.32 mb/d resulting in a contraction of 0.69 mb/d as compared to the previous year. Revisions were made to supply figure in Q1-16, 3Q-16 and 4Q-16 from Latin America, Other Asia, Africa and OECD. For 2017, non-OPEC is expected to increase by 0.58 mb/d to reach 57.89 mb/d, following an upward revision of 176 tb/d. A higher growth in the US that was revised upward by 200 tb/d and lower decline in Columbia and China led to the revision in supply figures for 2017. Supply from the US is expected to see the strongest growth in 2017 led by higher rig count, higher well completions, and greater access to capital. The EIA has forecasted record oil production in the US during the next two years led by shale and offshore fields coming back online. EIA forecasted a production rate of 9.9 mb/d in 2018, up 1.8 percent from its previous report that expected production to average at 9.73 mb/d. For the current year, output in the US is forecasted to average at 9.22 mb/d, an increase of 0.01 mb/d as compared to the previous forecast, EIA also reported a rebound in capital expenditure in the US as seen from the \$4.9 billion year-onyear increase in spending during Q4-16 by 44 US onshore-focused oil companies. Other major contributors to supply growth in 2017 are Brazil (+ 0.21 mb/d), Canada (+0.21 mb/d), Kazakhstan (+0.14 mb/d), Africa (primarily Ghana +0.05 mb/d), Russia (+0.04 mb/d) and Congo (+0.03 mb/d).

OPEC oil production & spare capacity

According to Bloomberg, OPEC oil output declined to a 22-month low level of 32.1 mb/d during March-17 after witnessing a decline of 200 tb/d as compared to February-17. OPEC's secondary sources puts the production figure at 31.93 mb/d in March-17 with a m-o-m decline of 153 tb/d. The decline comes primarily on the back of lower production in Libya and Nigeria due to the ongoing production disruption. Output from Libya declined by 80 tb/d to reach 620 tb/d, one of the lowest production in the past six months, after reports that its biggest field stopped pumping just a week after reopening from an earlier halt. In addition, one of the pipelines that transports crude from Sharara to the Zawiya refinery also stopped working in April-17, which will affect production figures for the current month. Nigeria's oil output saw the steepest decline during the month by almost 130 tb/d to reach 1.55 mb/d due to routine repair work at SNEPCo that has a capacity of 0.25 mb/d. In addition, it was reported that negotiations to start production from the Niger Delta Region are moving in the positive direction that would add to output in the near future.

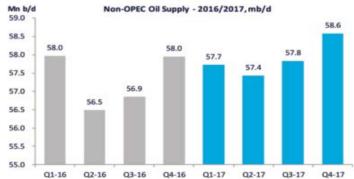
Saudi Arabia, which lowered its output to less than 10 mb/d during February-17, raised its output slightly by 70 tb/d to 10.01 mb/d during March-17. Nevertheless, despite the drop in output, the Kingdom continues to bear a higher share of the agreed production cuts resulting in a compliance of almost 104 percent by the end of March-17, according to OPEC monthly report. The compliance was also supported by Venezuela that reached its share of cuts while UAE moved closer to its share. During the month, average production in the UAE declined by 35 tb/d to 2.9 mb/d whereas Venezuela reduced its output by 10 tb/d. Meanwhile, Iran that almost report flat production during March-17 is said to have cleared its oil in floating storage resulting in a drop in exports from the country. On the other hand, the country started oil production from its South Pars gasfield that holds more than 14 billion barrels of oil reserves. The field is expected to initially produce 5tb/d and gradually increase it to 35 t/bpd within a week. We expect minimal addition to total output from Iran in the coming months that would be positive to crude prices.





Source for the above charts: OPEC and Bloomberg







SECTORS' WEEKLY TRAI	DING ACTIVITY				SECTORS INDICES PERFORMANCE						
Sector	Volume To Value Market %		Value	To Market %	Sector	Last Week Closing	Previous Week Closing	Weekly Ch. %	Annual Ch. %		
OIL & GAS	44,570,146	2.49%	2,365,671	1.73%	OIL & GAS	980.04	975.25	0.49%	25.54%		
BASIC MATERIALS	3,598,602	0.20%	1,324,838	0.97%	BASIC MATERIALS	1,328.59	1,346.92	-1.36%	32.22%		
INDUSTRIALS	83,163,429	4.64%	9,633,164	7.03%	INDUSTRIALS	1,738.25	1,711.05	1.59%	29.33%		
CONSUMER GOODS	10,363,112	0.58%	1,535,770	1.12%	CONSUMER GOODS	1,127.96	1,144.58	-1.45%	0.26%		
HEALTH CARE	15,280	0.00%	7,885	0.01%	HEALTH CARE	1,523.52	1,508.19	1.02%	22.43%		
CONSUMER SERVICES	21,817,693	1.22%	1,987,015	1.45%	CONSUMER SERVICES	945.89	941.21	0.50%	2.31%		
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	108,476,298	6.05%	12,611,458	9.20%	TELECOMMUNICATIONS	660.73	659.44	0.20%	3.86%		
BANKS	130,865,698	7.30%	24,263,116	17.71%	BANKS	965.47	974.78	-0.96%	15.32%		
INSURANCE	1,025,979	0.06%	69,091	0.05%	INSURANCE	1,111.27	1,078.49	3.04%	11.77%		
REAL ESTATE	774,218,954	43.20%	42,681,165	31.15%	REAL ESTATE	1,053.48	1,091.70	-3.50%	21.06%		
FINANCIAL SERVICES	613,095,870	34.21%	40,415,781	29.50%	FINANCIAL SERVICES	777.57	774.78	0.36%	30.24%		
TECHNOLOGY	1,049,388	0.06%	123,483	0.09%	TECHNOLOGY	773.73	803.84	-3.75%	27.44%		

KUWAIT EQUITIES FACE SELLING PRESSURE

BAYAN WEEKLY MARKET REPORT

KUWAIT: Boursa Kuwait ended last week in the red zone. The Price Index closed at 7,007.89 points, down by 0.31 percent from the week before closing, the Weighted Index decreased by 0.89 percent after closing at 416.40 points, whereas the KSX-15 Index closed at 943.04 points declining by 1.56 percent. Furthermore, last week's average daily turnover decreased by 9.64 percent, compared to the preceding week, reaching KD 27.40 million, whereas trading volume average was 358.45 million shares, recording a drop of 0.10 percent.

The three market indices recorded losses by the end of last week, especially the KSX-15 Index, which was the biggest loser among its peers, the Price & Weighted indices, where it recorded a decrease of 1.56 percent by the end of the week compared to its previous week closing, affected by the selling and speculative operations executed on many leading and operational listed stocks.

-0.31%

Price Index

9-Apr-2017

10-Apr-2017

0.01%

1.12%

7.03%

1.73%_

1.00%

0.00%

-1.00%

-2.00%

② 30

K.D.

The Boursa Kuwait initiated its first session of last week with mixed performance for its three indices, where the Price Index recorded decline as a result of the selling pressures on the small-cap stocks, while the Weighted and KSX-15 indices received support from the active purchasing and speculative operations on the leading and heavy stocks, amid a noticeable decline in the trading activity, where the cash liquidity dropped by 34.69 percent, the volume decreased by 27.86 percent, and the deals contracted by 23.29 percent.

In addition, the market could not hold for the next session, as the selling and profit collection operations executed on leading stocks and the selling pressures that the small-cap stocks were subject to, caused the three market indices to drop by the end of the session, while the trading activity increased in comparison to the previous session.

-1.56%

KSX 15

13-Apr-2017

0.05%

7,070

7.054

7,038

7,022

7.006

6,990

On the mid-week session, the Boursa Kuwait indices were able to redirect its performance and record some gains, supported by the active and strong speculative operations on many listed stocks, while the random purchasing operations executed on a limited number of leading stocks gave support to the Weighted and KSX-15 indices to increase by the end of the session, in light of a noticeable decline in the trading activity, where the market lost around 28.40 percent of its cash liquidity.

Moreover, the three indices closed mixed on Wednesday's session, whereas the Price Index was able to realize some gains in light of the active purchasing operations that concentrated on a number of low-priced stocks, especially after the positive disclosure of few listed companies of its first quarter financial results for 2017, while the Weighted and KSX-15 indices couldn't keep up to its peer's performance, and lost all its gains realized in the earlier sessions of the week.

On the last session of the week, none of the indices could record gains, whereas the heavy selling pressures witnessed by a large number of stocks of most market sectors, especially in the Technology, Real Estate, and Telecommunications, caused the Boursa to underperform and close in the red zone, despite the activity witnessed on the trading performance during the session, especially the volume, which increased by 40.43 percent.

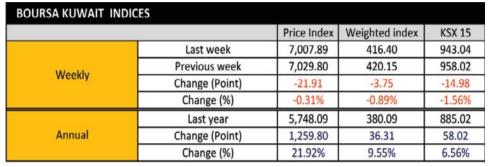
The market capitalization reached by the end of last week KD 27.45 billion, down by 0.41 percent compared to its level in a week earlier, where it was K.D. 27.57 billion. On an annual level, the market cap for the listed companies in the main market increased by 8.05 percent from its value at end of 2016, where it reached then KD 25.41 billion.

For the annual performance, the Price Index ended last week recording 21.92 percent annual gain compared to its closing in 2016, while the Weighted Index increased by 9.55 percent, and the KSX-15 recorded 6.56 percent growth.

Sectors' Indices

Seven of Boursa Kuwait's sectors ended last week in the green zone, while the other five recorded decreases. Last week's highest gainer was the Insurance sector, achieving 3.04 percent growth rate as its index closed at 1,111.27 points. Whereas, in the second place, the Industrial sector's index closed at 1,738.25 points recording 1.59 percent increase. The Health Care sector came in third as its index achieved 1.02 percent growth, ending the week at 1,523.52 points.

On the other hand, the Technology sector headed the losers list as its index declined by 3.75 percent to end the week's activity at 773.73 points. The Real Estate sector was second on the losers' list, which index declined by 3.50 percent, closing at 1,053.48 points, fol-



lowed by the Consumer Goods sector, as its index closed at 1,127.96 points at a loss of 1.45 percent. The Banks sector was the least declining as its index closed at 965.47 points with a 0.96 percent decrease.

Sectors' Activity

The Real Estate sector dominated a total trade volume of around 774.22 million shares changing hands during last week, representing 43.20 percent of the total market trading volume. The Financial Services sector was second in terms of trading volume as the sector's

MARKET ACTIVITY

traded shares were 34.21 percent of last week's total trading volume, with a total of around 613.10 million shares.

On the other hand, the Real Estate sector's stocks were the highest traded in terms of value; with a turnover of around KD 42.68 million or 31.15 percent of last week's total market trading value. The Financial Services sector took the second place as the sector's last week turnover was approx. KD 40.42 million representing 29.50 percent of the total market trading value. — Prepared by: Studies & Research Department - Bayan Investment Co.

MAINTEN AC						
	Las	t Week	Previou	ıs Week	Ch. %	
Volume	1,792	2,260,449	1,794,0	87,273	-0.10%	
Value (K.D)	137	,018,436	151,64	-9.64%		
Deals	3	3,240	34,	355	-3.25%	
MARKET CA	PITALISATIO	N (K.D.)				
Las	st	Previo	ous	Weekly Ch.	Annual Ch.	
We	ek	Wee	ek	%	%	
27,451,9	06,259	27,566,03	-0.41%	8.05%		
TOP GAINER	RS OF THE W	EEK				
Company	Last Week Closing	Previous Week Closing	Ch.	Ch. (fils)		
AMWAL	104.00	77.00	27	7.0	35.06%	
ENERGYH	53.00	40.50	12	2.5	30.86%	
EQUIPMENT	600.00	475.00	26.32%			
THURAYA	194.00	154.00	40	25.97%		
AAYAN	53.00	44.00	9	20.45%		
TOP LOOSE	RS OF THE W	/EEK				

TOP LOOSE	RS OF THE W	/EEK		
Company	Last Week Closing	Previous Week Closing	Ch. (fils)	Ch. %
REAM	350.00	600.00	-250.0	-41.67%
NCCI	91.00	104.00	-13.0	-12.50%
NAFAIS	160.00	180.00	-20.0	-11.11%
KPROJ	425.00	475.00	-50.0	-10.53%
NSH	42.50	47.50	-5.0	-10.53%

BOURSA KUWAIT INDICES

-0.89%

Weighted index

Last Five Days Activity

11-Apr-2017

Weekly Trading Activity (Value)

12-Apr-2017

17.71%

GLOBAL STOCKS DROP AFTER TRUMP TALKS DOWN DOLLAR

WEEKLY MARKETS REPORT

BEIJING: Global stock markets turned lower and the dollar was volatile on Thursday after President Donald Trump withdrew a threat to declare China a currency manipulator and said the US currency was "getting too strong." Tensions over North Korea also weighed on investors ahead of a long weekend in many

Keeping score: In Europe, London's FTSE-100 lost 0.6 percent to 7,307 and France's CAC-40 shed 0.6 percent to 5,072. German's DAX slid 0.4 percent to 12,108. On Wall Street, the future for the Dow Jones industrial average was down 0.2 percent and that for the Standard & Poor's 500 was off 0.3 percent

Trump watch: Trump said he won't declare China a currency manipulator, dropping a key campaign promise. In a newspaper interview and a White House news conference, Trump hailed the rapport he developed with his Chinese counterpart, Xi Jinping, in meetings last week that seem to have eased trade tensions. A declaration that China manipulates the exchange rate of its yuan to gain a trade advantage could have opened the way to sanctions. "They're not currency manipulators," Trump told The Wall Street Journal, saying Beijing hadn't been cheating on its currency for months.

Dollar talk: On the dollar's exchange rate against those of major trading partners, Trump said: "I think our dollar is getting too strong, and partially that's my fault because people have confidence in me." He added that "It's very, very hard to compete when you have a strong dollar and other countries are devalu-

the yen to its highest level since mid-November, just after the presidential election. **Currency:** After slumping in the wake of Trump's comments, the dollar steadied at 109.10 yen, compared with Wednesday's

108.80 yen. The euro edged down to \$1.0634

ing their currency." Those remarks helped push

from \$1.0665.

Analyst viewpoint: "After a few weeks of relative calm, the 'Trump hurricane' is back to disrupt the tranquility in the currency markets," said Margaret Yang of CMC Markets in a commentary. "I describe Trump's influence on currencies as a hurricane as it's both harmful

and unpredictable. It is debatable whether Trump can have both a weak currency and

massive fiscal stimulus at the same time." Asia's day: Tokyo's Nikkei 225 fell 0.7 percent to 18,426.84 and Sydney's S&P-ASX 200 lost 0.7 percent to 5,889.90. The Shanghai Composite Index gained 0.1 percent to 3,275.96 and Hong Kong's Hang Seng retreated 0.2 percent to 24,261.66. Seoul's Kospi added 0.9 percent to 2,148.61 while India's Sensex declined 0.7 percent to 29,513.14. Markets in Asia have been rattled by saber-rattling between North Korea and the U.S. The Trump administration's has sent an aircraft carrier to waters off the Korean Peninsula as a show of force amid speculation that North Korea will stage a weapons test in coming days.

China trade: China's export growth accelerated in March in a positive sign for global demand while import growth cooled. Customs data show exports rose 16.4 percent from a year earlier to \$180.6 billion, up

from 4 percent growth in the first two months of the year. Imports rose 20.3 percent to \$156.6 billion, down from the

January-February rate of 26.4 percent.

Energy: Benchmark US crude rose 4 cents

to \$53.15 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract fell 29 cents on Wednesday. Brent crude, used to price international oils, gained 7 cents to \$55.93, having lost 37 cents the previous session. The market took in its stride a report by the International Energy Agency saying that demand growth for oil will slow for a second consecutive year this year. — AP



TOKYO: People are reflected on an electronic stock indicator of a securities firm in Tokyo. — AP





NISSAN ALTIMA SCOOPS 'BEST MID-SIZE SEDAN' AWARDS

DUBAI: The 2017 Nissan Altima has been crowned "Best Mid-Size Sedan" at this year's Middle East Car of the Year Awards (MECOTY). The Altima faced stiff competition but a jury of senior automotive editors from across the region decided that it was the outstanding choice for the award.

"The 2017 Nissan Altima embodies what a modern, practical and reliable car should be while also being comfortable, well designed and have the right balance of power and control to truly deliver innovation that excites," said Fadi Ghosn, Chief Marketing Officer at Nissan Middle East. "This year's 'Best Mid-Size Sedan' winner offers a fantastic blend of styling comfort and performance which regional customers can experience for themselves at Nissan showrooms across the region."

The 2017 Altima impressed the judges on a number of fronts, including styling which sees the car adopting Nissan's latest design language. The 'Energetic Flow' exterior includes the V-Motion grille and boomerang lamp signatures while the 'Gliding Wing' interior displays a level of opulence that's reminiscent of the premium segment. An unabashed driver's car, the driver-centric cockpit is as ergonomic as it is intuitive.

Altima is living proof that a sedan can be engaging and inspiring to drive. Whether it's the 182 hp 2.5-litre 4-cylinder engine, or its 3.5-litre, 270 hp V6 sibling, there's plenty of performance on tap and with Active Understeer Control and a rear multi-link suspension, cornering with confidence comes as standard. The MECOTY awards are unique in the region in that they bring together 15 motoring writers from 10 different countries who combine their knowledge and experience to make informed decisions designed to assist the car-buying public in their choices. The addition of public voting means these awards - now in their fourth year - have unrivalled credibility in the eyes of the region's automotive industry.

Nissan is a global full-line vehicle manufacturer that

sells more than 60 models under the Nissan, Infiniti and Datsun brands. In fiscal year 2015, the company sold more than 5.4 million vehicles globally, generating revenue of 12.2 trillion yen. Nissan engineers, manufactures and markets the world's best-selling all-electric vehicle in history, the Nissan LEAF. Nissan's global headquarters in Yokohama, Japan manages operations in six regions: ASEAN & Oceania; Africa, Middle East & India; China; Europe; Latin America and North America. Nissan has been partnered with French manufacturer Renault since 1999 and Mitsubishi Motors since 2016 under the Renault-Nissan Alliance.

OVER 32,600 NEW JOBS POSTED ON BAYT.COM IN FIRST QUARTER OF 2017

DUBAI: Bayt.com, the Middle East's #1 Job Site, wrapped up the first quarter of 2017 with a larger and a more widereaching portfolio of employers, who are announcing thousands of jobs across the Middle East through their platform.

In the first quarter of 2017, more than 32,600 new jobs were announced on Bayt.com marking the job site's continued success. These numbers do not include the thousands of additional vacancies that are being filled daily through Bayt.com's CV search tool. Companies can choose to use CV Search to access over 27 million professionals and hire the ideal candidate for their needs without making a job announcement. "Since the start of this year, we have multiplied our efforts to connect job seekers in our region with more career opportunities," said Suhail Masri, Vice President of Employer Solutions, Bayt.com. "It is our unwavering plan to support and grow the Middle East's job between employers and job seekers and ence level.

by making the most effective tools and the most useful information readily available for everyone. We are proud of how many jobs are regularly available on Bayt.com and how many employers are searching for CV's to directly hire our job candidates. We are excited to see how the next quarter unfolds and to work with many more of the region's leading employers. Bayt.com encourages job seekers to apply for these positions but also keep their profiles completed and their CVs refreshed so that employers can contact them directly for more career opportunities."

The jobs announced through Bayt.com are also increasingly varied in terms of industry, location, required skills and educational degree. From sales and marketing, to engineering and construction, to finance and accounting, and all the way to information technology and communications, job postings on Bayt.com are covering just about market by enhancing connections every field of work and every experi-



2017 NISSAN ALTIMA FOR JUST KD5,999

KUWAIT: Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al-Babtain Co (AABC), the authorized dealer of Nissan vehicles in the State of Kuwait, offers customers for a limited period of time the 2017 Nissan Altima with exceptional features for just 5,999 KD, to break all norms.

Nissan Al-Babtain today presents customers with a chance to purchase the new 2017 Nissan Altima with an exceptional price for a vehicle that surpasses others with a variety of valuable features and much more for a special price.

The 2017 Nissan Altima was debuted in Nissan Al-Babtain showroom, with its fresh new appearance the "Energetic Flow" exterior styling theme and "Gliding Wing" interior layout, "Class Leading Fuel Economy" and "Improved Driving Dynamics and Safety Technology" in mid-2016.

The 5,999 KD exceptional price for the 2017 Nissan Altima vehicle includes, the most dramatic change with its energetic flow design, a 2.5L - 182Hp engine, a new 17-inch machine-finish aluminum-alloy wheel design, owners of this Nissan Altima can enjoy the comfort of front & rear parking sensor to always assist, remote engine starter, colored monitor with rear view camera and most importantly customers driving the Nissan Altima 2017 have the privilege to enjoy their ride with audio system & cruise control steering wheel switches with Bluetooth.

Nissan Al-Babtain is known for always providing customers with exceptional offers and its surprises throughout the year; customers are welcome now to take advantage of this special price available for a limited time at all Nissan Al-Babtain's showrooms located in Al-Rai and Al-Ahmadi area and enjoy all these valuable features.

In 1948, late Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al-Babtain established a small automotive business. Today Al-Babtain Group is a conglomerate organization located in the State of Kuwait. Al-Babtain Group integrated honesty, integrity and dedication in all aspects of the business. The Group has established strongholds in the local, regional and international market. Al-Babtain Group experienced continuous success throughout the past 60 years.

The contemporary and flexible management approach, aligned with the long term vision and well-studied strategies are the key factor for the groups' success. Al-Babtain Group businesses include; Automotive, Information Technology, Investment, Real Estate, Finance and

The Group has licensing rights for some of the world's leading brands, international corporations and distributes a wide variety of products & services. Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al-Babtain Company (AABC) core business is automotive services. With the great success this business has built, AABC is also the main distributor for several well renowned brands.

The Group is currently the official agent and distributor for the Japanese and European (French) vehicles, Nissan, Infiniti, Renault and Citroen in the State of Kuwait.

BURGAN BANK SPONSORS 'WAVES OF BRAZIL' EVENT

A CELEBRATION OF SOUL-SOOTHING MUSIC AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY

KUWAIT: Burgan Bank, the second largest conventional bank in terms of assets, in partnership with the Embassy of Brazil in Kuwait, Dar Al-Athar Al-Islamiyyah and other companies with interests in Brazil, recently sponsored a Brazilian musical night at the Yarmouk Cultural Center on 9 April 2017. The musical extravaganza, held under the patronage of the Brazilian Ambassador to the State of Kuwait, Norton de Andrade Mello Rapesta, aimed to celebrate the rich Brazilian music and enhance the exchange of cultures

The night hosted world famous Brazilian artists, Francis Hime a renowned pianist, composer, singer, arranger and conductor with a career of more than 50 years and 26 albums, who represents the best of the second generation of the Bossa Nova and Olivia Hime, lyricist, singer and Francis Hime's partner in life and music, enthralled the audience and captured the essence of the rich and beautiful Brazilian music.

