



MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2017

JAMADA ALAWWAL 9, 1438 AH

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**Amir, Croatian
president
exchange
honorary orders**

**Days of
heavy snow
kill 54 in
Afghanistan**

**Iran volleyball
pioneers
shrug off
hijab taunts**

**Jesus saves
City with
last-gasp
winner**

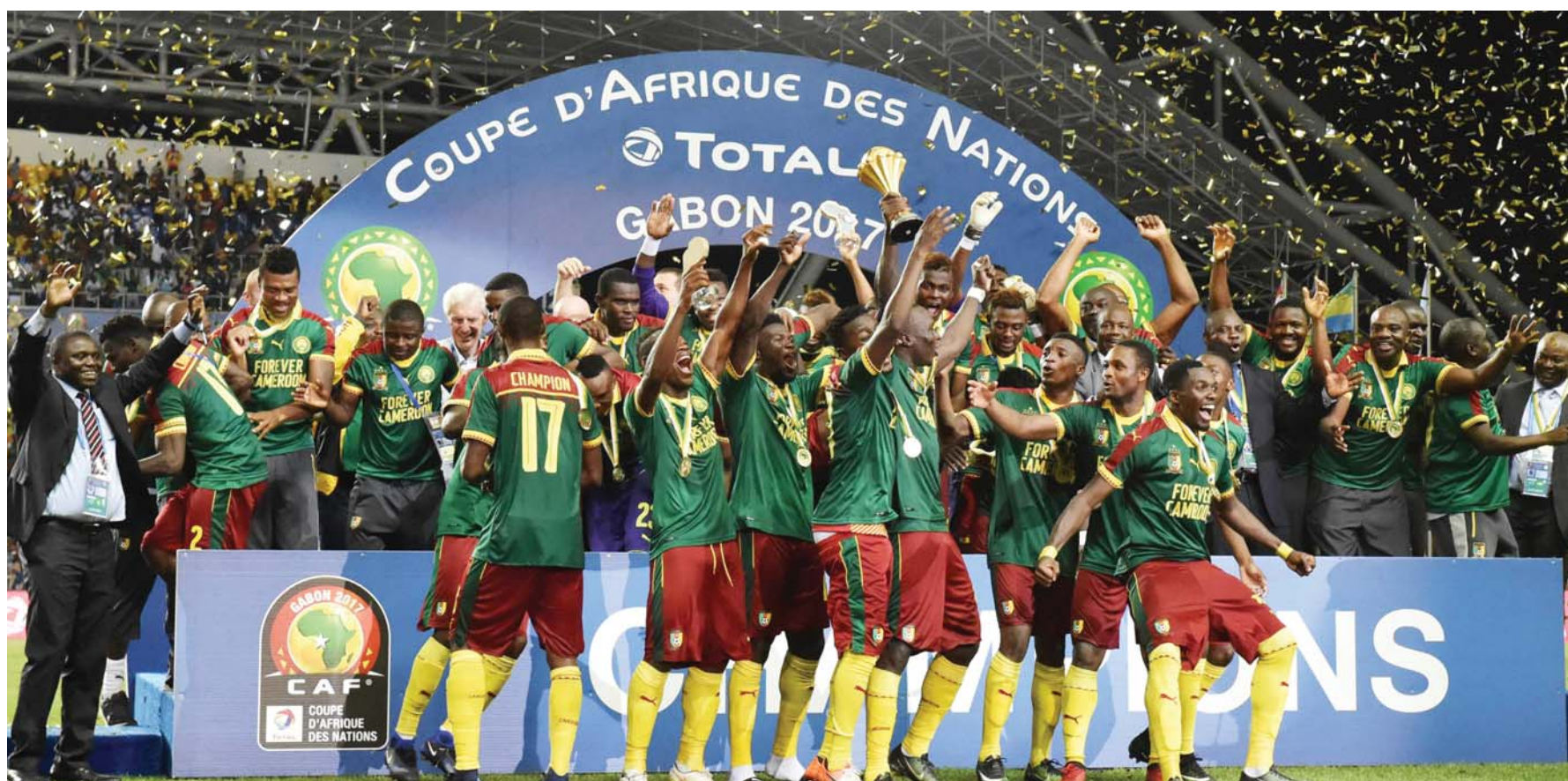

150 FILS NO: 17133 40 PAGES

ASSEMBLY TO HOLD DEBATE ON KHOR ABDULLAH ISSUE

GHANEM: SOME GRILLINGS POLITICALLY MOTIVATED


 Min 01°
 Max 16°
 High Tide
 07:55 & 18:35
 Low Tide
 12:48 & 12:48

'INDOMITABLE LIONS' CROWNED AFRICA KINGS



LIBREVILLE: Cameroon players celebrate with the trophy after beating Egypt 2-1 to win the 2017 Africa Cup of Nations final football match at the Stade de l'Amitié Sino-Gabonaise yesterday. —AFP (See Page 20)

By B Izzak and A Saleh

KUWAIT: Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem yesterday said that he will invite the government to brief the National Assembly in a closed debate on Feb 14 on the shared Khor Abdullah waterway with Iraq. The issue of the narrow estuary has become an issue in Iraq, leading to demonstrations in the southern city of Basra, with a number of Iraqi parliamentarians accusing Kuwait of taking part of Iraqi territorial waters.

Kuwaiti and Iraqi land and maritime borders were demarcated under the UN Security Council resolution 833 issued in 1993 when former Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein was still in power. Land borders were demarcated in a simple way, but it took the two countries until 2012 to demarcate the maritime borders in Khor Abdullah, which faces the Kuwaiti islands of Warba and Boubyan, where the Mubarak Al-Kabeer container harbor is being built.