With an aim of promoting different world cultures in Kuwait and nurturing the local society with world-class music, Burgan Bank continues to engage in partnerships that position Kuwait as a thriving cultural destination. As art continues to play a powerful role in bringing people of different cultures together and supporting progress and advancement in society, Burgan Bank is proud to support two highly regarded artists who brought the best of Brazil to Kuwait.

This sponsorship falls under Burgan Bank's full-fledged community program entitled 'ENGAGE' - Together to be the change. This program sheds light on important aspects affecting every segment of the society by promoting social welfare through educational, cultural, social and health initiatives. Burgan Bank's approach to 'ENGAGE' begins with a vital principle that as a Kuwaiti financial institution, its conduct and policies should be aligned with the needs and interests of the Kuwaiti society.

Established in 1977, Burgan Bank is the youngest commercial Bank and second largest by assets in Kuwait, with a significant focus on the corporate 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. The Bank has continuously improved its performance over the years through an expanded revenue structure, diversified funding sources, and a strong capital base. The adoption of stateof-the-art services and technology has positioned it as a trendsetter in the domestic market and within the MENA region. Burgan Bank's brand has been created on a foundation of real values - of trust, commitment, excellence and



driven by you 4



progression, to remind us of the high standards to which we aspire. 'People come first' is the foundation on which its products and services are developed.

The bank was re-certified with the prestigious ISO 9001:2008, making it the first bank in the GCC, and the only bank in Kuwait to receive such accreditation for the third consecutive year. The Bank also has to its credit the distinction of being the only Bank in Kuwait to have won the JP Morgan Chase Quality Recognition Award for twelve consecutive years.

BE CAREFUL IF YOU'RE BETTING TAX CHANGES WILL BOOST STOCKS

NEW YORK: Investors have pinned high fund it by removing hopes on President Donald Trump's tax reform proposals, and that's one of the reasons stocks have soared since Trump's election in November.

But there's reason for caution: it's not clear if Washington will deliver as much as investors want, and if there are big changes to the tax code, there may be losers as well as winners. Whitney George, chairman of Sprott Asset Management USA and the manager of the Sprott Focus Trust, says investors may be hoping for too much when it comes to changes to the tax code. He advises investors to keep their expectations low and look for buying opportunities rather than betting that tax cuts or changes will lead to a broad rally. Questions and answers have been edited

for length and clarity. Q: What does Wall Street want to see in a tax reform package, and what do investors think tax legislation will ultimately look like?

A: With tax reform the question is, where does the money come from? There are always winners and losers and that may produce kind of a barrier to much happening this year, and if the attempt to repeal and replace the Affordable Care act is any kind of indication, I bet that not much is going to happen.

The idea that you can balance trade by taxing goods at the border and letting people export tax free sounds like a good idea at the outset, but when you start to look at the way our system and companies and industries have been built over many, many years, it would just create so much uncertainty and disruption and confusion and exemptions that it would probably create the opposite of one of the desired goals, which is tax simplification.

Consumption

Our economy is basically 70 percent consumption, so you are likely raising the price to 70 percent of the economy by taxing imports. The consumer does not want to see the price of all of the goods that we buy globally go up materially any more than they want to see oil prices go up materially. So a tax cut sounds like a great idea that everybody's behind but if you have to exemptions or creating new taxes, that's where you're going to run into

trouble. Q: Are there industries that stand to benefit a lot from the tax ideas that are floating around?

A: The best case is some sort of business tax cut. Small business-

income tax rate.

es like local law firms and dry cleaners make up the vast majority of the economy. They are taxed as partnerships, which means they get taxed at your personal

Whitney George

Some sort of break there, as he has suggested, probably does make sense and probably does benefit the economy. Particularly if the simplification allows for less tax avoidance, better compliance, less lost time and a pickup in the economy to help pay for it. The United States imports a lot more than it exports, so with a border adjustment tax, the winners would be fewer in number than the losers.

The best I'd hope for is maybe tax simplification, where it's easier to fill out your tax forms and less complicated and you save money with less professionals having to work on your behalf. So you're doing something for small businesses that could help improve employment and growth there. I think that's probably the best thing for the

Q: Is the corporate part of tax reform seen as a major contributor to future earnings growth?

A: If the top corporate tax rate goes from 35 percent to 25 percent, that's a 10-percent bump to S&P earnings. A lot of that got priced into the market pretty quickly. Some companies pay the full 35 percent tax rate and you'll actually see the earnings bump there as they keep more out of every dollar that they earn. Smaller, simpler businesses, businesses that are in low-tax states, like much of the Midwest, might be better off. One of my concerns is that anything Washington does to cut federal tax rates in some places are likely to be more than eaten up by the state needs to raise taxes. —AP

WELLS FARGO SHOWS SOME STABILITY, RESUMES **PROMOTING ACCOUNTS**

NEW YORK: Wells Fargo's sales practices scandal isn't going away anytime soon, with first-quarter profit essentially flat as the bank struggled to win customers. But amid signs that the storm over fake accounts is easing, branch employees are starting to promote new accounts to people.

The company said that new checking account openings were down 35 percent in March from the same month a year ago. New credit card applications were down 42 percent. Both those metrics improved from the activity in February, however.

And after months of apologizing and calling customers to ask whether they really opened the accounts in their names, Wells executives said the bank is starting to move back into the offense.

Bank employees are "more actively marketing products" to customers again in the branches, said John Shrewsberry, the company's chief financial officer. Regulators had fined San Francisco-based Wells Fargo \$185 million in September for opening more than 2 million accounts fraudulently as employees tried to meet aggressive sales goals. The bank has been dealing with the aftermath since then, as then-CEO John Stumpf stepped down and the head of the consumer banking division moved up her retirement. Both were ordered to forfeit promised stock awards. Wells Fargo also scrapped its sales goals and announced new compensation standards.

Earlier this week, the bank's board released its own investigation, and announced it was clawing back another \$75 million in pay from Stumpf and former community bank executive Carrie Tolstedt, saying the executives took too long to recognize problems at the company. —AP



CHARLOTTE: A man uses a Wells Fargo ATM in Charlotte, NC. Wells Fargo's first-quarter profit was essentially flat from a year earlier as new customers continue to stay away from the bank following its sales practice scandal. — AP









LEXUS IS THE MOST DEPENDABLE LUXURY BRAND 6TH YEAR IN A ROW

J.D. Power Vehicle Dependability Study 2017

KUWAIT: Lexus has captured the highest ranking in vehicle dependability among all nameplates for a sixth consecutive year with a score of 110 problems per (PP) 100 in the 2017 J.D. Power US Vehicle Dependability Study (VDS).

In addition to Lexus' top score in overall nameplate ranking, the luxury brand also received three segment awards. The Lexus ES ranked highest in the Compact Premium Car segment, and the Lexus GS led the Midsize Premium Car segment. Lexus RX was the top Midsize Premium SUV.

Lexus Experience Amazing: The Path Of **Global Transformation**

At the heart of every Lexus design is "Takumi Craftsmanship" where craftsmen use their vast experience to achieve one single goal, perfection. As a result, all Lexus vehicles are created with masterful skill and attention to detail, utilizing state-of-the-art technologies to deliver an engineering masterpiece.

The outstanding Turbo engine, the powerfully different Hybrid engine or the adrenaline packed F range, imaginative technology that translates into exhilarating performance and each one is built to deliver maximum performance.

The 2017 US Vehicle Dependability Study is based on responses from 35,186 original owners of 2014 model-year vehicles after three years of ownership. The study was fielded from October through December 2016.



into unsurpassed customer care. Our staff of automotive professionals take pride in representing Lexus brand and are dedicated to making customer experience unforgettable and relaxing one through tailored services that are pampering as well as rejuvenating.

mines overall dependability by the number of problems experienced per 100 vehicles (PP100), with a lower score reflecting higher quality. The study covers 177 specific problems grouped into eight major vehicle categories.



KFIC ANNOUNCES NEW **COLLABORATION WITH** MIDAS FURNITURE

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance and Investment Company (KFIC) announced that its financing services sector (Tamwilia) signed an agreement of cooperation with Midas furniture for the needs of Midas' clients for home furniture. In this occasion,



Ahmed Maher Executive Director at KFIC stated: "we are happy for signing this agreement that comes as a step in implementing Tamwilia's plan to serve wider segments of the Kuwaiti finance services market and serve their needs with more ease and seamlessness. Maher added that this step to expand in the market comes after the success Tamwilia has witnessed in financing automobiles and marine equipment since its inception as one of the pioneers in the financing services market. Maher

then clarified that Tawmilia will continue to expand in order to meet the needs of its clients with rapid and user friendly systems with the efficiency it has long been known for.

From her side, Deborah Abu El Jibien Reigonal Retail Manager at Midas Furniture voiced her happiness for the signing of the agreement where she stated that this will facilitate the decision-making process for Midas' customers through the credibility that KFIC enjoys in the financing services market. Abu El Jibien clarified that "this cooperation empowers both Midas and KFIC in order to serve their respective clients in a better manner and eventually speeds up the process of furnishing a new home or refurnishing a current one for the customer. Abu El Jibien hopes that the cooperation between Midas and KFIC will continue to grow in other areas in the future.

It is noteworthy that KFIC offers financing services through the Tamwilia sector that includes the financing of automobiles and marine equipment in addition to furniture, health services and real estate financing. Tamwilia serves its clients through receiving all their questions and concerns on the hotline 1889000.



KFH ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF HESABI YOUTH DRAW

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House KFH announced the winners of "Hesabi" for Youth draw where the total value of prizes awarded was KD 10,000. The draw was held under the supervision of Ministry of Industry and Commerce.

KFH launched this draw in an attempt to reward the youth segment of customers by providing them with programs tailored especially for youth people to suit their lifestyles.

The prizes were categorized KD2500, KD2000, KD1500, KD1000 to the first, second, third and fourth winners respectively. The 6 other winners receive KD500 each.

The value of the prizes will be deposited into the winners' accounts by end of this week.

The winners are: Ahmad Al-Masari, Fehaid Alajmi, Soud Mohammad, Saad Alrashidi, Fatemah Saeed, Maria Hamad, Soud Al-laho,

Meshari Alruwaieh, Terky Alsaeedi, and Ahmad Thenayan.

Hesabi" program has been designed to meet the needs of youth from 15 to 21 years old and to go in line with their active life style. This program presents for youth many exclusive offers and a wide range of privileges including ATM card with a unique design, eligibility to issue KFH prepaid cards, distinguished offers and discounts etc.

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.

ABK ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF 50TH 'DOUBLE YOUR SALARY' DRAWS

KUWAIT: Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) held its 50th 'Double Your Salary' weekly draw on 11th April, 2017 at the Bank's Head Office in the presence of a representative from the Ministry of Commerce, announcing the names of the winners for this week. The promotion includes weekly draws, with two winners per draw. The campaign will run until 27th June, 2017.

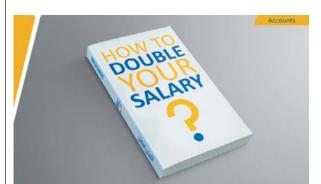
The winners of this week are:

1) Yousef Ali Hasan AlQedheeb, Salmiya Branch 2) Jassim Ahmad Jassim AlShatti, Salmiya Branch

New customers who transfer their salary to ABK receive KD 100 and will automatically be entered into the weekly draws to double their salaries. Existing customers who are already transferring their salary to ABK are entered into a separate draw.

The next 'Double Your Salary' draw will be held on 18th April, 2017 where two new lucky winners will be announced. All winners will be contacted personally and a weekly announcement will be made through the media with the winners' names.

For more information about Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait please visit eahli.com or contact a customer service agent via 'Ahlan Ahli' at 1899899.



MICROSOFT SAYS USERS ARE PROTECTED FROM NSA MALWARE

PARIS: Up-to-date Microsoft customers are safe from the purported National Security Agency spying tools dumped online, the software company said yesterday, tamping down fears that the digital arsenal was poised to wreak havoc across the internet. In a blog post, Microsoft Corp security manager Phillip Misner said that the software giant had already built defenses against nine of the 12 tools disclosed by The Shadow Brokers, a mysterious group that has repeatedly published NSA code.

The three others affected old, unsupported products. "Most of the exploits are already patched," Misner said. The post tamped down fears expressed by some researchers that the digital espionage toolkit made public by TheShadowBrokers took advantage of undisclosed vulnerabilities in Microsoft's code. That would have been a potentially damaging development because such tools could swiftly be repurposed to strike across the company's massive customer base.

Those fears appear to have been prompted by experts using even slightly out-of-date versions of Windows in their labs. One of Microsoft's fixes, also called a patch,

was only released last month. "I the records bear NSA seals, but missed the patch," said British security architect Kevin Beaumont, jokingly adding, "I'm thinking about going to live in the woods now." Beaumont wasn't alone. Matthew Hickey, of cybersecurity firm Hacker House, also ran the code against earlier versions of Windows on Friday. But he noted that many organizations put patches off, meaning "many servers will still be affected by these flaws." Everyone involved recommended keeping up with software updates. "We encourage customers to ensure their computers are up-to-date," Misner said.

Meanwhile, hackers released documents and files on Friday that cybersecurity experts said indicated the US National Security Agency had accessed the SWIFT interbank messaging system, allowing it to monitor money flows among some Middle Eastern and Latin American banks. The release included computer code that could be adapted by criminals to break into SWIFT servers and monitor messaging activity, said Shane Shook, a cyber security consultant who has helped banks investigate breaches of their SWIFT systems.

The documents and files were released by a group calling themselves The Shadow Brokers. Some of Reuters could not confirm their authenticity. The NSA could not immediately be reached for comment. Also published were many programs for attacking various versions of the Windows operating system, at least some of which still work, researchers said. In a statement to Reuters, Microsoft, maker of Windows, said it had not been warned by any part of the US government that such files existed or had been stolen. "Other than reporters, no individual or organization has contacted us in relation to the materials released by Shadow Brokers," the company said.

The absence of warning is significant because the NSA knew for months about the Shadow Brokers breach, officials previously told Reuters. Under a White House process established by former President Barack Obama's staff, companies were usually warned about dangerous flaws. Shook said criminal hackers could use the information released on Friday to hack into banks and steal money in operations mimicking a heist last year of \$81 million from the Bangladesh central bank. "The release of these capabilities could enable fraud like we saw at Bangladesh Bank," Shook said. —Agencies



MANHATTAN: Traffic makes it's way past the building that houses the New York office of EastNets in Midtown, Manhattan, NY, Friday. A new set of documents purportedly lifted from the US National Security Agency suggests that American spies have burrowed deep into the Middle East's financial network, apparently compromising the Dubai office of the anti-money laundering and financial services firm EastNets. The company said Friday that the documents were dated and denied that any customer data had been affected. —AP



Sundar Pichai

GOOGLE SILENTLY LAUNCHES HYPERLOCAL PLATFORM AREO

Google launched its new hyperlocal services app, Areo, on the Play Store, with plans to get food and home services to customers' doorsteps in Bengaluru

and Mumbai. It was reported that Areo has incorporated partners like UrbanClap (for a bouquet of home services), Zimmber, FreshMenu, Box8, and Faasos for food ordering.

Google Areo was launched on the Google Play Store on Wednesday.

According to the app description on the Play Store, the app enables customers to order for food or hyperlocal services, and book and schedule deliveries for a particular time of convenience, and also allows fast and secure checkout options for payment.

AndroidSoul, a site that focuses on Android news, was the first to spot the app on the Play Store.

But this isn't the first time a technology giant has set eyes on the Indian hyperlocal market. Last year, in April, the news came out that Facebook set foot into the hyperlocal services segment in India.

The move then by the networking giant was fairly discreet, allowing consumers to look for spas, pet services, and event planners on the page. Then, the line-up of services included plumbing, medical and health, arts and marketing,

NEW YORK: Sneakily on Wednesday, automotive (repair), business services, personal care (spas), and pet care, among several others.

Just in January this year, Google's top boss Sundar Pichai arrived in India and spoke about the company's Digital Unlocked programme. He said,

"Imagine if every single small business owner were to leverage the power of internet and information. The economy would simply boom. Google aims to give those businesses that power."

Sundar Pichai

Looking farther down the line, Google Areo could serve as a complimentary cause to their Digital Unlocked programme. As a part of the programme, digital skill training will be provided to SME owners through sessions that will be FICCI and ISB certified. These provide owners with the information and knowledge of how mobile platforms, digital payments, and e-commerce work.

In the future, this might prompt the owners to list themselves on platforms like Areo, thus expanding Google's hyperlocal network.

Further, over the past few months, Google has worked on Google Station, which provides high-speed Wi-Fi to over 110 of the busiest railway stations

HOW TECH, NEW BUSINESS MODELS COULD CHANGE CAB INDUSTRY

MINNESOTA: Almost every generation goes through a technological revolution, where newer and more elegant solutions make routine ways of doing tasks completely obsolete or irrelevant, to an extent. Millennials are generally early adopters of new technologies, while older folks often follow on grudgingly, not keen to let go of the systems they are already comfortable with.

The pre-teen population of every generation generally adopts new technology almost instinctively, as it has no 'mental baggage' and considers new technologies to be the standard process of doing things. But time and tide, and now the steady march of technology, seem to

The Fourth Industrial Revolution?

A report from the World Economic Forum (WEF) notes that the First Industrial Revolution used water and steam power to mechanise production. The second used electric power to create mass production. The third used electronics and information technology to automate production. Now, a Fourth Industrial Revolution is upon us, building on the third. This one is predicted to disrupt business models and decentralise our economies as we move from value-system-based on ownership to ones enabling access.

The belief is that personally owned assets, from cars to spare bedrooms, will be part of the 'shared economy', and will expand entrepreneurship and diversify revenue streams. We have already seen some of this in action. Cab aggregating services like Uber, Lyft, Ola, Didi, and Grab have changed the world of

But now, connected cars, autonomous vehicles, and flying cars seem to be where the next quantum leap lies. YourStory referred to industry reports and reached out to Uber India and Ola, an international player in the in-cab entertainment space, and a legacy advertising player in India for this story. Let us take a deep-dive into how the cab space is evolving.

Could short-distance cab rides be free in the near future?

Sharing a cab is good for the environment, and also helps cabbies and cab aggregators maximise earnings. Uber India recently announced a flat rate of Rs 29 for up to four kilometres of travel on their UberPool platform.

Ola too announced a similar offering for Ola Auto rides in December 2016, and recently announced plans priced between Rs 39 to Rs 50 for up to seven km in cities like Delhi, Bengaluru, and Mumbai, for a limited time.

Image credit: Ola Blog

While these prices are already quite low, James Bellefeuille, Founder of Vugo, believes that short-distance cab rides could in fact become free for end consumers in the near future. Headquartered in Minneapolis,

many of them paying much interest to his recommendations. Then, he tried a different approach. He began sharing brochures of places or menus from restaurants with his passengers, and found that a visual aid created more interest and impact.

He realised that there was a big market that could be tapped here, by providing riders with personalised recommendations and content. So, along with his co-founders, James launched Vugo in June of 2015, and now has over 10,000 drivers in the United States across multiple



Vugo team

Minnesota, Vugo is a cloud-based B2B mobility media platform that provides an in-cab content-play experience to passengers of rideshare platforms like Uber and Lyft in the US.

James was recently in India on a personal trip and spoke to YourStory over the phone about his journey and how he sees the cab space evolving in the US and emerging markets like India. In 2011, James was working at an ad agency during the day, and moonlighted as one of the first Uber drivers in Chicago. He would generally recommend restaurants and rideshare platforms like Uber and Lyft on their platform. Vugo team. James on the extreme right

'Netflix and ride'?

Vugo works with brands to stream custom content on tablets that are fitted in cabs. They also share the revenue with cabbies, serving as an additional source of income to them. James said,

A typical Vugo advertisement is a 30 second-long video; it's targeted using our datadriven TripIntent Technology, which ensures that ads are relevant and contextual to a pas-

APPLE EYES BACKING HON HAI BID FOR TOSHIBA CHIP UNIT

TOKYO: Tech giant Apple is considering backing Hon Hai's multi-billion dollar bid for Toshiba's lucrative memory chip business, a report said yesterday.

The US firm plans to financially support Taiwan's Hon Hai, which has reportedly bid some 3 trillion yen (\$27.6 billion) in the initial tendering round for the memory chip business, the Mainichi Shimbun said.

Apple, which uses Toshiba's memory chips for its iPhone, hopes to secure stable supplies of the key parts by supporting Hon Hai's bid, the daily said.

Hon Hai, which acquired Japanese electronics maker Sharp last year, is separately asking SoftBank to join the team, the daily said. The Japanese telecom company may help Hon Hai negotiate with local banks currently supporting Toshiba, it said.

Immediate confirmation of the report was not available. Among other bidders are Google and Amazon as well as US private-equity firm Silver Lake Partners and American chipmaker Broadcom, news reports have said, quoting unnamed sources.

Local media said any foreign buyer would need to pass a Japanese government review, given concerns about security around systems already using Toshiba's memory chips.

Toshiba is the world's number two supplier of memory chips for smartphones and computers, behind South Korea's Samsung, and the business accounted for about a quarter of its 5.67 trillion yen in revenue last fis-

But it plans to sell off the chip business, seen as crucial for the cashstrapped company to turn itself around, after suffering huge cost overruns and construction delays at its US nuclear power unit Westinghouse Electric, which filed for bankruptcy protection late March.

On Tuesday, Toshiba reported an unaudited loss of \$4.9 billion in longoverdue financial results for the nine months to December 2016.

In announcing the earnings, Toshiba also warned of the likelihood of a worsening financial situation and said its survival was at risk. —AFP

places to visit to his passengers, but didn't see THE IPHONE OF CARS? APPLE

SAN FRANCISCO: Apple is joining the fiercely competitive race to design self-driving cars, raising the possibility that a company that has already re-shaped culture with its iPhone may try to transform transportation, too.

Ending years of speculation, Apple's late entry into a crowded field was made official Friday with the disclosure that the California Department of Motor Vehicles had awarded a permit for the company to start testing its self-driving car technology on public roads in

The permit covers three vehicles - all 2015 Lexus RX 450h hybrid SUVs - and six individual drivers. California law requires people to be in a self-driving car who can take control if something goes wrong.

Apple goes mobile ... in a new way

Apple confirmed its arrival in the self-driving car market, but wouldn't discuss its intentions. Its interest in autonomous vehicle technology, however, has long been clear.

The Cupertino, California, company pointed to a statement that it issued in December."

Apple is investing heavily in machine learning and autonomous systems," the company said then. "There are many potential applications for these technologies, including the future of transportation."

Apple released that statement after Steve Kenner, a former Ford Motor executive who is now Apple's director of product integrity, notified federal regulators of the company's interest in self-driving cars in a letter.

ENTERS SELF-DRIVING CAR RACE

Like others, Apple believes self-driving cars could ease congestion, prevent millions of crashes and save thousands of lives annually in traffic accidents often caused by drunk or distracted

Self-driving cars could also be a lucrative new market. And Apple has been searching for its next act for a while, one that will take it beyond its mainstay phones, tablets and personal computers.

A next big thing

Although iPhone's ongoing popularity has helped Apple remain the world's most valuable company, the company hasn't had a breakthrough product since the 2010 debut of the iPad, currently in the throes of a three-year sales slump. The dry spell has raised doubts as to whether Apple lost some of its trend-setting magic with the death of co-founder Steve Jobs in 2011.

Apple will be vying against 29 other companies that already have California permits to test self-driving cars. The list includes major automakers, including Ford, General Motors, BMW, Volkswagen and Tesla, as well as one of its biggest rivals in technology, Google, whose testing of self-driving cars has been spun off into an affiliate called Waymo. Since Google began its work on self-driving vehicles eight years ago, Waymo's fleet of self driving cars has logged more than 2 million miles on the road.

That means Apple has a long way to catch up in self-driving technology. But it has often been a follower in markets that it eventually revolutionized. It wasn't the first to introduce a digital music player, smartphone, or tablet before its iPod, iPhone and iPad came out.

Deep pockets

With \$246 billion in cash, Apple also could easily afford to buy technology that accelerates its development of self-driving cars. There has been recurring speculation that Apple might eventually acquire Tesla, which has a market value of about \$50 billion. Neither Apple nor Tesla has given any inkling that they're interested in joining forces, though.

Speculation about Apple's interest in expanding into automobiles began swirling in 2015 amid media reports that the company had begun secretly working on building its own electric car under the name project "Titan." Apple never confirmed the existence of Titan, which is now believed to be dead. —AP

RECORD-SETTING ASTRONAUT THRILLED WITH BONUS TIME IN SPACE

CAPE CANAVERAL: The world's most experienced spacewoman said she's thrilled to get an extra three months off the planet. The commander of the International Space Station, Peggy Whitson, told The Associated Press that five months into her mission, she's not bored yet - "not even close." She misses cooking, though, and a diverse menu. She's afraid there isn't much chocolate left, to celebrate Easter this Sunday, but she's hoping for more when two astronauts fly up next week, bringing the crew to five.

Whitson learned there was a chance her mission would last until September, instead of the originally planned June, the day before she rocketed away late last year. That's because an empty seat will be available on a Russian Soyuz capsule for her return. She'll now spend close to 10 months in space, keeping up with all the science experiments.

She said it was an easy decision to make, once NASA and the Russian Space Agency firmed up the plans earlier this month. She and her husband of almost 28 years, Clarence Sams, a biochemist at Johnson Space Center in Houston, decided on "a flexible plan of happiness," either way.

The biggest challenge of staying up so long, she said, is more mental. While phone and video communication is great, there's nothing like giving family and friends a hug, she told the AP. Given the



In this Thursday, April 13, 2017 image from video made available by NASA, astronaut Peggy Whitson speaks during an interview aboard the International Space Station. The commander of the ISS says that five months into her current mission, she's still not bored. At 57, she's the oldest woman to fly in space and is on the verge of setting a US record for most accumulated time in space. — AP

space station's relatively limited food choices, she'd like nothing more than an Italian dinner with a great salad. She's enjoyed munching on some Chinese cabbage she's grown up there; she whipped up some tuna salad with horseradish sauce, and served it on the fresh cabbage leaves.

Oldest woman

The 57-year-old biochemist - the oldest woman to fly in space - is on the verge of setting a US record for most accumulated time in space. On April 24, she'll surpass astronaut Jeffrey Williams' 534 days in space. She also has performed eight spacewalks, more than any other woman. A ninth may be in the offing. During her last spacewalk two weeks ago, a piece of cloth shielding got loose and floated away before it could be installed. Whitson said they had tethered it to the wrong strap and it slid off the end. She said the training equipment on the ground was different, and didn't pose such a problem. This is her third space mission - and she'd welcome more.

"I would definitely love to go to moon or Mars or some other destination," she said, "Space station's been phenomenal, but I'd like to take some of the next steps. I'm not sure if I'll last that long, but I'll aive it my best." — AP

CRITICS WORRY 'JUNK SCIENCE' TO REIGN AS FORENSIC PANEL ENDS

WASHINGTON: Defense attorneys say they will step up their challenges to certain forensic practices now that the Justice Department has disbanded an independent commission that was studying how to improve their reliability.

But the absence of research or guidance from the National Commission on Forensic Science could make the task of challenging questionable scientific evidence in court even harder, according to experts who worry that "garbage science" will continue to cloud court cases across the US.

"Even if defense attorneys jump up and down and complain about it, they won't have the power of a national commission to back them up," said Erin Murphy, a professor at New York University School of Law. "The status quo right now is to admit it all. The status quo is where things are likely to stay."

Attorney General Jeff Sessions announced this week the Justice Department would not renew the commission, a panel of researchers, scientists, judges and attorneys that had been working more than three years to raise forensic science standards. Research had increasingly shown that techniques such as comparisons of hair found at crime scenes, handwriting analyses, bitemark evidence and certain ballistics tests are scientifically flawed.

Instead, the Justice Department will build on the commission's work to develop a new strategy on improvements to forensic methods. with the help of an internal committee and a still unnamed forensic adviser, Sessions said.

The announcement drew alarm from some in the legal community who saw the commission as the best chance for an independent look at questionable techniques that have long been used in American courtrooms. They fear its end marks a rollback of recent



WASHINGTON: In this March 27, 2017 file photo, Attorney General Jeff Sessions speaks at the White House in Washington. Defense attorneys say they will step up their challenges to certain forensic practices now that the Justice Department has disbanded an independent commission that was studying how to improve their reliability. — AP

reform efforts. Justice Department officials say that concern is premature. They stressed they are still coming up with a plan to advance forensic science and bolster the work of U.S. crime labs, and they are seeking public input.

The department also plans to study the needs of overloaded crime labs. The in-house committee will include prosecutors, crime lab representatives, law enforcement officials and grant-makers. "Nothing is off the table," said Associate Deputy Attorney General Andrew Goldsmith, who spoke this week at the final meeting of the commission. It was due to expire later this month.

Prosecutors praised the move, saying the 32-member commission had often ignored their concerns and had grown unwieldy. A Justice Department office devoted to forensic science, made up mostly of scientists, rather than policymakers and lawyers, would be a better approach, said Bill Fitzpatrick, the district attorney in Syracuse, New York, and chairman of the board of the National District Attorneys Association.

But the commission's strength was its array of voices, said one member, Jed S. Rakoff, a federal judge in New York. The group had made dozens of recommendations to the attorney general since it formed in 2013, and many were adopted, including standards for crime lab accreditation and the ways prosecutors and defense attorneys should share evidence they plan to present in cases.

Best practices

The panel also had been focusing on finding best practices for the growing arena of digital forensics evidence collected from electronics like computers and cell phones, Rakoff said. The creation of the commission stemmed from a series of crime lab failures and a 2009 report by the National Academy of Sciences revealing forensic evidence like bite marks and hair samples that often helped convict defendants was based on shoddy science. It called for far-ranging improvements. A wave of exonerations followed and ultimately the formation of the commission.

The FBI in 2015 revealed that experts had overstated the strength of evidence involving microscopic hair analysis in cases dating back decades, and the Justice Department promised a review of laboratory protocols and procedures. The Justice Department is reconsidering that review while it devises its new forensics strategy. The scrutiny of contested practices has led to some change in U.S. courtrooms, but more work is needed, Murphy said. Judges have shown more willingness to limit certain testimony, and forensic experts in Texas have called for a ban on bite-mark evidence, which the California Supreme Court also called into question.

Barry Pollack, president of the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, offered a different prediction: Because it had been trying to find a balance for the use of certain forensic methods, the commission's end might give defense attorneys a better chance of prevailing with judges who are skeptical of the old-fashioned techniques. "We would have gotten to the point where there was scientific support for some of these disciplines, and that would have allowed their admission," he said. "By preventing that from happening, these disciplines remain open

LILLY'S RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS PILL REJECTED BY REGULATORS

NEW YORK: Eli Lilly said US regulators have rejected its much-anticipated pill for the immune disorder rheumatoid arthritis, the drugmaker's second drug development setback since November.

The Food and Drug Administration said in a letter to the company that it needed more information about the drug's safety and the best doses, Lilly said Friday in a statement.

Lilly said it disagrees with FDA's conclusions but will work with the agency on a plan to eventually get the drug, baracitinib, approved for US patients.

In November, Lilly's experimental medicine solanezumab flopped in a closely watched test in patients with mild Alzheimer's disease, after having already failed in testing in patients with more advanced Alzheimer's.

The arthritis drug, which has the proposed brand name Olumiant and was approved for use in Europe in February, was expected to be a big seller in part because most other new rheumatoid arthritis drugs are injected, making them less appealing for patients.

Christi Shaw, president of the Lilly division that developed the drug, said the company remains confident in the drug's ability to safely treat moderate and severe rheumatoid arthritis.

About 23 million people worldwide, three-fourths of them women, have rheumatoid arthritis, a chronic disorder in which the immune system attacks the body's tissues. It causes painful swelling and progressive destruction of joints, which can leave them deformed and, in severe cases, lead to disability. It can also damage other body parts, including the skin, eyes, lungs, heart and blood vessels.

Eli Lilly & Co. and Incyte Corp., its partner in developing baracitinib, applied for FDA approval of the drug in January 2016. Normally the review process takes 10 months, but this January, FDA said it needed three additional months to review more information. Still, drug industry analysts as recently as this week were advising clients that approval of baracitinib was likely.

Despite the setback, Lilly reaffirmed its 2017 financial forecasts Friday, for earnings per share of \$2.69 to \$2.79, excluding one-time items, and revenue between \$21.8 billion and \$22.3 billion. It said Incyte, which is based in Wilimington, Delaware, was evaluating the rejection's impact on its position and would update investors when it reports first-quarter results, likely in mid-May. Lilly is expected to report its quarterly results on April 25. — AP



This undated image provided by Ken Olson shows a drawing of the plesiosaur (marine reptile). A fossil found by an elk hunter in Montana nearly seven years ago has led to the discovery this new species of prehistoric sea creature. The new species of elasmosaur is detailed in an article published Thursday, in the Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology. The creature lived about 70 million years ago in the inland sea that flowed east of the Rocky Mountains from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico. — AP

BOEHRINGER INGELHEIM: A NEW WORLD LEADER IN ANIMAL HEALTH

KUWAIT: Three months after acquiring animal health leader Merial in a strategic transaction with Sanofi, Boehringer Ingelheim revealed its ambition to compete for industry leadership worldwide in animal health. Boehringer Ingelheim's management recently discussed the importance of its animal health business and its long-term growth potential at a briefing event that took place in Ingelheim, Germany.

Following a positive year for the animal health business in 2016 with net sales increasing by 8.5 percent in currency adjusted terms to 1.46 billion euros, Boehringer Ingelheim finalized the acquisition of Merial on 1 January 2017. With the combination of these two leading and highly complementary businesses, animal health has been identified as a strategic long-term development priority for the company.

Joachim Hasenmaier, Head of Boehringer Ingelheim's Animal Health Business Unit and member of the Boehringer Ingelheim board of managing directors said, "Acquiring Merial immediately positions us to be increasingly competitive in a high-growth sector that is in a consolidation phase. By combining two dynamic companies that share the same long-term strategic vision, we are delivering a larger and more innovative portfolio of products and services to prevent disease and improve the health and productivity of animals around the world. We want to actively help shape the animal health industry by combining our forces, one with the power of two."

Moreover, Herbert Pohle, Boehringer Ingelheim's Head of Animal health META also noted, "Animal health is one of the key drivers to sustainable human health. In large areas across the region, the animal health sector is of strategic importance as it directly links to our daily lives and overall nutrition. We remain committed to strengthening the Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health Business Unit across the region by driving market leadership, leveraging innovation and providing customer service excellence."

Pohle further added, "We will continue

strengthening our relationship with our partners, and work with them to help drive best practices, and further develop problem-solving health solutions that maximize productivity."

Between now and 2030, the latest forecasts predict the animal health market will double,



Herbert Pohle

driven by three major trends: increasing demand for animal meat in connection with changing demographics, increasing demand and diversification in the pet market, and increasing health threats due to the

spread of infec-

tious diseases from animals (avian influenza, foot-and-mouth disease, etc.). The new Boehringer Ingelheim animal health business is now the second largest company in the global animal health market, and is the top provider worldwide of parasiticides and vaccines for both production animals and pets. The combined company is now the global leader in the pets, swine, equine and veterinary public health categories, with a strong position in poul-

try and cattle.

"We see an important opportunity to capitalize on the evolving trends and critical needs to prevent disease and manage the health of animals worldwide," added Hasenmaier. "We intend to do so by ensuring a smooth integration of our businesses; extending our leadership in vaccination and parasite control programs, and focusing on pet care solutions. It is our ambition to develop new products and solutions that address unmet customer needs with an industry leading R&D investment up to 10%."

Pohle further pointed out to that, "Preventive vaccination is one approach to controlling any diseases. The region has applied a lot of advances in this area and our commitment is to support in the investment in a healthier and more robust animal health sector which in return would reflect in stronger communities."

The combined animal health business will in the future represent more than 25 percent of Boehringer Ingelheim's total revenue and employ more than 10,000 people. Boehringer Ingelheim expects animal health net sales to more than double in 2017 in comparison to the previous year due to the Merial integration.

PROFESSORS NAME DINOSAUR AFTER DIGGING UP THOUSANDS OF BONES

MOAB: University officials say they've named a dinosaur that they found hidden in Utah. Brigham Young University professors have created a full picture of the sauropod from thousands of fossilized bones and published a paper Tuesday in the University of Michigan's Contributions from the Museum of Paleontology.

The creature has been named Moabosaurus

because it was found near Moab. Like other sauropods, researchers say it was an herbivore with a long neck and tail and a small brain but it was much smaller, at 32 feet. The paper says the Moabosaurus is 125 million years old and its skeleton was found in a quarry. Geologist Brooks Britt and his team have been excavating the bones since the late 1970s. The skeleton is on display at BYU's Museum of Paleontology. — AP

HUNTER'S FIND LEADS TO DISCOVERY OF PREHISTORIC SEA CREATURE

HELENA: A fossil found by an elk hunter in Montana nearly seven years ago has led to the discovery of a new species of prehistoric sea creature that lived about 70 million years ago in the inland sea that flowed east of the Rocky Mountains.

The new species of elasmosaur is detailed in an article published Thursday in the Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology. Most elasmosaurs, a type of marine reptile, had necks that could stretch 18 feet, but the fossil discovered in the Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge is distinct for its much shorter neck - about 71/2 feet.

"This group is famous for having ridiculously long necks, I mean necks that have as many as 76 vertebrae," said Patrick Druckenmiller, co-author of the article and a paleontologist with the University of Alaska Museum of the North. "What absolutely shocked us when we dug it out - it only had somewhere around 40 vertebrae."

The smaller sea creature lived around the same time and in the same area as the larger ones, which is evidence contradicting the belief that elasmosaurs did not evolve over millions of years to have longer necks, co-author Danielle Serratos said.

Elasmosaurs were carnivorous creatures with small heads and paddle-like limbs that could grow as long as 30 feet. Their fossils have been discovered across the world, and the one discovered in northeastern Montana was well-preserved and nearly complete. The refuge adjacent to the Missouri River is popular with hunters for its big game and remote setting. David Bradt, a ranch manager from Florence, Montana, said he was hunting elk unsuccessfully in November 2010 when he walked into a canyon to splash some water

In the creek, the water ran over what he thought was petrified wood sticking out of a rock. He pulled back the brush, saw vertebrae and knew it was fossilized bones. He thought it was a dinosaur and was floored when he learned it was a sea creature.

"It's about the size of a cow, and I'm thinking it's a triceratops," he said. "I didn't know there was an ocean there."

Bradt took photographs and reported the find to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Museum of the Rockies in Bozeman.

It took three days to excavate the fossil, but much longer to clean and study it before the determination could be made that it was a new species, Druckenmiller said. He said the inland sea that stretched the width of Montana to Minnesota and from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico was teeming with marine reptiles, but relatively few of their fossils have been excavated.

"It's a total bias - just more people out there are interested in land-living dinosaurs than marine reptiles," he said. "There would be a lot more known if more people were studying them." — AP

HEALTH & SCIENCE



NOIDA: Iraqi mother Gufran Ali (L) gestures as she holds her eight-month-old son Karam during a press conference at a hospital in Noida. — AFP



NOIDA: Iraqi parents Gufran Ali (3L) and Sarwed Ahmed Nadar (3R) pose with their eight-month-old son Karam (C) and physicians: Executive Consultant, paediatric surgery Abhishek (L), Senior Consultant, plastic and reconstructive surgery Ashish Rai, (2L), Director, paediatric cardiac surgery Rajesh Sharma (3L), Senior Consultant, Orthopaedics and Joint replacement Gaurav Rathore (2R) and consultant plastic surgery Saurabh K. Gupta during a press conference at a hospital in Noida yesterday. — AFP

BABY WITH EIGHT LIMBS GETS NEW LEASE ON LIFE IN INDIA

NEW DELHI: A baby born with eight limbs, including two protruding from his stomach, has undergone surgery in India to successfully remove the extra arms and legs, in an operation being hailed as a world first.

Seven-month-old Karam was born in Iraq with an extremely rare condition where a conjoined twin did not fully form and was partially absorbed, resulting in the additional limbs.

The boy's father Sarwed Ahmed Nadar flew the infant to India for surgery, where doctors performed a three-stage operation to remove the unnecessary limbs.

There are just five or six known cases worldwide of this condition, making the task more difficult for the doctors, said senior orthopaedic consultant Gaurav Rathore, who was part of the surgical team.

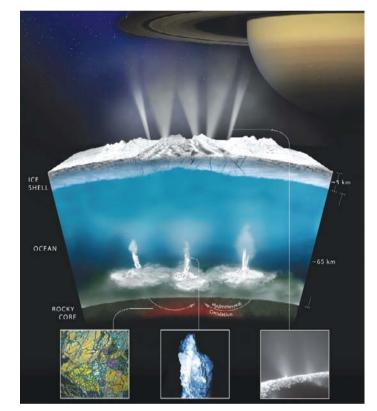
"He was brought to us when he was just two weeks old and his condition was quite unique. Most of the surgeries we performed had not been attempted before," Rathore told reporters in Noida, a satellite city outside New Delhi.

"Till now our journey has been quite successful. Karam is a very courageous young baby. He is in fact a very happy child." The team of doctors at Jaypee Hospital conducted the surgery in three stages, first removing the limbs sticking out from his stomach before correcting a cardiac complication. The final procedure saw doctors remove all the extra limbs, though he will require more procedures as he grows older to correct other anomalies.

A hub of medical tourism, India attracts

thousands of patients from all over the world, owing to low costs and high quality of medical care. Karam's father Nadar, who was initially horrified when his son was born, said his only hope was that his son now grows up normal and healthy. "He is my only child and the first-born is always special," said Nadar, 28. "There were a lot of risks but I never lost hope." — ADP

OCEAN WORLD NEAR SATURN: TOP CONTENDER FOR LIFE BEYOND EARTH



This illustration provided by NASA on Thursday, April 13, 2017 shows what scientists on the space agency's Cassini mission theorize how water interacts with rock at the bottom of the ocean of Saturn's icy moon Enceladus, producing hydrogen gas (H2). The graphic shows water from the ocean circulating through the seafloor, where it is heated and interacts chemically with the rock. This warm water, laden with minerals and dissolved gases (including hydrogen and possibly methane) then pours into the ocean creating chimney-like vents. — AP

CAPE CANAVERAL: A tiny, ice-encrusted ocean world orbiting Saturn is now a hotter-than-ever candidate for potential life.

NASA's Cassini spacecraft has detected hydrogen molecules in the geysers shooting off the moon Enceladus, possibly the result of deep-sea chemical reactions between water and rock that could spark microbial life, scientists announced.

NASA and others are quick to point out this latest discovery does not mean there's life on Enceladus (ehn-SEHL'-uh-duhs), but that there may be conditions favorable for life.

A liquid ocean exists beneath the icy surface of Enceladus, which is barely 300 miles (500 kilometers) across. Scientists have long known about the plumes of water vapor spewing from cracks at the moon's south pole, thanks to Cassini. The heavy presence of hydrogen suggests chemical reactions between the warm water and ocean-floor rock that could support life. Cassini uncovered the hydrogen during its final close flyby of Enceladus in 2015, when it dove deeper than ever through its plumes of vapor and particles. The researchers reported that the hydrogen, along with carbon dioxide that was also found, could mean that undersea microbes are producing methane as they do in the bowels of our own oceans and waterways.

"It really represents a capstone finding for the mission," said Cassini's project scientist, Linda Spilker, noting that the spacecraft has been circling Saturn for more than a decade.

"We now know that Enceladus has almost all of the ingredients that you would need to support life as we know it on Earth," she said at a NASA news conference.

A press conference viewer, asking questions of the scientists via Twitter, asked if NASA was talking about bacteria or algae - or giant squids.

"Most of us would be excited with any life," said Mary Voytek, an astrobiology senior scientist for NASA. "We're going to start with bacteria and, if we get lucky, maybe there's something that's larger."

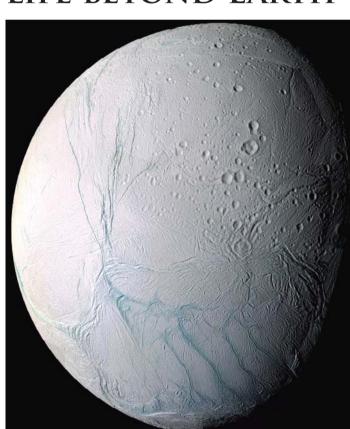
The findings were reported Thursday in the journal Science by a team from Southwest Research Institute in San Antonio.