A number of MPs strongly demanded government action in response to what they described as Iraqi provocations concerning Khor Abdullah. "Iraqi MPs statements in this regard are irresponsible because Kuwaiti-Iraqi borders are governed by UN resolutions. Somebody in fishing in troubled waters," they stressed. In this regard, MP Saleh Ashour said that the government has to immediately form an operations room to track anti-Kuwait developments in Iraq.

MP Ali Al-Degbasi said the parliamentary foreign affairs committee will convene today to discuss the 'usual' Iraqi provocations. "It is obvious that the US-Iran honeymoon is over," he said on his Twitter account. MP Marzouq Al-Khalifa urged the foreign ministry to take serious measures and not to take the Iraqi demonstrations lightly. MP Abdullah Fahad Al-Enezi urged the government to summon the Iraqi ambassador and express its objection to alleged claims on the waterway and call off the Iraq donors conference.

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News

in brief

Chilly Qatar suffers coldest ever day

DOHA: Desert state Qatar recorded the lowest ever temperature in the country's history yesterday, just 1.5 degrees Celsius, according to a statement posted online by state media. A weather station in the southwest of the country - Abu Samra - recorded the temperature, equivalent to 34 degrees Fahrenheit, in the "early morning", said a statement from Qatar News Agency (QNA). "The new record low temperature is the lowest since the 3.8 degrees recorded in January of 1964," said the QNA. Temperatures have been relatively low for the past several days in the Gulf state and the Qatar Meteorology Department said this was due to an area of high pressure. Qatar usually makes headlines for its hot weather. Most notably, football's governing body FIFA switched the timing of the 2022 World Cup, being held in Qatar, to November and December because of fears over the country's ferocious summer heat, where temperatures can regularly reach 50 degrees Celsius.

Bomb blast in Bahrain, no casualties: Govt

DUBAI: A bomb exploded on a main street near the Bahraini capital yesterday, causing no casualties in what the government described as a "terrorist" act. "Terrorist bombing on Budaya Street damages multiple cars without casualties," read a tweet by the interior ministry. Bahrain last month executed three men found guilty of killing policemen, including an Emirati officer who was part of a Gulf force that entered the kingdom to help quell protests. A policeman was also shot dead in a village last month. Authorities described the shooting as "terrorist".

Qatar Airways launches world's longest flight

DOHA: Qatar Airways launched the world's longest scheduled commercial service with its inaugural flight from Doha to Auckland taking off eight minutes early yesterday, a company spokeswoman said. Flight QR920 left the Qatari capital at 05:02 (0202 GMT) and was set to land in New Zealand at 07:30 local time today (1830 GMT). The Boeing 777 flight will take 16 hours and 20 minutes, pass over 10 time zones, five countries and travel 14,535 km before reaching Auckland. But even that flying time may be looked on jealously by passengers on the return flight which, due to high-altitude winds, will take 17 hours and 30 minutes, according to the company website. This will make it the world's longest passenger service in terms of flying time, according to tracking website flightradar24. Qatar Airways did not immediately have a figure for the number of passengers who boarded on Sunday, but it is believed there are four pilots and 15 crew on the plane.

TRUMP IMMIGRATION BAN IN LIMBO

VISA HOLDERS RUSH TO BOARD FLIGHTS AMID REPRIEVE



LOS ANGELES: Naimah Qazi (left) and Hatal Ashraph, both of Hawthorne, California, protest the executive order by US President Donald Trump banning immigrants from seven majority-Muslim countries at Los Angeles International Airport on Saturday. — AFP

PALM BEACH: A US appeals court has rejected a government request to reinstate President Donald Trump's controversial immigration ban, prompting travelers from seven mainly Muslim nations to hurry to enter the country before the next legal twist. The early-morning ruling from a federal appeals court was the latest chapter in a saga which began on Jan 27, when Trump issued a blanket ban on all refugees and travelers from Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen.

Trump, known for his early morning tweet storms, did not offer an immediate comment about the ruling, but Vice President Mike Pence, who made the rounds on yesterday's TV political talk shows, called the decision "frustrating". "We will move very quickly," Pence told Fox News. "We are going to win the arguments because we will take the steps necessary to protect the country, which the president of the United States has the authority to do."

On Saturday, the Manhattan property mogul had unleashed a string of fiery tweets defending his policy and attacking federal judge James Robart, who on Friday blocked the ban nationwide pending a wider legal review. "The opinion of this so-called judge, which essentially takes law-enforcement away from our country, is ridiculous and will be overturned!"

Trump wrote on Twitter, in rare criticism of a judge by a sitting president. "The judge opens up our country to potential terrorists and others that do not have our best interests at heart. Bad people are very happy!" Trump's original executive order slapped a blanket ban on entry for nationals of the seven countries for 90 days and barred all refugees for 120 days. Refugees from Syria were blocked indefinitely.

In an appeal filed late Saturday, the Justice Department said that suspending the ban was causing "irreparable harm" to the American public. It said Robart's ruling had run afoul of constitutional separation of powers, and "second-guesses the president's national security judgment". But in the early hours of Sunday morning, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals rejected a request calling for the travel ban to be immediately reinstated.

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WORRIES ANEW THAT US COULD REVIVE TORTURE

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump's advocacy of waterboarding and the promotion of a CIA official who once led brutal interrogations have raised concerns that the United States could yet resume torturing suspects in its fight against Islamist extremists. Last week the leaked draft of a White House executive order detailed a desire to reopen CIA "black sites" used in so-called enhanced interrogations in the early 2000s and to ease tough restrictions on interrogation techniques set by former president Barack Obama.

On Thursday, the Central Intelligence Agency announced that Gina Haspel would become the agency's deputy director, answering to new director Mike Pompeo. Haspel, a veteran undercover agent, presided over the interrogations of Al-Qaeda detainees Abu Zubaydah and Abd al-Rahim Al-Nashiri in a secret CIA facility in Thailand after the 9/11 attacks.