Launched in 1997 and now finally running low on fuel, Cassini is drawing ever closer to its demise. The spacecraft will duck through the gap between Saturn and its rings 22 times before spiraling out of control and vaporizing in the sky above Saturn this September.

Cassini has no instruments that can detect life, so it will be up to future robotic visitors to seek out possible life on Enceladus, the scientists said. Europa, an ice-covered moon of Jupiter also believed to have a subsurface ocean, may have water vapor jets spewing into space as well, similar to Enceladus. The Hubble Space Telescope has observed what looks to be plumes emanating from Europa. A spacecraft under development called the Europa Clipper, to launch sometime in the 2020s, could shed more light on the matter. Voytek said her money is still on Europa for potential life, versus Enceladus, since Europa is much older and any potential life there has had more time to emerge.

While questions remain, Thursday's news represents "an important advance in assessing the habitability of Enceladus," Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution's Jeffrey Seewald wrote in a companion article.

"We still have a long way to go in our understanding," said Seewald, who was not involved in the study. "Future missions to explore oceans beyond Earth will answer many of these guestions." — AP



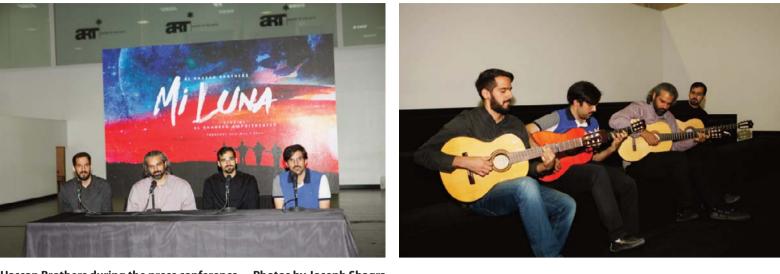
This June 28, 2009 image provided by NASA, taken by the international Cassini spacecraft, shows Enceladus, one of Saturn's moons. NASA's Cassini spacecraft has detected hydrogen molecules in the geysers shooting off the ice-encrusted ocean world, possibly the result of deep-sea chemical reactions between water and rock that could spark microbial life, according to findings announced Thursday, in the journal Science. — AP



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Al-Hassan Brothers during the press conference.—Photos by Joseph Shagra

AL-HASSAN BROTHERS RELEASE FIRST MUSIC ALBUM

By Faten Omar

vwaiti multi-lingual band 'Al-Hassan Brothers' announced its release of their first album "Mi Luna" on Wednesday at the Center of Arts. In addition, they revealed

their first music video by AJNA recording company. During the press conference, the members of the band Ali Al-Hassan, Haitham Al-Hassan, Mahmoud Al-Hassan and Hassan Al-Hassan, a group of four guitarists whose talent is radically gifted in their music inspired by

many aspects.

The band was formed in the summer of 2015 and signed with AJNA 2016 under the supervision of the composer Nawaf Al-Gharibah

The album "Mi Luna" consists of 12 songs in

Spanish, Arabic and English with contemporary guitar tunes performed in different languages, and special music pieces ranging from flamenco, rock and popular Kuwaiti.

The members of Al Hassan Brothers said that the band will perform a concert in April 20th at Al-Shaheed Park at 7:00 pm. It will be supported by seven musicians: The drum player, the bass player, the rhythms and the electronic guitar, as well as a special guest from Bahrain, guitarist Hamanino. The concert will be free of charge to public.







ALARGAN'S C CLUB LAUNCHES THE FIRST ANNUAL TRA ART EXHIBITION

15 Kuwaiti artists from across generations showcase art pieces

■he C Club, the state-of-the-art social club owned by ALARGAN International Real Estate Company, launched its first annual TRA ART exhibition in a display of artworks combining genres and eclectic pieces by renowned Kuwaiti artists and curated by Fatina Al-Sayed.

Brought forth out of a desire to highlight the growth and evolution of the arts community in Kuwait, TRA ART presents select art pieces in different mediums from across generations of 15 Kuwaiti artists such as May Al-Nouri, Thuraya Al Baksami, Abdul Rida Baqer, Mahmoud Ashkanani, Mohammad Ramadan, Shaimaa Ashkanani, Farah Behbehani, Mohammad Ali Sarkhou, Ibrahim Habib, Fahed Al-Hajeri, AbdulRaheem Al-Attiyah, Maitham Abdal and Najd Al Taher.

Commenting on the launch of the new annual initiative, C Club Managing Director Abdullah Al Askari, said: "TRA ART is brought forthout of a desire to highlight the growth and evolution of the local arts community in Kuwait and to showcase artworks that have captured the heart of the art scene with our members and guests. The exhibition is one of the many initiatives that we aim at C Club to host as part of the social club environment that we are creating for members to enjoy, complementing the wellbeing that we offer through health and fitness. We thank Ms. Fatina Al-Sayed for curating such a beautiful exhibition and look forward to next year's artworks."

The C Club is a state-of-the-art social club located at ARGAN Al-Bida'a and designed to offer all the elements needed for a holistic approach to life. Characterized by its iconic location overlooking the Arabian Gulf, the C Club comprises the latest equipment and amenities in its gym area as well as exclusive services and social areasto help members meet and engage with one another.









KKMA - Indian Doctors Forum organizes FREE MEDICAL SCREENING CAMP 2017

■he Kuwait Kerala Muslim Association (KKMA), the leading social welfare organization of Indians in Kuwait together with Badr Al Sama Medical Center and Indian Doctors Form celebrated the World Health Day on Friday, 7th April 2017 by organizing a large scale Medical Screening and Consultation Camp for Indians in Kuwait. The Camp was also supported by Kuwait Medical Association, Kuwait Herat Foundation, Dasman Diabetic Institute, Association of Indian Ophthalmologists, Indian Dentists Alliance Kuwait (IDAK), and Saudi Kuwait

Pharmaceuticals Company. Sunil Jain, His Excellency the Ambassador

of India to Kuwait inaugurated the Medical Screening Camp. He commended the community services of KKMA such as support patients in the hospitals and for the repatriation of dead bodies to India. N.A. Muneer Chairman of KKMA presided over the meeting.

The camp held in Pakistan Excel English School Abbasiaya on Friday from 7 am to 4 pm. A dedicated team of medical professional led by IDF President Dr. Abhay Patwara, along with more than 30 expert physicians specialized in cardiology, dermatology, diabetic and endocrinology, E.N.T., gastroenterology, general medicine, gynecology, nephrology, Ophthalmology, orthopaedic, pediatric, and

general surgery provided their dedicated services to nearly 1400 patients who attended the Camp.

To mark the occasion, KKMA has published a special health guide containing medical tips and awareness literatures. Abdul Fattah Thayyil, convenor of health provided details on the guide, and Sunil Jain, the Ambassador released the guide by giving a copy to Ashraf Ayoor, Project Manager of Bader Al-Sama Medical Center. In respect of World Health Day celebrations and its main theme 'Depression: Let's Talk", medical awareness messages were delivered by SageerTrikaripur, Dr. Abahy Patward and Dr. Susewana Sujith Nair. During the event, KKMA also introduced a Heart Check Up Card, which can be used at organization's Early Detection Center (EDC) recently opened in the city of Kannur, Kerala State. Dr. Mohammed Syed, Secretary of IDF Comunnity Service Wing released the Medical Discount Card by giving the first one to Abdul Fattah Thayyil.

The Art of Living Kuwait Team conducted multiple sessions of Health and Mind Relaxing Programs. Balaji, Prem Krishnan, Dharmajan, and Pooja Venu Gopal lead the physical exercise activities along with the tips for happy and health.

A special food packet of fresh vegetable

and fruits were given to the participants delivering a health message "Eat Fresh and Live Healthy". Appreciation mementos presented to the supporters of the Medical Camp, IDF, Badr Al Sama Medical Center, Kuwait Heart Foundation, Kuwait Saudi Pharmasuitical Company, Bahrain Exchange Company, Grand Hyper Market, Indian Dentist Alliance in

Kuwait, Indian Opthalmology Association by N.A. Muneer, Ali Matra, Ibrahim Kunnil, Abdul Fattah Thayyil, Hamsa Payyanoor, K.C. Rafeek, Abdul Salam A.P. respectively.

Organizing Committee leaders BM Iqbal, A.P. Abdul Salam, C. Firoz, K.C. Gafoor, V.K. Gafoor, MuneerKuniya, AboobackerMayyeri, HameedMulki, Eng. Hamsakutty, Shamseer

Nasser, Haneefa lead various arrangements required for the Camp. A team of very dedicated disciplined volunteers lead K.C. Kareem, MajeedRawabi, Shereef. P.M., ZamzamRasheed, Ashraf Mankav, SaleemKommery, relentlessly offered their dedicated efforts for the success of the medical camp.







COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING AND PETROLEUM AT KUWAIT UNIVERSITY ORGANIZE OPEN DAY

KUWAIT: The College of Engineering and Petroleum at Kuwait University organized an open day for students enrolled in the second semester of the school year 2016/2017. The Faculty's Dean Dr Abdullatif Al-Khalifi and other teaching staff members and KU officials attended the event.









NANMA HOSTS FAREWELL TO SHERLY SUKU

anma Kuwait gave a farewell to Mrs Sherly Suku as she is leaving Kuwait for good. She was in Kuwait for the past 20 years and has been very active in the Nanma activities. She hails from Trivandrum, Kerala.

The meeting was held in Red Flame Hall Salmiya, presided by Kalanjoor Radhakrishnan (President). Parimanam Manoj (General Secretary) welcomed all. A memento was presented for his valuable service to the Nanma during her tenure.

Abdul Salim (Patron), Parimanam Manoj, Madhu Appukuttan, Amalan K.I., Vimal Kumar, Surendran Nair, Santhosh Srambickal, Abhilash C. G., Mrs. Shylaja Thulasi, Mrs Jyothi Parwathy, Mrs Rosamma Joy, Mrs Kamala, Mrs Valsala Mohanan, Mrs Girija Vijayan, Joy Augustine, Krishnankutty, Balasubramanian, Sinu John, Noushad S, Mrs Shylaja Thulasi, Ushakumari L & Mrs. Beenamol made felicitation speeches during the meeting. Vote of thanks was given by Abhilash C. G (Unit Convener)







BEE'AH REWARDS INCREASE TO 10,000+ PARTICIPANTS IN A SINGLE MONTH

ee'ah, the Middle East's leading and award-winning environmental management company, has announced the winners of Bee'ah Rewards for the month of March. The first-of-itskind CSR programme has been rewarding UAE residents for their recycling efforts since January and is open to the general public.

Every participant in Bee'ah Rewards is eligible to win prizes, when using the Reverse Vending Machines (RVMs) that is placed in various locations in Dubai and Sharjah. With the incredible participation of over 10,100 participants in March, the initiative witnessed an increase of 10 times the number of participants in a single month (with 900 participants in February). At this pace, the environmental management company expects to substantially increase recycling rates by the end of 2017. The programme's popularity in its first two months is a sign that Bee'ah Rewards has already gained the interest of the public, impacting recycling behaviour for years to

Khaled Al Huraimel, Group CEO, Bee'ah commented, "Bee'ah has a long history of CSR initiatives and community engagement is an important part of that. Bee'ah Rewards is an initiative that instills

a culture of recycling in the UAE and beyond. We pride ourselves in proactively promoting community development in exciting ways and producing tangible results. This programme is a statement of intent that Bee'ah will continue to have a positive impact on the environ-

ment as well as the public sphere." The moment that any member of the public recycles using an RVM and scans a unique receipt code using Bee'ah's app, their receipt number automatically enters a prize draw. The monthly winners are announced on Bee'ah's social media accounts on the first day of each month. The lucky recyclers from the month of March, included: Sahin M.D Jalal, who won a trip for two to Paris; Edwardo Mangalus Alcaide, who won an iPhone SE 16GB; Abu Bakr Nasir Butt, who won a Nespresso machine; Leanora Dehonor Ballers and Asanka Daransana Attanayaka, who both won 'At The Top' tickets for the Burj Khalifa.

The rewards system is linked directly to Bee'ah's innovative app, locating the nearest Reverse Vending Machines (RVM). With the launch of Bee'ah Rewards, users that download the app can participate in the initiative and potentially win exciting prizes. Participants simply deposit plastic bottles and

aluminium cans in an RVM to receive a receipt code that must be scanned using Bee'ah's app. Current RVM locations include: American University of Sharjah, Dibba Al-Hisn Municipality in eastern region of Sharjah, Dubai International Airport, Dubai Marina Mall and Al-Majaz (with Al-Qasba and Dubai Design District to follow soon).

Using Bee'ah's app and RVMs to

recycle now will enter participants into April's draw with a chance to win a getaway to the Maldives and many other exciting prizes. As public interest in the programme increases, it is simultaneously developing a culture of recycling. Bee'ah is looking forward to expanding the programme across the UAE and the region.



Edwardo Mangalus Alcaide, who won an iPhone SE 16GB

TV PROGRAMS

06:25 Marvel Ultimate Spider-Man vs

OVIN MOVIES

00:15 REC 2 02:00 Gone In Sixty Seconds 06:00 Run All Night 08:00 Forbidden Empire 10:00 Gone In Sixty Seconds

12:00 The Throwaways

13:45 Run All Night 15:45 Hudson Hawk 17:30 A View To A Kill 19:45 The Living Daylights

22:00 Sanitarium

00:45 Swamp Brothers 01:10 Vet On The Loose 01:40 Swamp Brothers 02:05 Vet On The Loose

02:35 Swamp Brothers 03:00 In Too Deep 03:25 Swamp Brothers 05:27 Vet On The Loose 05:49 Gator Boys

06:36 Gorilla School 07:00 Swamp Brothers 07:25 Lone Star Law 08:15 Treetop Cat Rescue 08:40 Treetop Cat Rescue

09:10 Life At Vet University 10:05 Rugged Justice 11:00 Wildest India 11:55 Bondi Vet 12:50 Pandamonium

13:45 Pandamonium

14:40 Pandamonium 18:20 Predators Up Close With Joel Lambert

19:15 Rugged Justice 20:10 Pit Bulls & Parolees 21:05 Lone Star Law 22:00 Predators Up Close With Joel

Lambert 22:55 Gator Boys 23:50 Gator Boys

BBC **FIRST**

00:55 Eastenders 01:30 Poldark

02:30 Line Of Duty 03:25 Eastenders

04:00 The Musketeers

05:00 The Musketeers

06:00 Doctors

06:30 Eastenders

07:00 Holby City

07:55 Father Brown

08:45 Doctor Who

09:35 Doctor Who

11:00 Eastenders

11:30 Father Brown

12:15 Doctor Who

13:10 Doctor Who

14:45 Eastenders

15:15 Father Brown

16:00 Doctor Who

17:00 Doctor Who

18:30 Eastenders

19:05 Father Brown

20:00 Scott & Bailey

crime

00:00 Escaping Evil: My Life In A Cult

02:00 They Took Our Child, We Got Her

03:00 Leah Remini: Scientology And The

04:00 Escaping Evil: My Life In A Cult

01:00 Britain's Darkest Taboos

05:00 Britain's Darkest Taboos

08:00 Britain's Biggest Heists

06:00 The First 48

07:00 The First 48

09:00 | Killed My BFF

10:00 | Killed My BFF

11:00 Evil Up Close

12:00 Evil Up Close

13:00 Evil Up Close

14:00 It Takes A Killer

14:30 It Takes A Killer

15:00 It Takes A Killer

15:30 It Takes A Killer

16:00 Homicide Hunter

17:00 Homicide Hunter

18:00 Crime Stories

19:00 Crime Stories

20:00 The First 48

21:00 Homicide Hunter

&investigation

21:00 The Level

21:55 The Level

22:50 Class

23:40 Doctors

18:00 Doctors

14:10 Doctors

10:30 Doctors

04:15 Lip Sync Battle 04:40 Ridiculousness 05:05 Disaster Date

05:30 Framework 06:20 Hungry Investors 07:10 Disorderly Conduct: Video On 08:00 Disaster Date

08:50 Ridiculousness Key And Peele 09:40 Disaster Date 10:05 Ridiculousness 10:30 Impractical Jokers UK 10:55 Framework 11:45 Impractical Jokers

08:25 Disaster Date

12:10 Lip Sync Battle 12:35 Impractical Jokers UK 13:00 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patro 13:50 Ridiculousness

14:15 Framework 15:05 The Jim Gaffigan Show 15:30 Disaster Date 15:55 Disaster Date 16:20 Impractical Jokers UK

16:45 Lip Sync Battle 17:10 Key And Peele 17:35 Catch A Contractor 18:00 Catch A Contractor 18:25 Ridiculousness 18:50 Disaster Date

19:15 Lip Sync Battle 19:40 Lip Sync Battle Key And Peele 20:30 Comedy Central Presents Comedy 3alwagef 21:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah

21:30 Ridiculousness Arabia The Half Hour 22:25 John Oliver's New York Stand Up

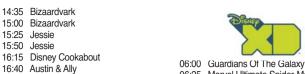
23:15 The Alternative Comedy 23:40 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah

Discovery

00:05 Kids Do The Craziest Things 00:30 What Could Possibly Go Wrong? 01:20 What Could Possibly Go Wrong? 02:10 Dirty Jobs

03:00 Dirty Jobs 03:50 Ultimate Survival 04:40 Ultimate Survival 05:30 Ultimate Survival 06:20 How It's Made

06:40 How It's Made 07:00 Doki 07:25 Doki



17:05 Eco Club

17:10 Elena Of Avalor

17:35 Liv And Maddie

18:00 Disney The Lodge

18:25 The Little Mermaid

20:05 Stuck In The Middle

20:30 Bizaardvark

20:55 Bunk'd

19:55 Welcome To The Ronks

21:20 Best Friends Whenever

23:25 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage

23:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage

DISNED &

00:00 Henry Hugglemonster

01:20 Henry Hugglemonster

02:55 Henry Hugglemonster

04:30 Henry Hugglemonster

05:30 Henry Hugglemonster

06:45 Henry Hugglemonster

08:15 Miles From Tomorrow

07:00 My Friends Tigger & Pooh 07:25 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse

10:30 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse10:55 Sofia The First

12:55 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse 13:20 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse

13:50 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse

14:15 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse

14:40 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse

15:05 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse15:40 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse

16:05 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse

16:30 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse

17:00 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse

17:30 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse

20:35 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse

21:00 Sheriff Callie's Wild West

21:30 Miles From Tomorrow

22:00 Miles From Tomorrow

22:25 Miles From Tomorrow

23:20 Henry Hugglemonster

Discoverv

19:00 Jake And The Never Land Pirates

19:25 Jake And The Never Land Pirates

17:55 A Goofy Fairy Tale

18:45 P.I Masks

19:50 PJ Masks

22:55 PJ Masks

23:35 The Hive

23:45 Loopdidoo

20:05 Goldie & Bear

11:25 Goldie & Bear

11:50 Goldie & Bear

12:00 The Wizard Of Dizz

13:45 Minnie's Bow-Toons

08:40 Jake And The Never Land Pirates

00:15 Calimero

00:30 Art Attack

01:05 Loopdidoo

01:35 Calimero

02:05 Art Attack

02:30 The Hive

02:40 Loopdidoo

03:10 Art Attack

03:35 Loopdidoo

03:50 Calimero

04:05 Art Attack

05:00 Art Attack

05:45 Loopdidoo

06:15 Calimero

06:30 Loopdidoo

07:50 Goldie & Bear

09:10 Sofia The First

09:35 Doc McStuffins

10:00 The Lion Guard

04:45 Zou

06:00 Zou

00:55 Zou

01:50 Zou

21:45 Disney The Lodge

22:10 Girl Meets World

22:35 That's So Raven

23:00 Good Luck Charlie

The Sinister 6 06:50 Atomic Puppet 07:15 Gravity Falls 07:40 Supa Strikas 08:05 Two More Eggs 08:10 K.C. Undercover

08:35 Milo Murphy's Law 09:00 Walk The Prank 09:25 Right Now Kapow 09:50 Lab Rats

10:15 Two More Eggs 10:20 Star vs The Forces Of Evil 10:45 Mighty Med 11:10 K.C. Undercover 11:35 Lab Rats: Bionic Island 12:00 Tarzan 2

13:20 Star vs The Forces Of Evil 13:45 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything 14:10 Disney Mickey Mouse 14:15 Milo Murphy's Law

14:40 K.C. Undercover 15:05 Walk The Prank 15:30 Atomic Puppet 15:55 Lab Rats 16:25 Right Now Kapow

16:50 K.C. Undercover 17:15 Future-Worm! 17:40 Star Wars Freemaker Adventures 18:05 Disney Mickey Mouse 18:10 Star Wars Rebels

18:35 Tarzan 2 19:55 Star vs The Forces Of Evil 20:20 Kickin' It 20:45 Mighty Med 21:10 Star Wars Rebels 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



00:00 WAGs Miami 00:55 WAGs Miami

01:50 E! News 02:50 Celebrity Style Story 03:20 Celebrity Style Story 03:50 Just Jillian

04:40 Just Jillian 05:30 Celebrity Style Story 06:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler 06:50 E! News

07:20 EJ NYC 08:10 E! News

09:05 Keeping Up With The Kardashians 09:55 Keeping Up With The Kardashians 10:45 Keeping Up With The Kardashians

11:35 So Cosmo 12:25 So Cosmo 13:20 So Cosmo 14:15 Botched

15:10 Botched 16:05 Keeping Up With The Kardashians 17:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians18:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians 19:00 E! News

20:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians 21:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians 22:00 Rob & Chyna 23:00 Keeping Úp With The Kardashians



00:00 Man Fire Food 00:30 Man Fire Food

01:00 Restaurant: Impossible 02:00 Mystery Diners 02:30 Mystery Diners 03:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives

03:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives 04:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives 04:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives 05:00 Guy's Grocery Games 06:00 Roadtrip With G. Garvin

06:30 Roadtrip With G. Garvin 07:00 Chopped 08:00 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics

08:30 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics 09:00 The Pioneer Woman 09:30 The Pioneer Woman 10:00 Siba's Table

10:30 Siba's Table 11:00 Anna Olson: Bake 11:30 Anna Olson: Bake 12:00 Man Fire Food

12:30 Man Fire Food 13:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives 13:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives 14:00 Chopped

15:00 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics 15:30 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics 16:00 The Pioneer Woman

16:30 The Pioneer Woman 17:00 Siba's Table 17:30 Siba's Table

18:00 Anna Olson: Bake 18:30 Anna Olson: Bake 19:00 Man Fire Food

19:30 Man Fire Food 20:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives 20:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives 21:00 Tia Mowry At Home 21:30 Tia Mowry At Home

CHOICE

22:00 Dinner At Tiffani's

22:30 Dinner At Tiffani's

23:00 Chopped

00:15 Coronation Street 00:35 Coronation Street 01:00 Paul O'Grady's Animal Orphans 02:00 Coronation Street 02:25 Coronation Street 02:45 Coronation Street

03:10 Coronation Street 03:30 Coronation Street 03:55 The Chase 04:45 Come Date With Me Australia 05:35 Come Date With Me Australia

06:00 Come Date With Me Australia 06:25 Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway 07:35 Surprise Surprise

08:35 Guess This House 09:30 Murdoch Mysteries 10:25 Vera 11:55 Broadchurch 12:50 Broadchurch

13:45 Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway 15:00 It's Not Rocket Science 15:55 Paul O'Grady's Animal Orphans

16:50 Surprise Surprise 17:50 Brief Encounters 18:45 Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway 20:00 Vera

21:30 Murdoch Mysteries 22:20 Paul O'Grady's Animal Orphans 23:15 Brief Encounters



00:00 The Universe 01:00 The Universe 02:00 The Universe

02:50 The Universe 03:40 The Universe 04:30 The Universe 05:20 The Universe 06:10 The Universe

07:00 The Universe 08:00 The Universe 09:00 The Universe 10:00 The Universe

11:00 The Universe 12:00 The Universe 13:00 The Universe 14:00 The Universe 15:00 The Universe

16:00 The Universe 17:00 The Universe 18:00 Bible Secrets Revealed 19:00 Ancient Top 10

20:00 Million Dollar Genius 21:00 Ancient Aliens 22:00 Engineering Disasters

23:00 Smartest Guy In The Room 23:30 Smartest Guy In The Room



00:20 Ice Road Truckers 01:10 Hunting Hitler 02:00 Counting Cars 02:25 Car Hunters 02:50 Ultimate Wheels Fifth Gear 04:30 Storage Wars Texas 05:00 Hoard Hunters 06:00 Leepu And Pitbull

06:50 Ice Road Truckers 07:40 Counting Cars 08:30 Pawn Stars 08:55 Pawn Stars 09:20 Storage Wars 09:45 Storage Wars 10:10 American Pickers

11:00 The Curse Of Oak Island 11:50 Battle 360 12:40 Swamp People 13:30 Ax Men

14:20 Mountain Men 15:10 Ice Road Truckers 16:00 Leepu And Pitbull 16:50 Pawn Stars 17:15 Pawn Stars 17:40 Gold Hunters: Legend Of The

Superstition.. 18:30 Search For The Lost Giants 19:20 Mountain Men 20:10 American Pickers

21:00 Pawn Stars 21:25 Pawn Stars Best Of 21:50 Storage Wars: Barry's Best Buys 22:40 Counting Cars 23:05 Car Hunters

23:30 American Pickers



21:45 My Dubai

22:10 Cruise Ship Diaries

23:00 Bondi Rescue Outback Adventure

23:50 Lyndey Milan - Taste Of Australia

NATIONAL

GEOGRAPHIC

06:00 Lawless Island 07:00 Uncensored With Michael Ware 08:00 Scam City 09:00 Locked Up Abroad

10:00 Origins: The Journey Of Humankind 11:00 Parched

12:00 Filthy Riches 13:00 Dog Whisperer 14:00 Dog Whisperer 15:00 Monster Fish

16:00 Wicked Tuna 17:00 Titanic: Case Closed 19:00 Monster Fish 20:00 Wicked Tuna 20:50 Titanic: Case Closed

22:30 Monster Fish 23:20 Forbidden Tomb Of Genghis Khan

NAT GEO 00:20 World's Deadliest Killers

01:10 Killer Dragons 02:00 Jobs That Bite! 02:50 Africa's Creative Killers 03:45 Animals Gone Wild 04:40 Wild Indochina

05:35 Africa's Hunters 06:30 Monster Fish 07:25 Monster Fish 08:20 World's Deadliest Animals

09:15 Survive The Wild10:10 Animals Gone Wild Compilations 11:05 Wild Case Files 12:00 Dangerous Encounters 12:55 Jobs That Bite!

13:50 Africa's Creative Killers 14:45 Animals Gone Wild 15:40 The Desert Sea 16:35 Wild Indochina 17:30 Dr Oakley: Yukon Vet

18:25 Hunter Hunted 19:20 Animals Gone Wild 20:10 The Desert Sea 21:00 Wild Indochina 21:50 Dr Oakley: Yukon Vet

23:30 Dangerous Encounters

22:40 Hunter Hunted

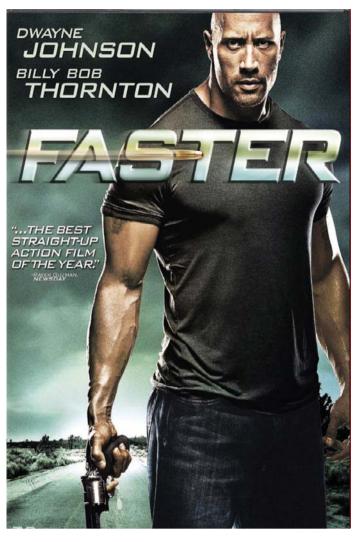
ON MOVIES HID

FAMILY

03:00 White Fang 2: Myth Of The White

05:00 Wall-E

07:00 Tinker Bell And The Lost Treasure 09:00 Alice In Wonderland 11:00 Wall-E



FASTER ON OSN MOVIES HD 13:00 IVIEET LINE HODINSONS

15:00 Atlantis: The Lost Empire

17:00 Atlantis: Milo's Return

19:00 Max Keeble's Big Move

21:00 I'll Be Home For Christmas

OM MOVIES

FESTIVAL

ON MOVIES HID

00:45 The Wild Thornberrys Movie

02:30 The Adventures Of Rocky And

00:15 Cocaine Cowboys: Reloaded

03:00 The Theory Of Everything

10:00 Neil Young: Heart Of Gold

11:45 The Theory Of Everything

14:00 Pele: Birth Of A Legend

05:15 The Express

07:30 Ironweed

16:00 Rosewater

17:45 Quiz Show

20:00 Lucky Them

22:00 A Late Quartet

23:00 Atlantis: The Lost Empire

people ED

00:40 Chasing The Sun 01:05 Mega Food 01:55 Lyndey Milan - Taste Of Australia 02:20 Hotel India

03:10 Charlie Luxton's Homes By The Med 04:00 Restoration Man 04:50 Raw Travel 05:20 Raw Travel

05:45 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia 06:15 Confucius Was A Foodie 07:10 The Game Chef 07:35 The Game Che 08:05 Carnival Eats 08:30 Carnival Eats 09:00 Route Awakening 09:25 My Dubai

09:55 Lucky Chow 10:20 Chasing The Sun 10:50 Chasing The Sun 11:15 World's Best Beaches 12:10 Croatia's Finest

12:40 Bondi Rescue Outback Adventure 13:35 Lyndey Milan - Taste Of Australia 14:00 Hotel India 14:55 Charlie Luxton's Homes By The

Bullwinkle 04:15 Rugrats In Paris: The Movie 06:00 Pet Pals In Windland 15:50 Restoration Man 07:30 Cher Ami 16:45 Raw Travel 09:15 The Nutcracker Sweet 17:15 Route Awakening 10:45 The Wild Thornberrys Movie 17:40 My Dubai

12:30 The Adventures Of Rocky And 18:10 Cruise Ship Diaries 19:05 Charlie Luxton's Homes By The 14:15 The Heart Of The Oak 20:00 Restoration Man 20:55 Raw Travel 21:20 Route Awake

16:00 The Nutcracker Sweet 20:00 Big Baby

18:00 Daddy I'm A Zombie 23:15 Cher Ami

21:45 The Heart Of The Oak

MOVIES

00:00 Goldfinger 02:00 Jurassic World 04:15 Beaches 06:15 Barely Lethal

08:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles 09:45 Paddington 11:30 Jurassic World

14:00 October Sky 16:00 Everest

18:15 D-Tox 20:00 Faster 22:00 Wild Horses





01:20 The Big Brain Theory 02:10 Prototype This 03:00 Prototype This 03:48 How Do They Do It? 04:12 How Do They Do It? 04:36 How Do They Do It?

05:00 Food Factory 07:00 How Do They Do It? 07:26 The Big Brain Theory 08:14 The Big Brain Theory

09:02 The Big Brain Theory 09:50 Prototype This 10:38 Prototype This 11:26 Mythbusters 12:14 Mythbusters

17:26 How Do They Do It? 19:30 Sci-Fi Science 22:00 Ways To Save The Planet 22:50 Ways To Save The Planet 23:40 Ways To Save The Planet





01:10 An Hour To Save Your Life 02:00 Toddlers & Tiaras: Coach Wars 03:35 Sister Wives 04:20 Toddlers & Tiaras

05:10 Toddlers & Tiaras 06:00 Super Soul Sunday 06:50 Toddlers & Tiaras: Coach Wars 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 11:50 Super Soul Sunday

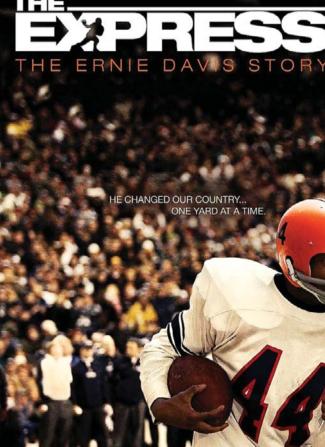
12:40 Iyanla: Fix My Life 13:30 Randy To The Rescue 14:20 Outdaughtered: Busby Quints 15:10 Toddlers & Tiaras 16:00 Little People, Big World

16:25 Little People, Big World 16:50 Little People, Big World 17:40 Love At First Swipe 18:05 Cake Boss 18:30 Save My Style

19:20 My Big Fat Fabulous Life

19:45 Say Yes To The Dress:

18:55 Save My Style



THE EXPRESS ON OSN MOVIES FESTIVAL

COMEDY CENTRAL 23:00 Evil Up Close

00:05 John Öliver's New York Stand Up 00:55 Kroll Show

01:20 The Alternative Comedy

22:00 Crimes That Shook Australia

Experience 01:45 Inside Amy Schumer 02:10 Chappelle's Show

03:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah 03:25 Disorderly Conduct: Video On

GOONE IN 60 SECONDS ON OSN MOVIES ACTION 07:50 Bear Grylls Survival School 08:15 Bear Grylls Survival School 08:40 How It's Made 09:05 How It's Made

ULUUINE

09:30 How It's Made 09:55 How It's Made 10:20 How It's Made 10:45 How It's Made 11:10 How It's Made 11:35 How It's Made 12:00 How It's Made 12:25 How It's Made 12:50 Ultimate Survival

13:40 Ultimate Survival 14:30 Ultimate Survival 15:20 Ultimate Survival 16:10 Ultimate Survival 17:00 What Could Possibly Go Wrong? 17:50 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?

18:40 Deception With Keith Barry 19:30 Zoltan The Wolfman 20:20 Raging Nature 21:10 Bionic Builders

22:00 Destroyed In Seconds 22:25 Destroyed In Seconds

22:50 Destroyed In Seconds 23:15 Destroyed In Seconds 23:40 Destroyed In Seconds

00:10 Hank Zipzer

00:35 Binny And The Ghost 01:00 Binny And The Ghost 01:25 Hank Zipzer 01:45 The Hive 01:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage

02:40 Hank Zipzer 03:05 Binny And The Ghost 03:30 Binny And The Ghost 03:55 Hank Zipzei 04:15 The Hive

04:20 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch 04:45 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch 05:10 Hank Zipzer 05:35 Binny And The Ghost 06:00 Binny And The Ghost 06:25 Hank Zipzer

06:45 The Hive 06:50 The 7D Jessie 07:25 Jessie 07:50 Tsum Tsum Shorts The Zhuzhus

08:20 Elena Of Avalor 08:45 Bizaardvark 09:10 Bizaardvark 09:35 Stuck In The Middle 10:00 Stuck In The Middle 10:25 Disney The Lodge

10:50 Bunk'd 11:15 Bunk'd 11:40 The Incredibles 13:40 Disney Mickey Mouse 13:45 Bizaardvark 14:10 Bizaardvark

CHANNEL 00:20 Wheels That Fail 00:45 Alaskan Bush People 01:35 Alaskan Bush People 02:25 Alaskan Bush People 02:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage 03:15 Alaskan Bush People

04:05 Alaskan Bush People 05:00 Alaskan Bush People 06:00 Outback Truckers 06:50 Street Outlaws 07:40 Fast N' Loud 08:30 The Island With Bear Grylls 09:20 Storage Hunters 09:45 How Do They Do It?

> 12:15 The Wheel: Survival Games 13:05 How Do They Do It? 13:30 Storage Hunters 13:55 Storage Hunters 14:20 Gold Rush 15:10 The Island With Bear Grylls 16:00 Outback Truckers

11:25 Treasure Quest: Snake Island

10:10 How Do They Do It?

10:35 What On Earth?

16:50 Fast N' Loud 17:40 Street Outlaws 18:30 How Do They Do It? 18:55 How Do They Do It? 19:20 The Island With Bear Grylls 20:10 Storage Hunters 20:35 Storage Hunters 21:00 Supertruckers

21:50 Toucan Nation

23:30 Fast N' Loud





CLASSIFIEDS

SUNDAY, APRIL 16, 2017





KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (13/04/2017 TO 19/04/2017)

Einstell Ebers	- W - W - V		13/04/201/	7 10 19/04/2017)	
SHARQIA-1		GOING IN STYLE	2:30 PM	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE -3D-4DX	1:45 PM
FEIN QALBY	12:00 PM	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	4:30 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8-2D-4DX	3:45 PM
FEIN QALBY	2:15 PM	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	6:30 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8-2D-4DX	6:30 PM
RABBIT SCHOOL	4:30 PM	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	8:30 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8-2D-4DX	9:15 PM
SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	6:15 PM	GOING IN STYLE	10:30 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8-2D-4DX	12:05 AM
FEIN QALBY	8:15 PM	GOING IN STYLE	12:30 AM		
GOING IN STYLE	10:30 PM			AVENUES-3	
FEIN QALBY	12:30 AM	FANAR-3		FAST & FURIOUS 8	11:45 AM
		KONG: SKULL ISLAND	1:00 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	2:30 PM
SHARQIA-2		RABBIT SCHOOL	1:30 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	5:45 PM
SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	11:45 AM	RABBIT SCHOOL	3:30 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	8:30 PM
FAST & FURIOUS 8	1:45 PM	RABBIT SCHOOL	5:15 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	11:15 PM
FAST & FURIOUS 8	4:30 PM	Kong: Skull Island	7:00 PM		
FAST & FURIOUS 8	7:15 PM	THE BELKO EXPERIMENT	9:30 PM	AVENUES-4	
FAST & FURIOUS 8	10:00 PM	THE BELKO EXPERIMENT	11:15 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	12:00 PM
FAST & FURIOUS 8	12:45 AM	THE BELKO EXPERIMENT	1:00 AM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	2:45 PM
				FAST & FURIOUS 8	5:30 PM
SHARQIA-3		FANAR-4	44.45.444	Special Show "SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE"	5:30 PM
FAST & FURIOUS 8	12:45 PM	SMURFS:THE LOST VILLAGE	11:45 AM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	8:15 PM
GOING IN STYLE	1:30 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	1:45 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	11:00 PM
FAST & FURIOUS 8	3:30 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	4:30 PM	240.4	
FAST & FURIOUS 8	6:15 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	7:15 PM	360° 1	11 20 444
FAST & FURIOUS 8	9:00 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	10:00 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	11:30 AM
FAST & FURIOUS 8	11:45 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	12:45 AM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	2:15 PM
		AAADINIA 1		FAST & FURIOUS 8	5:00 PM
MUHALAB-1		MARINA-1	12.15 DM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	7:45 PM
FEIN QALBY	11:45 AM	FEIN QALBY RABBIT SCHOOL	12:15 PM 2:30 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8 GET OUT	10:30 PM
FEIN QALBY	2:00 PM	RABBIT SCHOOL		GETOOT	1:15 AM
RABBIT SCHOOL	2:15 PM	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	4:15 PM 6:00 PM	360°- 2	
RABBIT SCHOOL	4:15 PM	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	8:00 PM	AFTERMATH	1:30 PM
SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE- Arabic	6:00 PM 8:00 PM	FEIN QALBY	10:00 PM	THE GREAT FATHER- Malayalam	3:45 PM
SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE FEIN QALBY	10:00 PM	FEIN QALBY	12:15 AM	THE GREAT FATHER Malayalam	6:45 PM
FEIN QALBY	12:15 AM	I LIIV QALDI	12.13 AW	THE GREAT FATHER Malayalam	9:45 PM
FEIN QALBI	12.13 AW	MARINA-2		THU+FRI+MON	J.131 W
MUHALAB-2		FAST & FURIOUS 8	1:00 PM	KONG: SKULL ISLAND	9:45 PM
FAST & FURIOUS 8	12:15 PM	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	1:45 PM	NOTHU+FRI+MON	
FAST & FURIOUS 8	3:00 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	3:45 PM	AFTERMATH	12:45 AM
FAST & FURIOUS 8	5:45 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	6:30 PM		
FAST & FURIOUS 8	8:30 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	9:15 PM	360°-3	
FAST & FURIOUS 8	11:15 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	12:05 AM	GOING IN STYLE	12:15 PM
				GOING IN STYLE	2:30 PM
MUHALAB-3		MARINA-3		GOING IN STYLE	4:45 PM
FAST & FURIOUS 8	11:30 AM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	12:00 PM	GOING IN STYLE	7:00 PM
SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	2:00 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	2:45 PM	AKHER DEEK FE MASR - Arabic	9:15 PM
FAST & FURIOUS 8	4:00 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	5:30 PM	GOING IN STYLE	11:30 PM
FAST & FURIOUS 8	6:45 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	8:15 PM		
FAST & FURIOUS 8	9:30 PM	Special Show "FAST & FURIOUS 8"	8:15 PM	AL-KOUT.1	
FAST & FURIOUS 8	12:15 AM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	11:00 PM	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	11:30 AM
				FAST & FURIOUS 8	1:30 PM
FANAR-1		AVENUES-1		FAST & FURIOUS 8	4:15 PM
FEIN QALBY	12:00 PM	RABBIT SCHOOL	12:00 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	7:00 PM
FEIN QALBY	2:30 PM	RABBIT SCHOOL	2:00 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	9:45 PM
FEIN QALBY	4:45 PM	RABBIT SCHOOL	3:45 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	12:30 AM
FEIN QALBY	7:00 PM	RABBIT SCHOOL	5:30 PM		
FEIN QALBY	9:15 PM	SAFRA 5 NJOOM	7:30 PM	AL-KOUT.2	44
FEIN QALBY	11:30 PM	SAFRA 5 NJOOM	9:45 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	11:45 AM
		SAFRA 5 NJOOM	12:15 AM	RABBIT SCHOOL	2:30 PM
FANAR-2		AVENUES 3		RABBIT SCHOOL	4:15 PM
GOING IN STYLE	12:30 PM	AVENUES-2	1.00 044	FAST & FURIOUS 8	6:00 PM
SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	2:30 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8-2D-4DX	1:00 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	8:45 PM



Alia International Hospital is hiring the following professional.

FEMALE MEDICAL REPRESENTATIVE

- for a big medical supplies co.

- Education: Pharmacy or science certificate.
 - Minimum 3 years of experience in selling medical instruments
 - Valid driving license and a car.
 - Language Arabic + English
 - Salary + commission

Only applicants with transferable residence shall be considered.