Continued on Page 13

TRUMP CABINET PICK PAID BY CONTROVERSIAL IRANIAN GROUP

DUBAI: An official in US President Donald Trump's Cabinet and at least one of his advisers gave paid speeches for organizations linked to an Iranian exile group that killed Americans before the 1979 Islamic Revolution, ran donation scams and saw its members set themselves on fire over the arrest of their leader. Elaine Chao, confirmed this week as Trump's transportation secretary, received \$50,000 in 2015 for a five-minute speech to the political wing of the Mujahideen-e-Khalq, previously called a "cult-like" terrorist group by the State Department.

Former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani also was paid an unknown sum to talk to the group, known as the MEK. More than two dozen former US officials, both Republican and Democratic, have spoken before the MEK, including former House Speaker and Trump adviser Newt Gingrich. Some have publicly acknowledged being paid, but others have not. While nothing



Elaine Chao

would have prohibited the paid speeches, they raise questions about what influence the exiles may have in the new administration.

Already, a group of former US officials, including Giuliani, wrote a letter to Trump last month encouraging him to "establish a dialogue" with the MEK's political arm.

With Trump's ban on Iranians entering the US, his administration's call this week to put Iran "on notice" and the imposition of new sanctions on Friday, the exile group may find his administration more welcoming than any before.

A potential alliance with the MEK would link the US to a group with a controversial history that has gone against American interests in the past by supporting Iran's Islamic Revolution and the US Embassy takeover in Tehran.

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His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah holds official talks with Croatian President Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic, in presence of His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.



Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah and the Croatian Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Kuwait Tomislav Bosnjak sign the visa waiver agreement.—Amiri Diwan and KUNA photos

AMIR, CROATIAN PRESIDENT EXCHANGE HONORARY ORDERS

KUWAIT, CROATIA SIGN VISA WAIVER AGREEMENT

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah yesterday presented the visiting Croatian President Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic with the 'Order of Mubarak Al-Kabeer,' in recognition of the European nation's support of Kuwait. In return, His Highness the Amir was adorned with the 'Grand Order of King Tomislav,' the most prestigious state order of Croatia. Later yesterday, His Highness the Amir hosted a lunch banquet in honor of the visiting Croatian President and her accompanying delegation.

Meanwhile, Kuwait and Croatia signed an agreement on mutual visa exemption, in the presence of His Highness the Amir and President Grabar-Kitarovic. The

proceedings at Bayan Palace were also attended by His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

The agreement applies to holders of diplomatic passports and was co-signed by Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah and the Croatian Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Kuwait Tomislav Bosnjak.

In the meantime, President Grabar-Kitarovic met separately with National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem, His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak, Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh

Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Sabah as well as Oil, Electricity, and Water Minister Essam Abdulmehsen Al-Marzouq. Furthermore, she held a meeting with First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Hamad Al-Sabah, which highlighted bilateral relations and ways to boost them in all fields. The two sides also discussed developments in the region and international arena.

Also yesterday, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Anas Al-Saleh met with the visiting Croatian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Economy, Entrepreneurship and Crafts Martina Dalic at Bayan Palace.— KUNA



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah presents the 'Order of Mubarak Al-Kabeer' to Croatian President Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic.



Croatian President Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic meets with His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.



Croatian President Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic receives the certificate for the 'Order of Mubarak Al-Kabeer' from His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah



National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem greets Croatian President Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic during a lunch banquet hosted by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.



Croatian President Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic meets with First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Hamad Al-Sabah.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives the 'Grand Order of King Tomislav' from Croatian President Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic.



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with UAE's Speaker of the National Council Amal Abdullah Al-Qubaisi, in presence of His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. — Amiri Diwan and KUNA photos



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Sabah meets with UAE's Speaker of the National Council Amal Abdullah Al-Qubaisi.

AMIR MEETS WITH UAE NATIONAL COUNCIL'S CHIEF

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah accompanied by His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace yesterday UAE

Speaker of the National Council Amal Abdullah Al-Qubaisi and her accompanying delegation. The meeting was attended by Deputy Minister of the Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah. Qubaisi

and her delegation later met with His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Sabah as well.

Earlier yesterday, His Highness the Amir received His Highness the Crown Prince,

National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem, His Highness Prime Minister and First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. Meanwhile, His

Highness the Crown Prince received His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled, and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah. — KUNA

Local spotlight

WORKING IN THE COLD



By Muna Al-Fuzai

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Kuwait is experiencing a cold wave these days. The weather is freezing, with the wind bringing temperatures down, especially in the early hours of the morning. But every morning, we see workers heading to work in the extreme cold wearing dirty yellow uniforms or old and light clothes. Their choice is limited, so they tend to shield themselves from the wind by crouching on the sides of buildings.

The owners of their companies - either cleaning, contracting or construction - should be obliged by law to provide warm clothes and give them their financial dues on time, and not take advantage of their weakness and neediness. It is devastating to see images of protests by poor workers who haven't been paid for months. Last week, hundreds of Egyptian workers held a protest for not being paid for the last seven months. Sadly, the Kuwaiti owners are making millions of dinars, but don't care about these poor laborers who only came to Kuwait to make a living and not to suffer more and sink in debt.

We all see pictures and hear stories about the exploitation of workers by contractors and rich businessmen, which reflects negatively on the reputation of Kuwait, and perhaps even beyond this. It gives a wrong perception of Islam and portrays this as normal behavior by Muslims, which is something that we should not accept.

Charities are active these days in collecting money and clothing for refugees outside the country, but turn a blind eye to the people who are closer to them - sometimes just a few steps away from their doors. Few people give clothes to street workers, and maybe some food in the morning would be a nice gesture. I am sure those workers are hungry and would be grateful if given a little money or a sandwich. This is a kind gesture of humanity.

The society should support each other, especially vulnerable and needy people who are struggling these days because of the cold and possibly delayed salaries. Don't forget their needs of heating and heavy clothing. Let's extend a hand of mercy towards them. The cleaners keep our streets tidy and take away all the garbage that gets dumped, especially food, which is often thrown on the streets. These men have the right to be respected, appreciated and get assistance.

Some might argue this is an insignificant and trivial matter, but as long as we are bringing in these workers to our country every day, it is our responsibility to make their life easier. I believe that as much as we need them to clean our streets, we must remember that we also need to scrub out our prejudices towards these vulnerable people.

OIL SECTOR TO EMPLOY OVER 2,000 KUWAITIS IN 2017-18

KUWAIT: Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) is set to employ over 2,000 Kuwaitis for the fiscal year 2017-2018. With the new employment, the number of new Kuwaiti



Oil Minister Essam Al-Marzouq

workers in the oil sector will reach 4000 for the current and the next fiscal years, Minister of Oil and Minister of Electricity and Water Essam Al-Marzouq said in an interview published yesterday in Al-Anbaa newspaper.

Marzouq meanwhile noted that Kuwait's oil sector aims to boost production rate to reach four million barrels per day, develop the petrochemicals industry and increase outside investments as part of its 2040 vision.

The minister added that oil consumption in the country is currently at 350,000 barrels per day. He expected consumption to jump to extremely high rates for the coming years due to urban expansion. Marzouq added that Kuwait aims to use renewable energy to produce about 15 percent of its consumption needs. —KUNA



KUWAIT: Drugs found with two suspects arrested yesterday in Fintas.

FUGITIVES ARRESTED IN FINTAS, MAHBOULA

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Two citizens were arrested in Fintas with drugs, said security sources, after checking on the suspects, one of them was also discovered to be wanted by authorities over five different cases, while the other was found to be wanted for a financial claim to a local telecom company. Meanwhile, another citizen was arrested in Mahboula and discovered to be wanted in four different cases including a financial claim to a local telecom company and to serve a year in jail for assault.

Separately, the Interior Ministry's relations and security media department announced that the Ministry of Electricity and Water will disconnect power supply at Ardihiya Service Center in block 4 from 8:00 am to 11:00 am this morning to conduct some maintenance works.

KUWAIT-JAPAN COOPERATE ON WASTE MANAGEMENT

'WORKSHOP OF MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE'

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: A two-day conference on the environment kicked off yesterday at Costa del Sol Hote, under the auspices of Kuwait's Environment Public Authority (EPA) in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment in Japan. The event, titled 'Workshop of Municipal Solid Waste,' is being held to tackle environmental issues and outline the upcoming solid waste management project to be carried out in cooperation with Japan.

Environmental challenges

In his speech, Ahmad Al-Manfour, Director General of Kuwait Municipality acknowledged the fact that Kuwait faces environmental challenges, particularly regarding waste management. "Economic development, the growth of the population, urban expansion and industrial progress increased all types of waste. The country actually wasted a lot of money getting rid of waste that harms environment, and studies showed that each individual exceeded the average percentage. So we need to take measure and precautions," he urged.

"Waste can be used as a source of energy. It has economic value and many countries around the world are

using it now," he pointed out. Manfour said that private sector companies are helping the municipality to execute waste management in the country. "In November 2014, the municipality's engineering consultants funded feasibility studies on solid waste management. They recently finished the research and are now ready to start the project," he stated.

Global problem

Takashi Ashiki, the Japanese Ambassador to Kuwait, lauded Kuwait and Japan's continued cooperation on all fronts, specifically on the environment. Ashiki said waste management is not just a Kuwaiti problem, but also a global one. "It is well-connected to the population growth and economic progress. But Japan has succeeded in tackling this issue especially, when it comes to industrial waste," he opined. During the 1960s and 1970s, Ashiki told attendees that they had to tackle waste management issues, an order they successfully completed.

"After a lot of attempts from our engineers, we were able to effectively manage the impact of industrial waste, recycle waste and therefore preserve the environment," he said. "Every day in Japan, we exceeded the average of 1.5 kilograms of waste per person. It is the

highest in the world. So we really require a firm position on tackling this issue. We did, and everybody acknowledged our work and effort. In fact the Amir of Kuwait and your Prime Minister have already encouraged Kuwait's Municipality to cooperate with us on the issue of waste management. The plan for 2035 for a new Kuwait is also very encouraging to us. They want Kuwait to be the center of Arab activities with the aim of preserving a sustainable environment. We want to help Kuwait to tackle this issue."

Presentation

The two-day conference also included a presentation on a vision for the future development of landfill sites in Kuwait, environmental awareness programs, and sanitary landfill projects. The presentation also included recycle and re-use programs, environmental preservation by industrial companies, the presentation of waste management by the Environment Public Authority in Kuwait and solutions/recommendations from both sides.



KUWAIT: Ahmad Al-Manfour, Director General of Kuwait Municipality (left) presents a memento to Takashi Ashiki, the Japanese Ambassador to Kuwait. —Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

FIRM TO INSPECT KUWAIT'S TAX EVASION PREVENTION MEASURES

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: A delegation from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) is scheduled to visit Kuwait in May to review its readiness for applying the agreement of Common Reporting Standard (CRS), which aims at fighting tax evasion. Informed sources said the visit aims at urging the procedures needed to implement the agreement Kuwait signed last year to be retroactive since 2017 and effective by 2018.

Health insurance

Health Minister Dr Jamal Al-Harbi announced that no violations had so far been detected in distributing the 'Afyah' health insurance cards for retired citizens. "Legal and financial penal measures included in the contract signed between the Ministry of Health and the insurance company will be applied in the event of detecting any violations," he stressed, noting that those measures may go as far as excluding the violator from the

medical service providers' network. Harbi added that all medical service prices provided through Afya cards are preset, and the service provider cannot change them during the contract's tenure.

Retirement

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry is expected to refer two assistant undersecretaries to retirement by next week, then fill vacancies in various sectors with a reshuffle.