Email ID: hr.alia.medical@gmail.com

CHANGE OF NAME

The public is hereby notified that ANNALEE VILLARE-AL 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)

I, Khalilulla Nabujan Sayyed s/o Nawabjan Shaikh, holder of Indian Passport No. L3465768 and Civil ID No. 276070402459 has changed my name to Khalilullah Nawabjan Shaikh, hereinafter in all my dealings and documents. (C 5294)

13-4-2017

SITUATION WANTED

Looking for job as procurement/business development/commercial executive. Experienced in industrial and construction equipment as well as electrical and hand tools. Can join immediately. Contact: 55276407, email: msyusuf110@yahoo.com (C 5296) 15-4-2017

FOR RENT

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EMERGENCY
112

Automated enquiry about the Civil ID card is 1889988

PRAYER TIMINGS

Fajr: 04:59 Asr: 15:22 Shorook: 05:21 Maghrib: 18:15 Duhr: 11:48 Isha: 19:35



Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page (www.kuwait-airport.com.kw)

DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

	Arrival Fli	ghts on Sunday 16/4/2017		UAE	871	Dubai	12:45		Departure F	Flights on Sunday 16/4/2017	7	JZR	124	Bahrain	13:30
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	THY	766	Istanbul	12:50	Airlines	Ėlt	Route	Time	THY	767	Istanbul	13:45
JZR	125	Bahrain	00:10	MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	AIC	988	Hyderabad/Chennai	00:05	MSR	611	Cairo	14:00
THY	772	Istanbul	00:10	AXB	393	Kozhikode	13:10	JAI	573	Mumbai	00:30	AXB	394	Kozhikode	14:10
KAC	786	Jeddah	00:10	KAC	662	Abu Dhabi	13:35	MSC	406	Sohag	00:30				
												UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
JZR	267	Beirut	00:35	KAC	672	Dubai	13:55	FDB	072	Dubai	00:30	GFA	222	Bahrain	15:00
KAC	504	Beirut	00:45	QTR	1078	Doha	14:05	THY	773	Istanbul	01:40	KAC	673	Dubai	15:00
KAC	102	London	00:55	GFA	221	Bahrain	14:15	DLH	635	Frankfurt	02:00	FDB	060	Dubai	15:05
DLH	635	Doha	01:00	KAC	618	Doha	14:20	PGT	859	Istanbul	02:35	QTR	1079	Doha	15:15
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:15	FDB	059	Dubai	14:20	THY	765	Istanbul	02:50	KAC	563	Amman	15:40
JZR	539	Cairo	01:25	SVA	500	Jeddah	14:45	ETH	621	Addis Ababa	02:50	KAC	775	Riyadh	15:40
UAE	853	Dubai	01:40	KAC	692	Muscat	14:55	KKK	6505	Istanbul	02:55	SVA	501	Jeddah	15:45
RJA	642	Amman	01:45	KAC	788	Jeddah	14:55	UAE	854	Dubai	03:30				
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	01:50	KNE	529	Jeddah	14:55	KLM	446	Amsterdam	03:30	KNE	530	Jeddah	15:55
KKK	6506	Istanbul	01:55	ETD	303	Abu Dhabi	15:05	OMA	644	Muscat	04:05	KAC	619	Doha	16:00
KLM	446	Bahrain	02:05	OMA	645	Muscat	15:10	QTR	1087	Doha	04:10	OMA	646	Muscat	16:10
QTR	1086	Doha	02:05	KAC	502	Beirut	15:25	ETD	306	Abu Dhabi		ABY	128	Sharjah	16:15
											04:10	ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20
JZR	553	Alexandria	02:10	KAC	412	Bangkok	15:30	MSR	613	Cairo	04:15	KAC	615	Bahrain	16:30
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:15	ABY	127	Sharjah	15:35	KAC	417	Manila	04:20	FDK	802	Damascus	16:55
KAC	418	Manila	02:50	KAC	118	New York	15:40	PGT	861	Istanbul	04:25	RJA	641	Amman	16:55
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	UAE	857	Dubai	15:45	JZR	560	Sohag	04:45				
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:10	RJA	640	Amman	16:00	LMU	511	Cairo	05:00	KAC	675	Dubai	17:00
KAC	382	Delhi	03:15	FDK	801	Damascus	16:00	KAC	103	London	05:00	FDB	052	Dubai	17:10
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	QTR	1072	Doha	16:15	CEB	019	Manila	05:30	JZR	266	Beirut	17:15
FDB	069	Dubai	03:15	FDB	051	Dubai	16:15	QTR	1077	Doha	05:35	QTR	1073	Doha	17:25
PGT	860	Istanbul	03:25	JZR	125	Bahrain	16:25	UAE	874	Dubai	06:15	JZR	240	Amman	17:30
QTR	1076	Doha	03:40	JZR	787	Riyadh	16:35	RJA	643	Amman	06:25	KAC	361	Colombo	17:35
KAC	1544	Cairo	03:50	KAC	542	Cairo	17:05	THY	771	Istanbul	06:25	UAE	858	Dubai	17:40
CEB	018	Manila	04:00	SVA	510	Riyadh	17:15	GFA	212	Bahrain	06:50	KAC	357	Kochi	17:40
LMU	510	Cairo	04:00	GFA	215	Bahrain	17:30	QTR	8512	Doha	06:50	KAC	381	Delhi	17:50
						Jeddah		FDB				KAC	343	Chennai	18:00
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	04:15	JZR	777		17:35		070	Dubai	07:05				
UAE	873	Dubai	04:15	CLX	612	Luxembourg	17:45	JZR	164	Dubai	07:15	KAC	283	Dhaka	18:00
KAC	332	Trivandrum	04:45	JZR	177	Dubai	17:45	KAC	521	Al Najaf	07:35	SVA	511	Riyadh	18:15
KAC	358	Kochi	04:50	QTR	1080	Doha	18:05	KAC	171	Frankfurt	07:50	GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
KAC	784	Jeddah	05:00	MSR	620	Cairo	18:30	KAC	501	Beirut	07:50	JZR	184	Dubai	18:20
THY	770	Istanbul	05:05	UAE	875	Dubai	19:05	BAW	156	London	08:20	JZR	538	Cairo	18:35
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:10	GFA	217	Bahrain	19:05	FDB	054	Dubai	08:30	KAC	785	Jeddah	18:45
QTR	8511	Doha	05:20	FDB	063	Dubai	19:10	KAC	741	Dammam	08:30	QTR	1081	Doha	19:15
KAC	344	Chennai	05:30	KAC	776	Riyadh	19:10	KAC	773	Riyadh	08:35	KAC	345	Ahmedabad	19:20
KAC	362	Colombo	05:50	ABY	123	Sharjah	19:20	KAC	117	SNN/New York	09:00	MSR	621	Cairo	19:30
BAW	157	London	06:05	KAC	154	Istanbul	19:30	KAC	661	Abu Dhabi	09:00	CLX	612	Luxembourg	19:45
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:35	KAC	616	Bahrain	19:40	KAC	671	Dubai	09:15				
KAC	206	Islamabad	06:40	KAC	674	Dubai	19:40	KAC	787	Jeddah	09:15	GFA	218	Bahrain	19:50
KAC	302	Mumbai	06:55	FDB	057	Dubai	19:50	KAC	163	Rome	09:20	FDB	064	Dubai	19:50
KAC	156	Istanbul	07:05	KAC	620	Doha	19:50	KAC	691	Muscat	09:30	ABY	124	Sharjah	20:00
KAC	354	Bangalore	07:50	KAC	104	London	20:00	ABY	126	Sharjah	09:40	FDB	058	Dubai	20:30
				OMA	647	Muscat	20:05					UAE	876	Dubai	20:35
FDB KAC	053 384	Dubai Delhi	07:50 08:00	MEA	402	Beirut	20:15	KAC UAE	101 856	London Dubai	09:45 09:50	KAC	331	Trivandrum	20:35
				DLH	634	Frankfurt	20:15					KAC	353	Bangalore	20:55
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	QTR	1088	Doha	20:35	ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	10:00	DLH	634	Doha	21:00
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	08:55	KAC	164	Rome	20:55	KAC	541	Cairo	10:00	OMA	648	Muscat	21:05
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	KAC	564	Amman	21:00	IRC	529	Ahwaz	10:10	MEA	403	Beirut	21:15
IRC	528	Ahwaz	09:10	KAC	172	Frankfurt	21:05	KAC	617	Doha	10:15				
QTR	1070	Doha	09:20	ETD	307	Abu Dhabi	21:10	IRA	664	Shiraz	10:25	KAC	301	Mumbai	21:40
IRA	665	Shiraz	09:25	ALK	229	Colombo	21:15	KAC	153	Istanbul	10:30	KAC	203	Lahore	21:45
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	UAE	859	Dubai	21:15	QTR	1071	Doha	10:35	QTR	1089	Doha	21:45
SVA	512	Riyadh	10:00	KAC	676	Dubai		FDB	056	Dubai	10:35	DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50
MSC	415	Sohag	10:15	GFA	219	Bahrain	21:35	SVA	513	Riyadh	11:00	KAC	205	Islamabad	21:55
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40		1082		21:50 22:00	MSC	416	Sohag	11:15	ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	22:00
MEA	404	Beirut	10:55	QTR		Doha Abu Dhabi		GFA	214	Bahrain	11:35	KAC	155	Istanbul	22:15
PAL	668	Manila	11:00	ETD	309	Abu Dhabi	22:10	MEA	405	Beirut	11:55	ALK	230	Colombo	22:20
SYR	341	Damascus	11:00	AIC	981	Chennai/Ahmedabad	22:25	VIZ	203	Baghdad	12:00	KAC	383	Delhi	22:35
JZR	561	Sohag	11:10	BBC	043	Dhaka	22:30	SYR	342	Damascus	12:00	UAE	860	Dubai	22:35
KAC	522	Al Najaf	11:20	JZR	241	Amman	22:55	JZR	776	Jeddah	12:00	GFA	220	Bahrain	22:50
KAC	742	Dammam	11:45	JZR	185	Dubai	22:55	PAL	669	Manila	13:10	ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:00
JZR	165	Dubai	11:45	JAI	574	Mumbai	23:00	JZR		Riyadh	13:10				
SAW				THY	764	Istanbul	23:05		786 176	•		JZR	528	Asyut	23:05
	701	Damascus	12:30	FDB	071	Dubai	23:35	JZR	176	Dubai	13:10	KAC	783	Jeddah	23:10
KAC	774	Riyadh	12:45	PIA	205	Lahore	23:40	SAW	702	Damascus	13:30	QTR	1083	Doha	23:20

CROSSWORD 1580

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			25	T		26			27	T		28	T		
29	30	31	1	\top	32		\top			33	34	1		35	36
37	\top	\top		38	T			39	40	1	41	\top	42	1	†
43	\top	T	44	1	45	46	47	1	48	49		\top	\top	T	t
50	\top	\top	\top		51	\top	\top	52	1	\top	T		53	\top	†
54	\top	T	\top			55	T		T	T		56	1	\top	†
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ACROSS

- 1. An inactive volcano in Sicily.
- 5. A German machine gun. 12. A white linen liturgical vestment with
- sleeves.
- 15. A boy or man. 16. A man whose wife is dead especially one
- who has not remarried.
- 17. Term of address for a man. 18. The work of caring for or attending to
- someone or something. 19. (Norse mythology) A dwarf who possessed a treasure that was stolen by Loki.
- 20. Seed of a pea plant.
- 21. The vein in the center of a leaf. 23. Causing great physical or mental suffering.
- 25. (Akkadian) God of wisdom
- 27. A linear unit of length equal to 12 inches or a third of a yard.
- 28. An international organization of European countries formed after World War II to reduce trade barriers and increase cooperation among its members.
- 29. A sheet or band of tough fibrous tissue connecting bones or cartilages or supporting muscles or organs.
- 33. A gradual decline (in size or strength or power or number).
- 37. A self-funded retirement plan that allows you to contribute a limited yearly sum toward your retirement.
- 38. Minor or subordinate. 39. 1/10 gram.
- 41. American professional baseball player who hit more home runs than Babe Ruth (born in 1934).
- 43. A large piece of something without definite shape.
- 45. A period marked by distinctive character or reckoned from a fixed point or event.
- 48. A city and port in northern Jutland. 50. On or toward the lee.
- 51. (Canada) A sled pulled by dogs.
- 53. A person active in party politics.
- 54. Open-heart surgery in which the rib cage is opened and a section of a blood vessel is grafted from the aorta to the coronary artery to bypass the blocked section of the coronary artery and improve the blood supply to the heart.
- 55. A Portuguese province on the south coast of China and two islands in the South China Sea.

57. A state in the southeastern United States

- on the Gulf of Mexico. 59. (comparative of `near') Being the one of
- two that is less distant in space. 60. A desert in southern Israel.
- 62. A defensive missile designed to shoot down incoming intercontinental ballistic
- missiles. 64. A colorless and odorless inert gas.
- 65. A genus of Mustelidae.
- 68. A government order imposing a trade bar-74. A form of entertainment that enacts a story
- by a sequence of images giving the illusion of continuous movement. 76. Mostly tropical stinging herbs or trees.
- 79. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
- 80. A graphical recording of the cardiac cycle produced by an electrocardiograph.
- 81. A cut of pork ribs with much of the meat trimmed off.
- 82. A master's degree in business. 83. An associate degree in applied science.
- 84. Something transitory.
- 85. A number of sheets of paper fastened together along one edge.

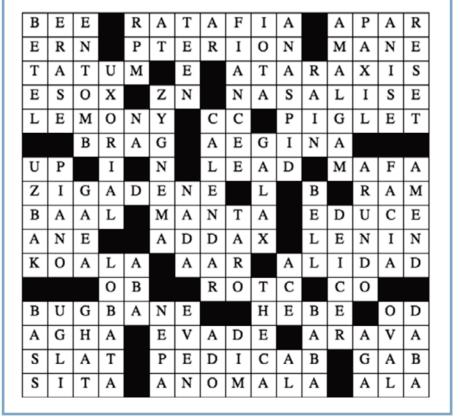
DOWN

- 1. Electronic warfare undertaken to insure effective friendly use of the electromagnetic spectrum in spite of the enemy's use of electronic warfare.
- 2. Of or relating to or characteristic of Thailand of its people.
- 3. An aromatic ointment used in antiquity.
- 4. South American cavy. 5. Implement consisting of a small piece of cotton that is used to apply medication or
- a secretion. 6. A piece of jewelry that is pinned onto the

cleanse a wound or obtain a specimen of

- wearer's garment. 7. Someone who is so ardently devoted to
- something that it resembles an addiction. 8. The month following October and preceding December.
- 9. Atypically small.
- 10. Expose to fresh air, as of old clothing.
- 11. In or relating to or obtained from urine. 12. Savory jelly based on fish or meat stock
- used as a mold for meats or vegetables. 13. The right to take another's property if an
- obligation is not discharged. 14. (informal) Exceptionally good.
- 22. A metrical unit with unstressed-stressed syllables.
- 24. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a
- skewer usually with vegetables. 26. An associate degree in nursing.
- 30. A Dravidian language closely related to Tamil that is spoken in a hilly section of southwestern India.
- 31. A canvas or leather bag for carrying game
- (especially birds) killed by a hunter. 32. Having an eye or eyes or eyelike feature
- especially as specified. 34. With no effort to conceal.
- 35. Carnivorous fresh and salt water fishes.
- 36. A scheming person.
- 40. Offering fun and gaiety. 42. A decoy who lures customers into a gambling establishment (especially one with a fixed game).
- 44. A prosthesis that replaces a missing leg. 46. Capital and largest city of Italy.
- 47. Small terrestrial lizard of warm regions of the Old World.
- 49. (in Gnosticism) A divine power or nature emanating from the Supreme Being and playing various roles in the operation of the universe
- 52. Someone who works (or provides workers) during a strike.
- 56. Mentally or physically infirm with age.
- 58. Separate by avulsion. 61. Any plant of the genus Erica.
- 63. The basic unit of length adopted under the System International d'Unites (approximately 1.094 yards).
- 66. An inhabitant of Lappland. 67. Large elliptical brightly colored deep-sea
- fish of Atlantic and Pacific and Mediterranean.
- 69. Israeli statesman (born in Russia) (1898-1978).
- 70. A small cake leavened with yeast. 71. An inclined surface or roadway that moves
- traffic from one level to another. 72. An amino acid that is found in the central
- nervous system. 73. Toward the mouth or oral region.
- 75. System of measurement based on cen-
- timeters and grams and seconds. 77. A metal-bearing mineral valuable enough to be mined.
- 78. A recurring sleep state during which dreaming occurs.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK

Aries (March 21-April 19)

Decisions will be easier to make or better suited to a situation if you can do the decision making before noon when you have a good focus. After the noon hour, the energies can be more frenzied as you rush to complete tasks and run errands. This is a delightful day for enjoying the out-of-doors and perhaps a little bicycle ride through the park with a friend or in a group would also be good. A few exciting adventures make themselves known this day and your job is to soak in the creative possibilities and enjoy your enhanced mental and physical strength. Continue your exercise program and you will enjoy success in any challenge or adventure that might come your way. The people that love you have plans for you this evening.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

This morning you make time to complete a project you may have started last weekend. You will find your emotional experiences are likely to be more intense than usual for the next few days-you could be drawn to unusual people and events. Fresh insight comes to you through the news media. You could blurt out the wrong thing after hearing the thoughts of another person. It may not be all that easy to convey what you really intend. Take your time; you will be able to express yourself better after you have given yourself a little time. You may find yourself being put to good use by your friends in the afternoon, as you gather to discuss some new event or plan a party around the night of a concert. Express your love in mellow tones this evening.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Status and security goals need rethinking now, in order to take advantage of changing circumstances. Your career is a focus, but your home and family situation are also involved. Finances-purchases, investments and credit in particularcould stand some clear thinking. Getting in over your head where such things are concerned can happen before you know it. Careful-this could mean the purchase of a new home before you are really ready for that responsibility. The expense of keeping a household running may come very close to the same amount as payments for the house, at least at times. This is an excellent time for study, to attend a lecture or go to a museum. Travel is also favored, especially if it stimulates your mind.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Arguments may be easy to find today, especially if you or somebody you live with has not had enough rest. You might feel that some avenues of support have been blocked. This will pass, but you might want to get outside for a while this morning to revive your energies. You may enjoy a bit of work in the yard to beautify your surroundings. You will probably encourage others to do the same and even in an apartment, an herb garden with several pots is possible and fun. Perhaps a full day of working in the yard, repairing summer furniture, planting and weeding, will help you to feel more at ease. Your sensitivity to others is strong and you may feel very close to a loved one this afternoon. A balance of mind, body and spirit is excellent this evening.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Resolving conflicting opinions and deciding between opposing views or different options is a special focus for you. This is a time of decision-a change is needed around your living area. Distinguishing between facts and feelings and giving each its due, are the keys to your best interests. You may be very pleased with the results of your efforts. This afternoon's events turn this weekend into a relaxed and enjoyable time. Close relationships take on more emotional depth, power and importance. Communication and personal life are emphasized. You do mental work and are in touch with many people that have new information for you. There is some time this evening for communication about family goals and developing more time to be together.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You may find yourself relaxing this morning only to rev up your energies for the afternoon's paperwork or survey of your personal finances. The king is in the counting house, counting his money, so to speak. Deciding what your purchase power is will help you know where you stand so you can make plans accordingly. It is not advisable to spend excessively until you analyze your financial situation. This afternoon is a great time to work with friends or family on some fun project. Working well with loved ones will speed up the end result. You may have insights or breakthroughs with regard to your living situation or life circumstances. Others show their appreciation for your insight and positive attitude. Simple things make you smile

WORD SEARCH

USA Presidents Word Search

Find and circle all of the United States Presidents that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell an Abraham Lincoln quotation.

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M	N	0	S	L	1	W	E	R	E	L	Y		L	E	Α	G	N	
Α	Н	0	0	V	E	R	Т	Α	Y	L	0	R	٧	E	Ν	Ν	A	
D	F	D	R	0	0	S	Е	٧	E	L	Т	0	N	0	M	1	M	
1	Ν	T	P	М	Н	1	E	G	D	1	L	0	0	C	0	D	U	
S	0	N	L	1	J	Q	Α	D	Α	М	S	S	R	Ν	Ν	R	R	
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Daily SuDoku

FORD CARTER REAGAN G H W BUSH CLINTON G W BUSH

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KENNEDY

NIXON

L JOHNSON

Libra (September 23-October 22)

Anything connected with publishing, and advertising or broadcasting requires reexamination; a change of plans or perspective gives you the upper hand. Your ability to rise above the emotions and make decisions shows your capabilities. Not having to work the whole day today, you may decide that this is the perfect time to hang out at some old gathering place with friends. You enjoy talking about old times and listening to friends tell their stories. You feel healthy and natural. Your hopes and dreams expand and develop. Your positive energies flow best when you are able to come to the aid of friends and family. Rest and relaxation are important this evening-a big day is planned for tomorrow. Enjoy walking before you retire for the evening.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Your energies are high and what you say is clear and to the point. Others will listen to any changes you want to make at work or at home. You may discover insights into problems that will be of great value later. This is a time when you can expect a little boost, some sort of extra support or recognition from those around you. You may feel that you are in touch and in harmony; the lines of communication are open. Life excites you when you feel you make a contribution to the quality of life for yourself and others. What you aspire to be or to accomplish is within your reach. If freedom in a relationship is important to you, it may be the time to have a serious talk with your loved one. Exchange a list of future expectations and then talk.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Good luck follows you around today - of course, you are the one to help the day move along in most positive ways. Becoming more practical and conscientious takes on a special importance. Obtaining and exchanging information helps to create a clear path toward your goals. You show much compassion for others and you make the effort to understand their needs. Taking care of the necessary underpinnings of life-health and such-becomes a greater preoccupation. Sorting things out and getting them organized to the utmost efficiency keeps you busy. If you are a musician or an artist you could find a long list of opportunities that will show off your talents this afternoon. If you are not performing, you will enjoy a friend's performance.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Your personality and mode of living will be in a flux today. Pay attention to the balance of the day. Make sure the amount of giving is equal to the amount of taking. This could be a time to make changes in your environment. Your financial success is probably more important to your family than it is to you right now. If you do not mind trusting your money to others, find a good money manager and put your money into the hands of that competent money manager, if possible. Let the manager know that you will be auditing every six months for that person's safety as well as your own. You and your family members could then have improved allowances. Communicating with others is at a high. These matters could be quite successful.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Marriage and other close relationships give rise to great expectations-a new period begins. You enjoy the opportunities that come at this time to be with friends. There are more self-assertion and personal freedom in your life now. You agree to vote on future entertainment decisions and there are lots of choices where you live. It may be that your group will want to split up for some entertainment choices and meet after for reviews. Self-discovery is becoming more obvious. You have made great progress in your psychological growth and how you interact with others. You confidently lend a helping hand to others at this time. A friend may want you to help with a baby or wedding shower for a mutual friend. This is a joy to arrange and you are happy to help.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

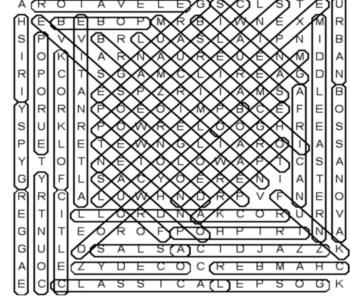
You are able to increase your earning power now. You may also be realizing the investments you have made are doing very well. There are several aspects moving out of your sign that will be turning things into the positive. Last year was hard work and struggle in many different ways. However, you are on the rise now and you can enjoy this change for the positive for quite some time. A strong need for nurturing is a bigger than usual element in your life now. You may feel the need to care for others or to have them care for you-perhaps on a public rather than a private level, which

Yesterday's Solution

means you will step up on that soapbox of yours and accomplish quite a lot. You have

needs and you sense the needs of others. You enjoy helping your friends and family

Types of Music 2



ACID JAZZ AFRICAN ALTERNATIVE **BEBOP BLUES** BOLLYWOOD **BOSSA NOVA** BRAZILIAN CELTIC CHAMBER

CLASSICAL COUNTRY DOO WOP **ELEVATOR** EUROPOP **EXPERIMENTAL FOLK ROCK** FUNK GOSPEL

GYPSY REGGAE IRISH MAMBO MARIACHI MIDDLE EASTERN NEW AGE NEW ORLEANS OPERA POP MUSIC **PROGRESSIVE**

ROCK AND ROLL SALSA SURF **SWING** TECHNO TRIP HOP TROPICAL URBAN ZYDECO

GRUNGE The hidden message is: ALTERNATIVE ROCK

Yesterday's Solution

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INTERNATIONAL

CALLS

Sabah Hospital

Amiri Hospital

Chest Hospital

Adan Hospital

Ibn Sina Hospital

Al-Razi Hospital

Kaizen center

Rawda

Adaliya

Khaldiya

Shamiya

Shuwaikh

Nuzha

Qadsiya

Dasmah

Shaab

Qibla

Mirqab

Sharq

Salmiya

Jabriya

Bayan

Mishref

Sabah

Jahra

W Hawally

New Jahra

West Jahra

South Jahra

North Jahra

North Jleeb

Ardhiya

Firdous

Omariya

N Khaitan

Fintas

Bneid Al-Gar

Ayoun Al-Qibla

Maidan Hawally

Abdullah Salem

Industrial Shuwaikh

Kaifan

Physiotherapy Hospital

Maternity Hospital

Farwaniya Hospital

Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital

INFORMATION

For labor-related inquiries and complaints:

Hospitals

Clinics

24812000

22450005

24843100

25312700

24849400

24892010

23940620

24840300

24846000

24874330/9

25716707

22517733

22517144

24848075

24849807

24848913

24814507

22549134

22526804

24814764

22515088

22532265

22531908

22518752

22459381

22451082

22456536

22465401

25746401

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25623444

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22630786

24810221

24770319

24575755

24772608

24775066

24775992

24311795

24884079

24892674

24719048

24710044

23900322

Soor Center

Tel: 2290-1677

Fax: 2290 1688

Call MSAL hotline 128

PHARMACIES ON 24 HRS DUTY

GOVERNORATE	PHARMACY	ADDRESS	PHONE
Ahmadi	Sama Safwan	Fahaeel Makka St	23915883
	Abu Halaifa	Abu Halaifa-Coastal Rd	23715414
	Danat Al-Sultan	Mahboula Block 1, Coastal Rd	23726558
Jahra	Modern Jahra	Jahra-Block 3 Lot 1	24575518
	Madina Munawara	Jahra-Block 92	24566622
Capital	Ahlam	Fahad Al-Salem St	22436184
	Khaldiya Coop	Khaldiya Coop	24833967
Farwaniya	New Shifa	Farwaniya Block 40	24734000
	Ferdous Coop	Ferdous Coop	24881201
	Modern Safwan	Old Kheitan Block 11	24726638
Hawally	Tariq	Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St	25726265
	Hana	Salmiya-Amman St	25647075
	Ikhlas	Hawally-Beirut St	22625999
	Hawally & Rawdha	Hawally & Rawdha Coop	22564549
	Ghadeer	Jabriya-Block 1A	25340559
	Kindy	Jabriya-Block 3B	25326554
	Ibn Al-Nafis	Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St	25721264
	Mishrif Coop	Mishrif Coop	25380581
	Salwa Coop	Salwa Coop	25628241

STATE OF KUWAIT DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



Tel: (+965) 161 Ext: 2627 - 2630 Fax: (+965) 24348714 www.met.gov.kw

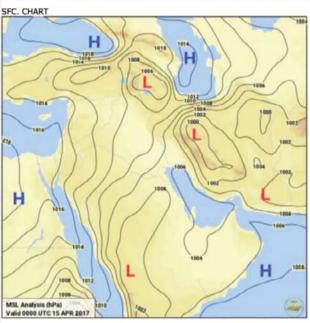


Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours Issued 15/04/2017-07:00 LT UTC +3hr

Max Temperature 37 °C

By Day : Partly cloudy with moderate to fresh northerly to north westerly wind, with speed of 25 - 60 km/h causing raising dust 60 km/h causing raising dust

By Night: Partly cloudy with moderate to fresh northerly changing to north westerly wind, with speed of 20 - 45 km/h causing raising dust with a chance for rain that might be thundery at times



Four-Day	Forecas

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	weanesday	
	*	*	*	*	
	dada	4.1	8.1	6.1	
Expected Weather	partly cloudy	partly cloudy + light rain	cloudy + scattered rain	partly cloudy + scattered rain	
Min Temp °C	21	22	22	24	
Max Temp °C	32	33	35	36	
Wind Direction	north westerly	north westerly to light variable	north easterly becoming south easterly	variable wind changing to north westerly	
Wind Speed km/h	25 - 45	10 - 30	12 - 35	12 - 35	

Strong Wind

Station	MIN °C REC	Max °C EXP
KUWAIT CITY	25	35
KUWAIT AIRPORT	25	37
ABDALY	26	38
BUBYAN	25	23
JAHRA	27	38
FAILAKA ISLAND	24	27
SALMIYAH	24	29
AHMADI	24	31
JAL ALIYAH	25	38
QAROH ISLAND	22	25
UMM AL-MARADEM	23	25
NUWAISIB	25	38
WAFRA	25	37
SALMY	25	37
MUTRIBA	26	38

Recorder	resterday at Kur	wait Airport		
Max Tem	44			
Min Temp	26			
Max Rel H	dum (%)	39		
Min Rel H	lum (%)	07		
Max Wind	46 S			
TOTAL RA	AINFALL IN 24 HR	0 mm		
244	Sunrise	05:22		
0	Sunset	18:14		

Prayer Times	
Fajr	04:00
Sunrise	05:22
Zuhr	11:48
Asr	15:22
Sunset	18:14
Isha	19:34



PRIVATE CLINICS

Ophthalmologists						
Dr. Abidallah Al-Mansoor	25622444					
Dr. Samy Al-Rabeea	25752222					
Dr. Masoma Habeeb	25321171					
Dr. Mubarak Al-Ajmy	25739999					
Dr. Mohsen Abel	25757700					
Dr Adnan Hasan Alwayl	25732223					
Dr. Abdallah Al-Baghly	25732223					
Ear, Nose & Throat	(ENT)					
Dr. Ahmed Fouad Mouner	24555050 Ext 510					
Dr. Abdallah Al-Ali	25644660					
Dr. Abd Al-Hameed Al-Taweel	25646478					
Dr. Sanad Al-Fathalah	25311996					
Dr. Mohammad Al-Daaory	25731988					
Dr. Ismail Al-Fodary	22620166					
Dr. Mahmoud Al-Booz	25651426					
General Practitioners						
General Practition	ners					
General Practition Dr. Mohamme Y Majidi	ners 24555050 Ext 123					
Dr. Mohamme Y Majidi	24555050 Ext 123					
Dr. Mohamme Y Majidi Dr. Yousef Al-Omar	24555050 Ext 123 24719312					
Dr. Mohamme Y Majidi Dr. Yousef Al-Omar Dr. Tarek Al-Mikhazeem	24555050 Ext 123 24719312 23926920					
Dr. Mohamme Y Majidi Dr. Yousef Al-Omar Dr. Tarek Al-Mikhazeem Dr. Kathem Maarafi	24555050 Ext 123 24719312 23926920 25730465					
Dr. Mohamme Y Majidi Dr. Yousef Al-Omar Dr. Tarek Al-Mikhazeem Dr. Kathem Maarafi Dr. Abdallah Ahmad Eyadah	24555050 Ext 123 24719312 23926920 25730465 25655528					
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Dr. Abdel Quttainah	25625030/60							
Family Doctor								
Dr Divya Damodar	23729596/23729581							
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Dr Eisa M. Al-Balhan	22613623/0							
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Dr. Ahmad Al-Khooly	25739272							
Dr. Salem soso	22618787							
General Surg	eons							
Dr. Amer Zawaz Al-Amer	22610044							
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Dr. Mousa Khadada	22666300							
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Dr. Mobarak Aldoub	24726446							
Dr Nasser Behbehani	25654300/3							

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Neurologist	ts						
Dr. Sohal Najem Al-Shemeri	25633324						
Dr. Jasem Mola Hassan	25345875						
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Dr. Sami Aman	22636464						
Dr. Mohammad Al-Shamaly	25322030						
Dr. Foad Abidallah Al-Ali	22633135						

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	Endocrinologist				
_	Dr. Abd Al-Naser Al-Othman	25339330			
	Dr. Ahmad Al-Ansari 25658888				
	Dr. Kamal Al-Shomr 25329924				
	Physiotherapists & VD				
	Dr. Deyaa Shehab 25722291				
	Dr. Musaed Faraj Khamees	22666288			
	Rheumatologists:				
	Dr. Adel Al-Awadi 25330060				
	Dr. Khaled Al-Jarallah	25722290			
	Internist, Chest & Heart				
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	Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital 25339667 Consultant Cardiologist				
	Dr. Farida Al-Habib MD, PH.D, FACC	2611555-2622555			
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William Schuilenberg, RPC 2290-1677

Zaina Al Zabin, M.Sc. 2290-1677

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Laos	00856	Wales (UK)	0044
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GOSSIP

JANET JACKSON HAS SHARED THE FIRST PHOTO OF HER SON

■he 50-year-old singer welcomed her son Eissa Al Mana whom she has with her estranged husband Wissam Al Mana - into the world three months ago, and she has now shared a photo of the tot with those who check out her personal website. The sweet snap, posted on Janet Jackson.com, features Eissa yawning while he cuddles up to his mother. Janet wrote alongside the picture: "My baby and me after nap time." The news comes after it was recently reported the 'That's The Way Love Goes' hitmaker is focusing all her attention on Eissa after she reportedly split from Wissam earlier this month. A source said: "Janet is ecstatic. She's so happy with her baby and that's all she is focused on." It was previously revealed that the pair decided to go their separate ways and want to focus on the co-parenting of their son. An insider said: "Sadly, Janet and Wissam have decided that it wasn't working and to go their separate ways. "They're both busy people but determined to be good parents, even if they're apart. It's amicable and Eissa will stay with his mother, who is basing herself in London." And the sweet snap of Eissa comes after it was previously claimed Janet was only allowing "a select few" people to see her baby so soon after the birth.



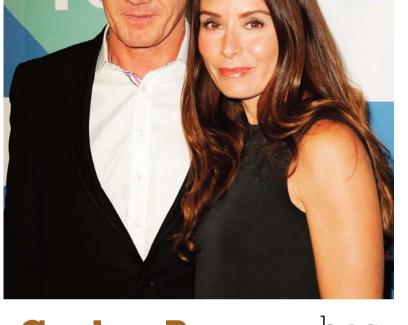


three-year-old Charlotte and two-yearold Theodore with his wife Rachael Leigh Cook, and has said he'd "like to stop" having children now as he wants to focus all his "love and attention" on the two tots he currently has. Asked if he and his wife were planning on expanding their brood any further, the 41year-old actor said: "No! Daddy is going to pay a special visit to a special surgeon real soon. "I'm too old as it is. My wife has got the energy of a 21-year-old and is physically in great condition, but me, I have, like, no knees and no shoulders. But no, that's the answer. I want to be able to give these two my love and my attention and my care. I would like to stop now." And 'The Originals' star already has his hands full with the two children he currently has, as he admits the pair snatch toys off each other regularly, but insists for the most part they are "sweet" to one another. He said: "There's a lot of snatching of toys going on.

■he 'Vampire Diaries' actor already has But [Charlotte] is a very sweet, older sister to him and she's day-by-day becoming more and more demonstrative. She'll be really sweet to my son and be like, 'Look, Daddy! Look at how great I'm being,' so that she can receive the reward later on, which is that I have to play her episodes of Dora the Explorer. If you're not a parent, you'll get to know Dora, trust me." Meanwhile, Daniel also confessed that after 12 years of marriage to 37-year-old actress Rachael, he still "can't believe how beautiful" she is. He added to 'Entertainment Tonight': "This is going to sound like the creepiest thing of all time, but when I was first married her ... I remember just watching her sleep and thinking that is the most beautiful person and I would just watch her for a while. "It's also amazing to see when our kids have inherited some of her physical characteristics."

BLUEY ROBINSON HAS DEFENDED PAL JUSTIN BIEBER FOR TAKING HIS TOP

■he 23-year-old singer, who is currently working with a band called The Feds ahead of their Glastonbury performance later this year, has spoken out in support of his pal after pictures of the 'Sorry' hitmaker surfaced of him grinding shirtless with an elderly lady. The pair struck up a friendship when Bluey joined Bieber as support on his European tour back in 2011. When BANG Showbiz asked if he'd seen the footage, which Justin uploaded to his Instagram page, Bluey, 28, replied: "Yes, I did, he's spreading the love you know, OAP's need love too, and it's just hilarious that he didn't have a top on." In the video, the Kanye West and Jay Z song 'N****s in Paris' plays in the background as Justin dances closely with the lady, while an elder gentleman -thought to be her husband - looks on and laughs. Bieber then embraces the lady, hugging and giving her a kiss on the cheek.



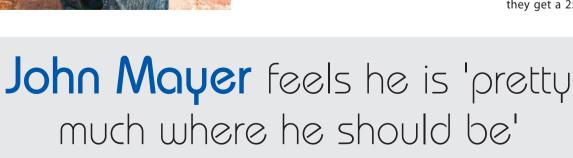
Gordon Ramsay has a floor-to-ceiling picture of **Cindy** Crawford in his house

has four children; Matilda, 15, Jack and Holly, 17, and Megan, 18, with his wife Tana - revealed that he keeps the huge picture of the supermodel in his home because she reminds him of his spouse. He told Radio Times magazine: "We've got an amazing Cindy Crawford picture, from floor to ceiling. She reminds me of Tana. "I like black-and-white, and I mix and match them, and then I go off to LA and Tana moves it all around. "I come home and think we've been robbed, but she's just moved it all upstairs." The pair also have pictures of Sir Michael Caine and Sir Mick Jagger in their home. Meanwhile, Gordon recently revealed he will not leave his vast personal fortune to the couple's children in his will because it would risk spoiling them. He shared: "It's definitely not going to them, and that's not in a mean way; it's to not spoil them. The only thing I've agreed with Tana is they get a 25 percent deposit on a

■he 50-year-old TV chef - who flat, but not the whole flat. "I've been super lucky, having that career for the last 15 years in the US. Seriously, it has earned a fortune and I've been very lucky, so I respect everything I've got." Gordon insisted he and Tana have raised their children to be independent and earn their own money. He said: "Tana came from a super setup, and I'm just 'educated rough' from a council estate. "So we meet in the middle and the kids bounce off both of us. They have a completely different life than I did growing up. I worked hard to get out of this mess that I grew up in and they're grateful, they're not spoilt. "Meg's at uni and has a budget of £100 a week; the others get about £50 a week and they have to pay for their own phones, their bus fare. The earlier you give them that responsibility to save for their own trainers and jeans, the

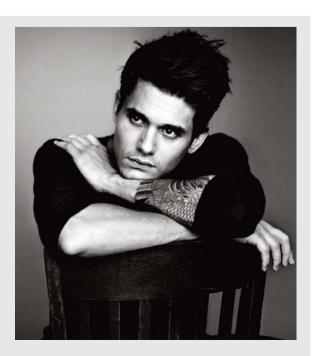
Tallia Storm is moving on from Brooklyn Beckham

he 18-year-old singer dated the aspiring photographer - the son of retired soccer star David Beckham and fashion designer Victoria Beckham - for 18 months back in 2014 but he broke her heart when he started dating someone else. However, now Tallia has met a new man in Los Angeles and couldn't be happier. She told MailOnline: "Last summer I met someone when I was out in LA when I was recording my new single Break It. There was definitely a spark instantly. "I've literally only kissed two guys in my life [the mystery man and Brooklyn]. I'm really fussy when it comes to love as I'm so busy with work. "I'm still really good friend with the guy I was seeing. We're in touch while I'm in the UK. We will see what happens. It still feels so new. "Now I'm breaking it to my ex Brooklyn." Tallia, who was discovered by Sir Elton John back in 2012, previously admitted she was left heartbroken when news of Brooklyn's new romance came to light. She said: "It came to an end when I saw him in the papers with another girl. I was like 'oh my goodness'. "We dated, it was puppy like. We kept our love all very private. We were only spotted together once. "He came to see me perform. We kept it very private. It was real. We spent a lot of time together." And they bumped into each other at the BRITs earlier this year but Tallia was not interested in speaking to him. She said: "I saw Brooklyn backstage at the BRITs. "It was a really big night for me. He tried to speak to me but I'm so over it. He's very dramatic. "I feel a lot of people saw the ice between us. Now I date men not boys. It's true, lovers can't be friends."



er this year and feels he is at a point of his life where he knows what he wants in both his career and his private life. He said: "I'm pretty much where I should be ... I have no reason to want to be any older or younger. Artists put themselves through dark times, knowing that if they create enough and well enough, they can emerge with great work that lives forever. I did that, and I now have this work that I've definitely hurt for, and this is my time to celebrate it. "The tour is like a victory lap after two and a half years of working on a record that is the deepest dive I've ever taken as an artist. The pot of gold at the end of the whole thing was being able to go around the world and play these songs as a happy, well-

■he 'Free Fallin' hitmaker is gearing up to turn 40 lat- situated, excited, inspired guy. That's who you're talking to." And the 39-year-old singer insists his new track didn't start "as a breakup record". He told USA Today: "I wouldn't say it started as a breakup record. [It] began with this idea of, 'I don't need to put out another album and I'm not going to until it proved the reason for its existence.' "It's about getting older and comparing my track to other people's. Part of me is a quote-unquote 'rock star' and part of me is this kid from Fairfield, Connecticut, who really wasn't made for this. That part looks around at the other parts and goes, 'Is any of this OK? Am I alright





MUSIC & MOVIES



"Wonder" performs at the Coachella Valley Music And Arts Festival in Indio, California. — AFP

From Netherlands to Norway, Klangstof on dark rock journey

hen Koen Van Der Wardt was 14, his parents moved with him from their native Netherlands to rural Norway, longing for nature. His musical awakening was an unintended consequence. As the frontman and principal songwriter of the band Klangstof, Van Der Wardt conjures up the dark atmospherics of rural Norway in guitar rock that breaks free from traditional song structure. He was kicking off Coachella on Friday, becoming the first Dutch act to play the leading music festival that takes place in the desert of southern California.

Now 24, Van Der Wardt recalls growing up in The Netherlands listening to electronic dance music like other Dutch preteens. In Norway, he said, he spent his first year engrossed in only one album-Radiohead's "OK Computer," the English rockers' seminal 1997 transformation into digital experimentation. He first picked up a guitar in Norway simply out of boredom. But he gradually came to appreciate his parents' decision to move.

"It was very inspirational to have no pressure from the outside world that you usually have when you live in a country with a lot of people," Van Der Wardt told AFP before a pre-Coachella rehearsal at a Los Angeles studio. "Norway just makes you feel that you don't have to care about anything around you," he said, "because there isn't much around other than beautiful nature."

Mood, not words

Although the music bears the clear influence of Radiohead, Van Der Wardt's high-pitched, melodyresistant vocals and Klangstof's Nordic sensibility also bring to mind the Icelandic post-rockers Sigur Ros and, to a lesser extent, the earlier era of progressive rock. Klangstof-the name, so evocative of the band's sound, is a portmanteau between the Norwegian word for "echo" and Dutch for "dust"-had its break when it uploaded "Hostage," a bleak song about personal confinement.

The song was spotted by David Dann, founder of label Mind of a Genius, who quickly signed the band. "Hostage" became the starting point for Klangstof's debut album "Close Eyes to Exit," released last year. Van Der Wardt said he focused on creating an ambience on the album-reinforced by vaguely futuristic cover art-and sang only where he thought the voice built the mood. "I got kind of fed up with sitting down and writing verses and choruses. I thought that was a bit boring," he said. "For me it was always about having a lot of cool sounds instead of having a catchy book"

Dark music, happy life

If Coachella's sunshine and scanty outfits seem a disconcerting match for Klangstof, Van

Der Wardt is hardly gloomy as a person, with an easygoing smile and constant laugh. "I always felt like I put all of the bad emotions into the music, and as soon as I'm done writing music and I'm on the road or living life, I actually feel like a pretty happy person," he said. "People always expect to have very depressed musicians on stage and when they come to me after the show, they're like, 'Huh? What was going on there? You were dancing, you were happy, you were screaming." Van Der Wardt expressed pride at being the first Dutch act at Coachella, but said he was barely thinking about it.

"Music isn't a nationalist thing. Music is for everyone and it doesn't know any borders. In any case, I don't feel like I'm 'the hippest export product from The Netherlands' or anything," he quipped with a laugh. After Coachella, Klangstof will play more festival dates and open on US tours for The Flaming Lips and Miike Snow. In a fitting sign of the band's origins, the headliner Friday at Coachella is Radiohead. "I'm definitely going to try to see if I can get a little high-five going backstage," Van Der Wardt said. — AFP

This file photo shows Alex Gibney, director of the Film 'Zero Days' posing at the 2016 Berlinale Film Festival in Berlin, Germany. — AP

Alex Gibney doc 'No Stone Unturned' pulled from Tribeca

ust a week before its scheduled Tribeca Film Festival premiere, producers of Alex Gibney's "No Stone Unturned" pulled the documentary about the 1994 murder of six men in Northern Ireland from the festival over legal issues. The film was to premiere April 23 at the festival, where "No Stone Unturned" would have been one of the more high-profile documentaries debuting. Producer Trevor Birney said in a statement he was "bitterly disappointed" to withdraw the film because of "ongoing legal issues relating to the subject matter of the film."

"No one will feel this disappointment more than the families at the center of the film, whose quest for justice has been both inspiring and unstinting these last 23 years," said Birney. "It is our deepest hope that these sensitive issues can be resolved as soon as possible so that we can share this important film with the world." The New York festival said it was notified Friday and that it shared in the disappointment of the film's producers

Gibney won an Academy Award for his 2007 documentary "Taxi to the Dark Side." "No Stone Unturned" investigates the 1994 case in which six were killed and five wounded while watching a World Cup soccer match in a Loughinisland, Northern Island, pub. The police investigation, the film's description states, "was perfunctory at best" and the case remained unsolved. "'No Stone Unturned' is a powerful story and so is the attempt to silence it," Gibney wrote on Twitter. "The truth will be told." — AP

'Guerrilla': Drama of love, revolution in '70s London

ohn Ridley's projects always have something to say, and it's always worth considering. The writer, director and producer works a big canvas and does it thoughtfully, whether in his Oscar-winning screenplay for "12 Years a Slave," his ABC anthology series "American Crime" or his new drama about England's 1970s black power movement. "Guerrilla," a Showtime miniseries debuting Sunday, extends his willingness to take on thorny political and social issues and his insistence on giving each stakeholder a chance to be heard.

The drama also allowed Ridley, a self-described "child of the '70s," to revisit his youthful, unshaded admiration for American radicals such as George Jackson of the Black Panther Party and Donald DeFreeze, known as Cinque when he led the Symbionese Liberation Army militia group that kidnapped heiress Patty Hearst. "As a young black man, they were just cool. They were icons of the movement," Ridley said. But maturity and reflection gave him a different perspective on violent radicalism and its proponents, he said.



In this image released by Showtime, Zawe Ashton portrays Omega in the Showtime series, 'Guerrilla,' debuting Sunday. — AP

"You realize these individuals are complicated, they're human and imperfect. And you start to ask questions about the ends justifying the means and, for me, that's where these stories really become exceptionally interesting," Ridley said. The six-part series' characters include a couple (Babou Ceesay, Freida Pinto), deeply in love and increasingly radicalized. The cauldron they're living in: A nation at odds with ethnic diversity created by its own post-WWII immigration policies to rebuild the workforce.