KUWAIT: Minister of Public Works Abdurrahman Al-Mutawaa opened yesterday the third phase of the Jamal Abdul-Nasser Road's intersections, which is a four-kilometer-long road consisting of overpasses that connect Ghermata with the Airport Road. —KUNA photos

Legalese

HOW TO HIRE A LAWYER

By Attorney Fajer Ahmed

Fortunately and unfortunately, the Kuwaiti market is saturated with lawyers - the good, the bad and the ugly, as well as everything in between. So when I decided to start my own law firm, my lawyer friends didn't think it was a good idea. "Surely Fajer, you can join one of us," was the repeated refrain by them with care and love, but I didn't want to.

I had a different vision then - I wanted my firm to be approachable (and affordable) by anyone and at any time, whether you are a blue collar worker or a CEO. I wanted people to feel welcome when they walked in. I am not a fan of unnecessary formalities and I like to keep the law simple. Of course, this does not mean that there are not lawyers with more experience than me in the market or who are more efficient, and so on. There are many great lawyers that I have had the pleasure to work with (and still do) who love what they do and want to make Kuwait a better place. Today I will be answering questions that are common, especially from expats or people that never needed to see a lawyer before and have concerns.

'Perfect lawyer'

Question: How do you choose the perfect lawyer?

Fajer: Choosing a lawyer should in my opinion be like choosing any other craftsman - do your research and weigh your options. I suggest you go to three different lawyers and see who you are more comfortable with. Do not go for cheaper or more expensive though, because how much they charge is not going to make a difference on how well they do. Always ask your lawyer for past experiences with similar cases. Do not be afraid to ask questions.

Question: What should you ask for or what should you avoid?

Fajer: Always ask for a contract between you and the lawyer, either in English if you do not speak Arabic, or if they cannot provide you with an English contract, ask them for time (even if it is just a few hours) to get a friend to read the Arabic and translate. Or you can take a photo of the contract and do not sign it until you understand everything written in it. If you do end up signing it, ask for a copy of the contract you signed. Make sure you know if your lawyer will appeal for you, pay the court fees, pay for any translation fees and do any execution on your behalf (I will talk more about execution of court verdicts in the next question).

Power of attorney

Question: When I got a POA for my lawyer, I was asked by the ministry if I wanted my lawyer to have the right to obtain money on my behalf (execute a verdict on my behalf). What do you suggest?

Fajer: First, let me explain what a POA is - it is a power of attorney that gives your lawyer the right to continue on your behalf any legal processes required. Some POA will give the lawyer the right to obtain money on your behalf. Let me give a common example - let us say you sue your previous employer for not giving you your indemnity, your lawyer wins and your indemnity is KD 15,000. If you gave your lawyer the right to obtain money on your behalf, then they could take the amounts and then transfer them to you. This is something you should discuss with your lawyer, because there are positive and negative consequences. Positive being that it is less work for you to execute the verdict and it is only negative if you are having difficulties trusting your lawyer. So I suggest you understand this point carefully.

Question: What are the common charges for lawyers?

Fajer: I get this question a lot and really it depends on the type of case and the type of proof required (what documents you have and what documents are missing). It is a service industry and therefore every lawyer has a different way for charging their clients. One thing to keep in mind though is only trust lawyers who studied your case before they provided you with a quotation. I personally do not trust lawyers that give quotations without seeing the whole picture.

I wish you all good luck and always, always, always ask your lawyer to negotiate before going to court. You will be surprised how much money and time you could save yourself, your lawyer and the country! Since I have answered questions about how to hire a lawyer and things to keep in mind, my office will refrain from answering any questions about your case if you already have a lawyer, because it is not right for us to interfere with our colleagues' work.

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

In Brief

AMIR OFFERS CONDOLENCES
OVER UAE SOLDIER'S DEATH

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of condolences to UAE President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahyan over the "martyrdom" of a UAE soldier during his duty as part of the Saudi-led Arab coalition supporting legitimacy in Yemen. Similar cables were also sent to the UAE president by His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. — KUNA



KUWAIT CONDEMNS
LOUVRE TERROR ATTACK

KUWAIT: Kuwait strongly condemned Friday's attack inside the Louvre Museum, central Paris, in which a French soldier was injured, a foreign ministry source said on Saturday. Kuwait is standing by France and supports all measures Paris takes to preserve the country's security and stability, the source said in a statement. He reaffirmed Kuwait's firm rejection of all forms of terrorism and violence, urging the international community to redouble efforts to eradicate terrorism. — KUNA



US DOLLAR STABLE
AGAINST DINAR

KUWAIT: The rate of the US Dollar against the Kuwaiti Dinar stable at KD 0.304, as well as the euro stabilizing KD 0.328, compared to yesterday prices, the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) said yesterday. According to the CBK, the Sterling Pound went down KD 0.380, while the Swiss Franc went down to KD 0.306. Meanwhile, the Japanese Yen stood firm at KD 0.002. — KUNA



Photo

of the day



KUWAIT: Flamingo birds swim in Kuwait's blue waters. — KUNA photo

KUWAIT, ROMANIA DISCUSS
COOPERATION IN CIVIL DEFENSE



Kuwaiti Ambassador to Romania Talal Mansour Al-Hajri meets with Romanian head of the Department for Emergency Situations at Ministry of Internal Affairs Raed Arafat.

VIENNA: Kuwait and Romania discussed means of enhancing cooperation in various fields of civil defense, Kuwaiti embassy in Romania said in a press statement yesterday. The statement noted that Kuwaiti Ambassador to Romania Talal Mansour Al-Hajri and Romanian head of the Department for Emergency Situations at Ministry of Internal Affairs Raed Arafat tackled, in a meeting, means of promoting cooperation in the fields of civil defense, emergencies and rescue operations.

They also discussed signing a proposed Memorandum of Understanding in civil defense. Hajri extended an invitation to Kuwaiti officials to visit Romania to be familiarized with the Romanian experience on this matter. Kuwait was the first Gulf country to establish diplomatic relations in 1963. In 2006, Kuwait opened its embassy in the capital Bucharest. — KUNA



DODOMA: Kuwaiti Ambassador to Tanzania Jassem Al-Najem meets with Tanzanian Foreign Minister Augustine Mahiga. — KUNA

TANZANIAN FM LAUDS
TIES WITH KUWAIT

DODOMA: Tanzanian Foreign Minister Augustine Mahiga has hailed ties between his country and the State of Kuwait calling for cementing these relations in various spheres. Mahiga expressed satisfaction at the bilateral relations' level during a reception of Kuwaiti Ambassador to Tanzania, Jassem Al-Najem, in the African nation. During the session, Ambassador Al-Najem handed minister Mahiga a written message from First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

The Kuwaiti embassy in Tanzania released a statement in which it quoted minister Mahiga as hailing continued contacts with Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled, exchanging views on a host of political

issues on the African and international arenas. A Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) delegation of technical experts visited Tanzania in December, tentatively approving funding a highway in West Tanzania and renovating the main hospital in Zanzibar. Minister Mahiga underscored necessity of boosting mutual commercial exchanges between the two friendly countries to a level parallel to that of the distinctive bilateral political ties and encouraging Kuwaiti public and private investments in his country. Moreover, he underlined the need to solicit Kuwaiti oil and gas expertise to develop recently-discovered fields in a region bordering Mozambique, hoping that local personnel undergo training by Kuwaiti oil companies. — KUNA

JORDAN THANKS KUWAIT FOR
SUPPORTING SYRIAN REFUGEES

AMMAN: A Jordanian humanitarian official on Saturday thanked Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) for its continued support of Syrian refugees in Jordan. KRCS has been providing humanitarian supplies for Syrian refugees in Jordan since outbreak of Syrian crisis in March 2011, and in coordination with Jordan's Red Crescent (JRC), Dr Mohammad Al-Hadeed, chairman of JRC, said.

Speaking after a meeting with Anwar Al-Hasawi, KRCS's vice-chairman, at the conclusion of the society's latest relief campaign, Hadeed said that Kuwait is a role model for other countries when offering aid for people hit by disasters.

Hasawi said it was KRCS's policy to provide humanitarian, medical and development aid for people in need worldwide. He said KRCS "will continue offering aid for the Syrian brothers in Jordan and in Syria's neighboring countries, which falls within the government and public support of this humanitarian issue."

KRCS' teams distributed food, clothes and blankets in addition to financial aid, Hasawi said. He said the society has wide experience in relief operations, and the teams on the ground contributed to many campaigns. Hasawi hoped the plight of Syrian refugees would end very soon. — KUNA



AMMAN: Chairman of JRC Dr Mohammad Al-Hadeed (left) meets with KRCS's vice-chairman Anwar Al-Hasawi. — KUNA

COMMITTEE TAKES PART
IN ARAB, GLOBAL MEETINGS

KUWAIT: The Women Affairs Committee at the Cabinet will take part in the 36th session of the Arab Women Committee at the Arab League that will kick off in Bahrain today and will continue for two days.

In a press statement, the committee said it will also participate in the Arab preparatory conference of the 61st session of the Commission on the Status of Women in UN, adding that Bahrain will host the two meetings under the auspices of the Arab League and Sheikhha Sabeeka bint Ibrahim Al Khalifa.

Chairperson of Women's Affairs Committee at the Cabinet Sheikhha Latifa Fahad Al-Salem Al-Sabah received an invitation from Secretary-General of the Arab League Ahmad Abul-Gheit to participate in the 36th session of the Arab Women Committee at the Arab League. Sheikhha Latifa underscored the impor-

ance of attending the 36th session as it will discuss issues of women empowerment and advancement at the Arab level, referring to the importance of Kuwaiti participation at all regional and international events. Sheikhha Latifa headed a Kuwaiti delegation that will participate in the two meetings. — KUNA



Sheikhha Latifa Fahad Al-Salem Al-Sabah



KUWAIT: Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah meets with Ambassador of Bosnia Mehmet Khililovich. — KUNA



Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah meets with Ambassador of Sudan Muhieddine Salem.



Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah meets with Ambassador of Brazil Norton Rapesta.

MINISTER SHEIKH NASSER HOSTS ENVOYS

KUWAIT: Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah held separate meetings yesterday with ambassadors of Bosnia

Mehmet Khililovich, Sudan Muhieddine Salem and Brazil Norton Rapesta. During the meetings with the diplomats, Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah

Al-Ahmad lauded relations between the State of Kuwait and the envoys' countries, affirming keenness on boosting these ties. — KUNA



Several photos taken from a five-day visit conducted by a delegation from Kuwait Bar Association to the Netherlands. — KUNA

KUWAITI LAWYERS CONCLUDE VISIT TO NETHERLANDS

BRUSSELS: A 35-member delegation from Kuwait Bar Association has concluded a five-day visit to Netherlands. During the visit, the delegation toured several Hague-based international courts and met several senior judiciary and legal personalities to discuss boosting cooperation and to get acquainted with work mechanisms and expertise in these courts. Among the institutions visited by the delegation was the International Court of Justice (ICJ).

ICJ President Ronny Abraham has welcomed the Kuwaiti delegation and briefed them about the ICJ charter and work mechanisms, Counselor to the Kuwaiti Embassy in The Hague and President of the Administrative and Financial Committee at the International Court of Arbitration Tareq Al-Shumaimri on Saturday. Abraham has also talked with delegation about his career and expertise in judicial domain, Shumaimri noted.

He added that the delegation has visited the International Court Arbitration and the International Criminal Court where it attended a hearing about examination of a territorial dispute between Somalia and Kenya, and the trial of a suspect accused of carrying out a genocide in an African country.