The conflict grows increasingly violent in both civilian and law enforcement quarters, with British police working from a "black power desk" tasked with eradicating black activism. They go hard after civil rights proponents, and some

respond in kind. The Gambian-born Ceesay, whose character debates the pursuit of justice through violence, said political tensions in his native country made him question how far he

would go if family members were in jeopardy.
"I think what's interesting for me about 'Guerrilla' is that maybe somewhere in all of us there is a guerrilla and, if the conditions were right, we might become one," he told reporters earlier this year. Ceesay's Marcus and Pinto's Jas face formidable opponents, including Detective Chief Inspector Nicholas Pence (Rory Kinnear), a Rhodesian policeman brought in because of his track record at home.

Among those caught in the middle: police deputy Liam Cullen (Daniel Mays), who is dismayed by Pence's bigotry and resents English bias against his Irish roots and, on the other side, Kentoroabasi "Kent" Fue (Idris Elba, also a producer on the project), who advocates change but rejects extremism.

Britain's turmoil was reflected internationally, as bombings, airplane hijackings and killings committed on behalf of varied causes made for routinely frightening headlines. That the American-born Ridley would set "Guerrilla" in Britain is a result of his dogged pursuit of telling the story he'd originally set in San Francisco. He found no US takers but, while working on a film in London, was encouraged by a British producer to fit his characters into UK history. Ridley set out on a "learning tour" that included discussions with British activists including husbandand-wife Darcus and Leila Howe: Farrukh Dhondy and Neil Kenlock, who became consultants and advisers for the production. (Darcus Howe died April 1 of cancer.)

The story was exported with a key element intact, that of the interracial relationship of Jas and Marcus. The decision to make the lead female character Asian and the series' failure to depict black female activists drew criticism at a recent London screening. Discussing the reaction several days later, Ridley defended his approach and called on others to "tell more and do more and say more" about the overlooked

He hopes his project compels "people to think a little bit more, causes people to react a little bit more," he said. "I'm under no illusion that any one TV show, certainly a TV show that I do, is going to change the world or change people's minds. But if it helps anyone see themselves in others, I do think there's value in what we're trying to do."

RUSSIAN SOPRANO PERFORMS 'TRAVIATA' AT MET OPERA

fter performing an emergency Violetta earlier this week, Russian soprano Olga Peretyatko-Mariotti planned to attend Friday night's "La Traviata" from the comfort of an audience seat. Peretyatko-Mariotti described her last-minute substitution in Tuesday night's performance of Verdi's great tragedy as a whirlwind that began with a midday phone call from Metropolitan Opera General Manager Peter Gelb and culminated in a triumphant curtain call beside the great Placido Domingo.

"Of course it was such a huge risk, but Peter Gelb and the Metropolitan believed in me, so I understood I should help them," she said in a telephone interview Friday. Gelb had only hours to find a replacement Violetta after Italian soprano Carmen Giannattasio was struck by allergies and left unable to sing. Peretyatko-Mariotti had sung Violetta before, but not in more than a year and never in the Met's production, which features a strippeddown set dominated by a giant clock that reminds the audience of Violetta's final, devastating fate.

Peretyatko-Mariotti, 36, is a rising star in opera, expert in vocal acrobatics that dominate the works of Rossini and other early 19th century Italian composers. Those attributes are also required of a soprano in the early stages of "La Traviata." The role is considered one of the toughest in the repertoire because of the character's dramatic transformation and near-constant presence on stage. Peretyatko-Mariotti confessed to a bout of nerves before the show, but said she was too focused on the conductor and stage directors to be panicked during the performance.

"I just tried to forget everything and then tried to stay in tempo with the maestro," she said. The heart of the piece occurs in the second act in Violetta's confrontation with Giorgio Germont, played by Domingo, who bullies the former courtesan Violetta into leaving Germont's son, Alfredo. Violetta ultimately dies of consumption, but her fate has also been seen as caused by the "stupid rules of society," as Peretyatko-Mariotti put it. "If you try to be the real Violetta, you react in the most natural way, it doesn't matter what the staging is," she said. "That's the key."



More of a gamble

Peretyatko-Mariotti said she fed off the audience which had been prepped by Gelb before the overture of the circumstances of her appearance, including the fact that she was recovering from jet lag. Many attendees later thanked the singer of her Facebook page. "You can't imagine this energy that I felt from the audience because everyone knew what was happening," she said.

"This vibration. You can touch that. And maybe that's why I said 'yes." Gelb said the Met keeps understudies on hand, but opts for more established singers like Peretyatko-Mariotti when possible, which is a "more of a gamble" but can have a bigger payoff. "It makes you realize how extraordinary things can be sometimes in live performance," he said.

"Singing on the stage of the Met in any production is kind of an exercise in baring your soul and art to the public, but this one even more so because it is so stripped down," Gelb said. Peretyatko-Mariotti said she was looking forward to seeing Giannattasio return to her part Friday, but would do vocal exercises ahead just in case. Told of this, Gelb laughed and said Giannattasio was feeling better, but added, "It's always good to know Olga will be there." — AFP



Josh Gad, Daisy Ridley, Kelly Marie Tran, Mark Hamill, Katheen Kennedy and Rian Johnson attend the Star Wars: The Last Jedi panel during the 2017 Star Wars Celebration at Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, Florida. — AFP

First 'Star Wars: The Last Jedi' trailer thrills fans

isney debuted its highly-anticipated first trailer for "Star Wars: The Last Jedi" at a fan event in the United States Friday, sending the internet into a frenzy of excitement and speculation. The footage from the eighth installment in the blockbuster space opera, due for release on December 15, was shown at the "Star Wars Celebration" gathering in Orlando marking the 40th anniversary of the original movie. The 132-second clip teases Luke Skywalker's first meeting with Rey as he teaches her the ways of the Force, opening with the young apprentice on the island where fans saw her find Luke at the end of "The Force Awakens." "Breathe, just breathe. Now, reach out. What do you see?" says a mysterious male voice as the camera focuses on a breathless Rey (Daisy Ridley) on her hands and knees beneath a cliff face. "Light. Darkness. And balance," Rey replies.

"It's so much bigger," the voice says.

"I only know one truth. It's time for the Jedito end," says the voice, which seems likely to be Luke (Mark Hamill). The first fully-formed trailer for "The Last Jedi" had almost half a million views and more than 13,000 comments on YouTube within 90 minutes of being posted, with #TheLastJedi quickly becoming the top trending hashtag worldwide on Twitter. Directed by Rian Johnson ("Looper," "Brick"), "The Last Jedi" was filmed on the west coast of Ireland and at Pinewood Studios near London.

Incredible mind

It sees the return of the characters introduced in 2015's seventh installment, including Rey, Poe Dameron (Oscar Isaac), Finn (John Boyega) and a few members of the original crew, including Luke. The trailer serves up a cameo from the iconic Millennium Falcon in a dogfight with TIE fighters and there's also lightsaberwielding bad guy Kylo Ren as well as Poe, Finn and droid favorites BB-8 and R2-D2. The film also stars Carrie Fisher as General Leia Organa, who

appears briefly from behind in the trailer.

Fisher died in December but had wrapped shooting "The Last Jedi" before her death, and was honored with an emotional video tribute as

the convention opened Thursday. Johnson paid his own tribute to Fisher-who had a career parallel to her acting as a writer and highly regarded script editor-revealing that she helped him with much of the dialogue. "I love her so much, man, I just adore her, and I connected with her first and foremost as a writer. She's a brilliant writer, an incredible mind. I'd go to her house and we'd sit on her bed for hours and go through the script," he said. "We'd have these stream-of-consciousness jazz poetry ad-lib sessions and I would just scribble on my script everything she said. And then, at the end of six hours, there would be like a four-word line of dialogue." Lucasfilm chief Kathleen Kennedy later revealed in an interview with ABC News that Fisher would not appear in the as-yet untitled ninth episode, due for release in 2019. Kennedy said the actress's brother Todd Fisher was "probably confused" when he announced she had a role in the final part of the latest trilogy of "Star Wars" movies.

Secrecy

Fans had been lining up on the sidewalk overnight to get into the event, hosted by "Frozen" actor Josh Gad and featuring Ridley, Boyega, Johnson, Hamill and Kennedy. Johnson unveiled a new star, Kelly Marie Tran, who plays Rose, a maintenance worker who is part of the resistance. The actress revealed that she had told her family she was doing "an indie movie in Canada"-such has been the secrecy surrounding the film. Hamill-a central figure in the original trilogy-told the crowd it was a pleasure to be able to enjoy the prequel films and last year's "Rogue One" spin-off without the pressure of actually having to carry them.

The actor said he had admitted to Johnson that trying to capture "lightning in a bottle" again was a prospect that "terrified" him-and he was relieved to find the director felt the same way. "To a certain extent, it's not Luke's story anymore. But I think he's an important part to the overall arc of the saga and again, there's a lot of mystery about him, even within the film," said Hamill. —AFP

FEATURES





Sculptures of 'The Rood Garden Commission: Adrian Villar Rojas, The Theater of Disappearance' are seen at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Met) in New York City. — AFP photos

Argentinian transforms NY's Met rooftop into banquet

n Argentinian sculptor has transformed the roof garden at New York's famed Metropolitan Museum of Art into a fantasy banquet scene overlooking the glittering Manhattan skyline for the summer season. The installation, which opened Friday, is centered around nine white tables set for dinner with sculptures replicating objects from the museum's vast collections, including ancient Egypt, African and medieval art.

Added to the mix are white human figures-real-life models scanned, enlarged or reduced, then formatted by 3-D printer-the same technique used to produce replicas from the museum's collection. Created by Adrian Villar Rojas and called "The Theater of Disappearance," the installation fuses different eras,

civilizations, the animate and inanimate to reflect on what the purpose of a museum means today and what an artifact means behind a glass case. At one table is the figure of a knight-lying as if a statue on his tomb being embraced by a young modern girl wearing sneakers, watched over by an otter.

"The human figures are activating figures that had not been activated in sometimes thousands of years. The activation idea is one of the things that the artist was really excited about," said curator Beatrice Galilee.

The installation appeared so real and inviting that visitors Friday often tried to sit on the white chairs-not allowed. "Please don't touch," said Galilee. "It's a tension for sure that you're not invited to the dinner." The Met's rooftop bar has also been redesigned to merge

into the installation, down to the menu, which includes cocktails chosen by the artist.

Born in 1980, Villar Rojas has said he is inspired by comic books and grunge music. He has had recent solo exhibitions at the Serpentine Gallery in London, the Highline in New York in 2013, and in Paris in 2011. For the Met project he immersed himself in the museum's history and its collections, talking to curators, researchers, conservators and imaging specialists. The installation is scheduled to remain open until October 29, weather permitting. — AFP











GRAFFITI IN THE SKY: NY ARTISTS MAKE SKYSCRAPER THEIR STUDIO



Joseph Meloy, an artist from Manhattan's Lower Eastside, works on a hieroglyphiclike art he calls 'confetti motif' on large windows on the unoccupied 69th floor window of 4 World Trade Center, overlooking the footprints of the old World Trade Center twin towers and facing their new replacement, in New York.

n one of the highest floors of a Lower Manhattan office tower, New York street artists have spent the past year spraypainting and splashing their graffiti, murals and other wild creations across pristine walls, windows, floors and ceilings. But no, it isn't vandalism. Developer Larry Silverstein allowed the 50 artists to turn 34,000 square-feet of office space that normally would rent for about a quarter of a million dollars a month into their own sprawling canvas. Multi-colored graffiti and other works by sculptors and painters explode with images of fantasy and reality, tragedy and comedy.

At 86, Silverstein is still a force in the rebirth of the World Trade Center site devastated by the Sept 11 attacks that killed more than 2,600 people in New York. "Here I am, an old fogy, but I wanted to do something exciting and different, and to provide a sense of beauty, a sense of peace, in an otherwise difficult world," he says. His 72-floor tower, 4 World Trade Center, was the first to rise on the 16-acre site a dozen years after the attacks. Now, the unoccupied 69th floor is covered in colors, squiggles, lyrics, faces and sculpted forms.

The floor-to-ceiling windows offer stunning views of the 1,776-foot One World Trade Center, the Hudson River and the memorial reflection pools where the twin towers once stood. The new tower's top 11 floors, including the art-filled space, have been leased by Spotify, the Stockholm-based music-streaming company that is moving into other floors but hasn't yet decided how to incorporate the artworks into its corporate style. "It is our intention to keep as much of the art as possible," said Spotify spokesman Graham James.

The free-standing works are the property of the artists who created them, at no charge. A 9/11 tribute called "In Bloom" by David Uda is a 20-foot circle on the floor painted with 2,606 flowers in memory of the dead. Sean Sullivan has a personal connection to the site; his father was a detective with the city police bomb squad who lost his best friend on 9/11 and was himself hurt. His shield number is highlighted in Sullivan's mural, "Beautiful Cleanup."

David Hollier sprinkled lyrics from the Broadway musical "Hamilton" into his "\$10 Bill," which looks over the graveyard at Trinity Church

where Alexander Hamilton is buried. And Ron English, who is known as "The Godfather of Street Art," brought the streets into the studio in the sky for his "No Brain No Pain," which features reddish brain tissue fashioned into a boxing glove. Silverstein Properties' chief marketing officer Dara McQuillan discovered the artists through a Lower Manhattan art shop called the World Trade Gallery where he had some photographs framed.

There, he saw the work of some of the artists who were then invited into the Silverstein property. While the skyscraper studio is not open to the public, it has exposed artists to visiting gallery owners and dealers. "Every little bit helps," says Miguel Ovalle, whose revolving, spaceship-like sculpture stands in an open area on the 69th floor. Sullivan, the mural artist, says project participants are getting a big payoff. "All the promotion and marketing is worth gold to us, plus we need a place to paint; that's payment enough." — AP



Sean Sullivan, who goes by the moniker 'Layer Cake,' leaves after making last minute enhancements to his graffiti-style artwork, right, on a wall inside the unoccupied 69th floor of 4 World Trade Center, in New York.



Risa Tochigi, whose artist name is 'Boogie Rez,' sits next to her sculpture installation on the unoccupied 69th floor of 4 World Trade Center, in New York.

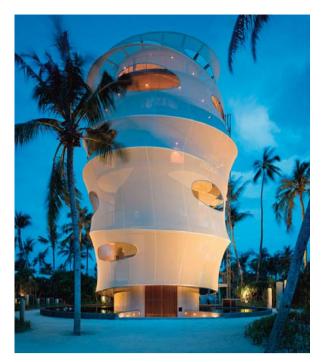


Miguel Ovalle, whose artist name is 'iDizmology,' works in the unoccupied 69th floor of 4 World Trade Center, preparing material for his sculpture that will showcase with other artists' works, in New York.— AP photos

TRAVEL





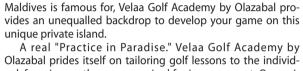


Velaa Private Island hosts media dinner at Kei Japanese restaurant



elaa Private Island is the realization of a dream to create a 'beyond luxury' ultra-exclusive boutique hideaway. This unique destination was developed to embody the very best of this unique archipelago, bathed by azure skies in the aquamarine waters of the Indian Ocean. The name of this private retreat, an elegant fusion of Maldivian culture with contemporary luxury, means "Turtle Island" in the local language - named after generations of sea turtles that have migrated here to nest and hatch.

The resort design borrows from this theme, with turtle motifs, and the colors and patterns of turtle shell pervading the property. From a broader "bird's eye view" which greets arrivals by seaplane, the island's exclusive over-water villas are also constructed to resemble the head of a turtle, with the island forming the body. Velaa Private Island also ensures plenty of room for its marine visitors, with a hatchery and conservation plan in place. DESIGN Velaa shares its name and its home with the generations of sea turtles that have inhabited the island for countless years.



bunkers, and a lake in the wonderful turquoise hues the

ual, focusing on the areas required for improvement. Our resident professionals are fully PGA qualified and are highly experienced in teaching all levels of golfers.



Discover the magic of the silent world. Velaa Dive centre is equipped by Scubapro, renowned for its outstanding quality, and affiliated to PADI (Professional Association of Diving Instructors), the largest dive association in the world. Velaa Private Island is located in the Noonu atoll, the latest atoll discovered and dived due to its far location. Only 20 minutes away from Velaa, divers will discover various unexplored dive sites with the most amazing Maldivian pelagic life such as grey reef sharks, nurse sharks, the seasonal manta ray, black spotted stingray and the graceful eagle ray.



Fulfill your thrilling fantasy and joyful moment with our variety of high tech toys. Sail along Velaa Private Island reef with our Weta trimaran, and Topcat K1 catamaran. Experience a feeling of speed with our jet ski and feel like a real James Bond exploring the house reef by Sea Bob. Cruise along and surf Velaa Private Island with the stand up paddleboard. Feel the sensation of flying with parasailing or kite surfing.



Experience the thrill of tranquility. Velaa Private Island is situated on the edge of Noonu atoll and surrounded by numerous uninhabited islands hosting numerous species of fishes. Experience the thrill of catching pelagic fish such as Blue Marlin, Yellow Fin Tuna or Waou during big game fishing. Live the Maldivian traditional fishing experience on a sunset fishing cruise. Or cast for the famous Maldivian Tuna on a fishing



Velaa Private Island offers the latest "Technogym", a worldclass Gym featuring state-of-the-art fitness equipment. On an elevated Yoga Pavilion, with beautiful views over the golf academy, guests can receive personal yoga master sessions held on the raised-tree meditation platform in the garden or by the beach. Sports facilities extend to a covered tennis court & squash court, table tennis, wall climbing, beach volleyball and a football pitch.

Excursions

Fulfill your wish of exploring the Maldivian sea and the beauty of the coral reef with passion. Velaa Private Island embraces and encompasses the tranquil infiniteness that is the ocean. Experience the tranquility of Velaa Private Island surrounded reef and cruise the sea with a traditional Bahtheli, meet the dolphins or jump on-board a snorkeling cruise and discovered abundant coral reef.

Kids club

The Lha Velaa ("Little turtle") Club will be the ideal place for our younger guests to enjoy, learn, develop new skills and form new friendships with kids from around the globe, while the parents enjoy some much-needed time off. Children will experience unforgettable moments created especially for them throughout their stay. Lha Velaa Kids Club will be the main attraction for guests travelling with children. Our dedicated team knows what children enjoy, and each week we will design a new daily program suited to each age group. We also have rainy day activities, and many more.

Library

Velaa Private Island features an extensive library. This facility will be most welcome for those rare windy and rainy days for adults and children alike.

Boutiques

We invite you to browse through the exclusive range of clothing, jewelry, resort products, gifts and a variety of merchandising including water sports, golf accessories and clothing chosen to complement your stay. Alternatively, the Spa Boutique stocks a wide range of Clarins skincare and exclusive lifestyle products.





























The colors and patterns of a turtle shell make up subtle nuances in the design, while from a broader aerial view; Velaa's exclusive over-water villas resemble the head of a turtle with the island forming the body. Designed by Czech architect Petr Kolar, the overall design concept is contemporary, yet intimate, with Maldivian nuances.

Located in the gorgeous Noonu Atoll, 187 kilometers north of Male, Velaa Private Island has been designed and curate with privacy and comfort as the guiding principles while allowing the Indian Ocean to take centre stage. At one with nature, each of the private retreats is built using local materials, combining contemporary flourishes with interiors designed for sensory exploration. The lapping waves and gentle breeze that grace the property year round make for a befitting venue to tie the knot.

Think an early morning retreat to the My Blend Spa by Clarins to ease off your anxiety, followed by a spectacular ceremony under an elegant gazebo-with floral dÈcor, lanterns, candles et al-bathing you in a soft glow as you walk down the aisle. After the celebrations by the sea, settle down for an extravagant assortment of gourmet food with your guests, be it Southeast Asian and Teppan grill from Tavaru, European delicacies from the overwater Aragu or traditional Maldivian flavors from Athiri restaurant. Of course, the long day of revelry merits a sneak into your paradise. Head to your Romantic Pool Residence by boat, the ultra-private one-bedroom villa above the lagoon that comes with its own private chef and butler, Jacuzzi and sundeck. Perhaps, this is as close to heaven you can get on Earth.

Dining experience

For the epicurean, Velaa Private Island boasts the culinary consultancy of Michelin-star chef Adeline Grattard from Paris, and an extensive wine cellar. With three restaurants and two bars and a wine cellar, a generous selection of locations and cuisines are available for guests.

Velaa golf academy

Designed by Jose Maria Olazabal, renowned for his short game prowess, Velaa Golf Academy is a golfing experience like no other, designed to create bespoke memories whatever your wishes. With nine different tees, six greens, seven

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SUNDAY, APRIL 16, 2017



In this picture artisan Nicu Poenariu turns Easter eggs on sale at a fair in Bucharest, Romania.



In this picture artisan Nicu Poenariu demonstrates his technique on an Easter egg on sale at a fair in Bucharest, Romania.



In this picture a child enjoys a ride in an Easter inspired installation at a fair in Bucharest, Romania.

New trends join old Easter traditions in Romania

ew trends are joining old traditions in Romania this Easter. In the predominantly Christian Orthodox country of 19 million, age-old crafts such as intricate egg decorating and painted religious icons are a major feature of the Holy Week run-up to Easter Sunday. But a more commercial flavor has slowly crept into the celebrations. At an Easter fair outside the Bucharest palace built by the late Communist leader Nicolae Ceausescu, entertainers strutted around wearing giant rabbit heads.

plays. An oversized hen pulled a cart while a plastic rabbit sat in the back with a model of large painted egg, scenes that could have been inspired by "Alice in Wonderland." Painted religious symbols, a major feature of Christian Orthodox observances, also were on display and for sale at the fair and the patriarchy, the seat of the Romanian Orthodox Church.

Tradition flourished elsewhere in the Romanian capital. Craftsmen such as Nicu Poenaru skillfully embellished hen,

Huge models of colored eggs in baskets dotted the dis- ostrich and goose eggs by hollowing out the contents and carefully piercing tiny holes in the shells, creating objects of artistic and religious value. Prices range from 15 lei to 150 lei (\$3.50 to \$35) depending on the size and intricacy of the design. While humans in rabbit costumes were all the rage at the fair, one child got to see a real rabbit close up, crouching down by the animal's cage with wonder. — AP



In this picture Easter eggs decorated with religious themes by artisan Nicu Poenariu are on sale at a fair in Bucharest, Romania.



In this picture a child tries to interact with a rabbit on display at a fair in Bucharest, Romania. — AP photos



In this picture entertainers wearing rabbit costumes strike a pose backdropped by the communist era built House of the In this picture a child walks between huge Easter eggs at a fair in Bucharest, Romania. People, currently the Romanian parliament, at a fair in Bucharest, Romania.