The delegation visited the Kuwaiti Embassy in The Hague where they were welcomed by the Ambassador Shamlan Al-Roumi. The aim of the visit is to gain international experience in trials and mechanism of action of the lawyers in those courts. The visit to the Netherlands by the Kuwaiti lawyers is the second of its kind since 2015. — KUNA



KUWAIT: The 2017 Kuwait International Festival for Arabian Horses kicked off Saturday night at the Arabian Horse Center (Bait Al-Arab) under the patronage of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. Amiri Diwan Advisor Khalid Boodai attended the festival on behalf of His Highness the Amir. — KUNA

Crime

Report

INTERIOR FOLLOWS UP IRAQI DEMONSTRATIONS

KUWAIT: Well-informed security sources said Ministry of Interior is following up with concern some demonstrations on the Iraqi side of Khor Abdullah, but noted that the matter was left to diplomats because it was an Iraqi domestic concern.

Smuggling foiled

An Ethiopian woman was arrested on arrival at Kuwait International Airport with possession of eight kilograms of qat hidden in ground coffee in her luggage. Security sources said the suspect denied any knowledge of the drug and claimed that she was only delivering the package.

False alarm

A citizen informed police that he received a call from a landline number that was identified by a smartphone app as 'Terrorist Organization,' which terrified him. However, on checking the number, policemen found it belongs to a charity that calls people randomly, asking them to donate.

Traffic dispute

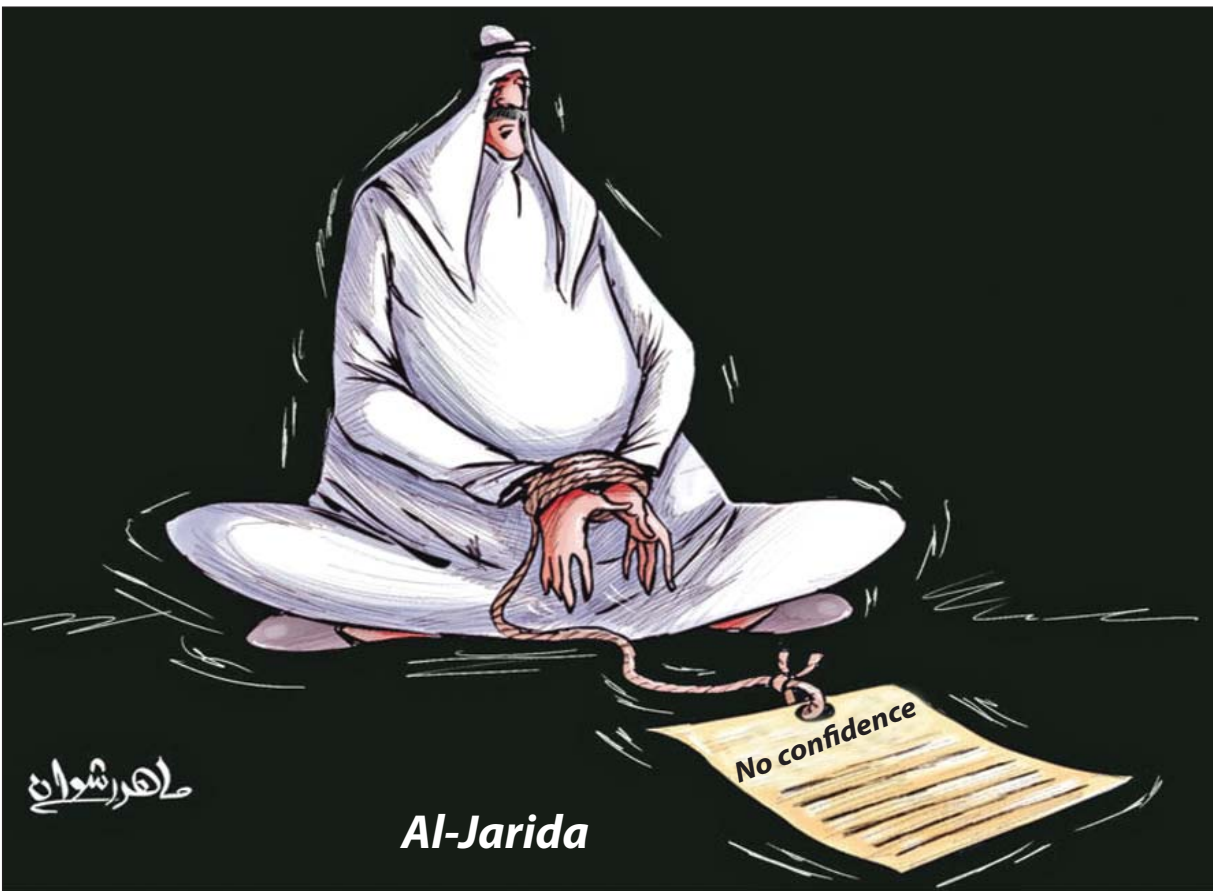
A man and a woman, both Kuwaitis, were arrested for fighting in the street following a traffic dispute, said security sources, noting that the woman used her shoe as a weapon during the fight before passersby called the police.

Restaurant robbed

The manager of a Jahra restaurant reported that an unidentified robber assaulted him and stole one of the restaurant's delivery vehicles. Security sources said that only half an hour after filing the report, the manager returned to the police station to report that the robber had brought it back. However, the manager insisted on filing a report lest the robber had used the vehicle for any illegal activities.

Forgery

A citizen was arrested for entering the country without registering his entry with the Ministry of Interior's border systems at Salmi land border post. Security sources said that the man, who works in the exit department, had officially left for a GCC state through the Nuwaiseeb land border exit, and a week later returned through Salmi, where he was warmly received and entertained by his coworkers, then went home without registering his entry. The sources added that a few days later, his supervisor noticed that he had not been registered while entering the country, despite the fact that he was already at work behind the counter. — Translated from the Arabic press



Al-Jarida

القلمس

THANK YOU SALMAN

Al-Qabas

By Qais Al-Usta

I do not know so far if the National Assembly will decide to renew its confidence in the Information Minister and State Minister for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Al-Humoud Al-Sabah, as the factors relating to the matter are complex and varied, coming from both inside and outside the Assembly. But I know that the state of the Information Ministry in general, and culture in particular, went through a positive phase with Sheikh Salman Al-Sabah.

With him in charge, Kuwait broke the barrier of naming facilities after people who passed away. Instead, we saw theaters named after those still living among us. Furthermore, we also witnessed the opening of Kuwait's biggest cultural and media facility; the Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Center. Meanwhile, work is also underway for the inauguration of the Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Cultural Center.

With him in charge, we started seeing talk-shows restore reasonable political freedom, while Kuwait's tele-

vision recovered part of its viewership that had begun to favor other channels. But this side - the information ministry's side - is not the reason for the lack of confidence in the minister, even if the grillers brought up things related to dancers and the like.

The real reason is sports' affairs and the struggle going on within this thorny topic. Some people hope that the minister would not continue in his post because of the stands he has taken against their interests. I am not interested in discussing this struggle, but having some elected MPs carry out a proxy-grilling on behalf of others disturbs me.

We criticized the previous National Assembly a lot out of our believe that it was heavily influenced from outside. However, it seems that a large group of MPs in the current Assembly have turned into opposition sheikhs! Has the message been delivered? I hope so.

— Translated by Kuwait Times

ZAIN PLATINUM SPONSOR OF 'INNOVATION CULTURE' WORKSHOP

FACILITATED BY DR OSTERWALDER FOR FIRST TIME IN KUWAIT

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, announced its platinum sponsorship of the biggest strategy and innovation workshop, titled 'Innovation Culture.' The workshop was held for the first time in Kuwait, and was facilitated by renowned speaker Dr Alexander Osterwalder.

Zain's support to this workshop came in line with the company's strategy that aims at developing its human resources, as it considers its employees the most valuable asset and a main element of its overall success.

Zain, a leading private sector company, also aimed to provide world-class training programs for those who are interested in business innovation in the Kuwaiti private sector.

The workshop, held over a period of three days, discussed value proposition design and business model innovation, and was facilitated by renowned speaker Dr Alexander Osterwalder. Dr Osterwalder is the inventor of the Business Model Canvas, and author of the international bestseller 'Business Model Generation.' His strategies were recognized by some of the world's

leading education providers, including Stanford University, Berkeley University of California, IMD, Wharton University of Pennsylvania, King Abdullah University for Science and Technology, and others.

The workshop provided private sector organizations as well as Zain employees the opportunity to learn about designing, testing, building, and managing innovative business models. Dr Osterwalder's Business Model Canvas is used by over five million people from the world's leading brands, and has been translated into over 30 languages.

Zain has reserved exclusive seats for its employees, giving them an opportunity to attend and gain valuable information as part of its comprehensive developmental strategy towards its own human resources. The company will spare no efforts into providing its employees with world-class training programs with the aim of developing their skills, ultimately providing its customers with the highest quality services. As a leading telecommunications company, Zain acknowledges the importance of providing a platform that brings together international experts from several areas such as business innovation, economics, finance, marketing, and social fields to offer a range of realistic solutions to the challenges faced by institutions.



KUWAIT: Gulf Bank team members pose with the two World Finance Magazine Awards.

GULF BANK'S DIGITAL INNOVATION CONTINUES WITH TWO AWARDS FROM WORLD FINANCE

'BEST MOBILE BANKING APPLICATION' AND 'BEST DIGITAL BANK'

KUWAIT: Recognition of Gulf Bank's digital innovation continues with two awards from World Finance Magazine an international bi-monthly print and online magazine providing comprehensive coverage and analysis of the financial industry, international business and the global economy. Gulf Bank has won "Best Digital Bank 2016 - Kuwait" award and "Best Mobile Banking Application 2016 - Kuwait" awards.

Laila Al-Qatami, Assistant General Manager of Corporate Communications at Gulf Bank said: "The awards we received from World Finance further affirm the success of Gulf Bank's strategy to provide its valued customers with innovative and easy to use products. We are proud to be the first bank in the Middle East to deploy a first of its kind biometric facial recognition mobile banking application, one that our customers have embraced due its simplicity and functionality. At the same time we also revamped our online banking platform, offering enhanced functionality and streamlined design based on customers' needs."

Qatami continued: "When we designed our mobile banking app, we paid great attention to simplicity and efficiency of movement, ensuring the customer is never more than 3 clicks away from their desired transaction. These innovations underline the Bank's strategy for moving its customer base over to digital while appealing to the nation's rapidly growing youth market segment."

World Finance Awards includes a judging panel that boasts over 230 years of financial and business journalism, supported by a research team that works round the clock to ensure that award winners are the most deserving in their sector. World Finance also relies on reader insight and experience to provide nominations to the judging panel, and they relish hearing about new experts and burgeoning markets.

World Finance award programs are tailored to provide a comprehensive analysis of the very best in each market. Its panel has been wary to avoid the danger of bias towards criteria such as depth of practice and size of company, in order to get an insight into different geographies and niche areas.

Following the submission of Gulf Bank to World Finance

الجريدة Al-Jarida

A FACE FROM THE LAND OF HUMANITY

By Hassan Al-Essa

Just to remind narcissists and the Kuwaiti administration that shows no care for humane values: Those serving in our homes and places of work, those cleaning our streets and keeping our sewers flowing, those teaching our children, and those medically treating us and comforting our patients have become as essential as the air we breathe in the land of sponsorship, and are as human as we are!

They are not genetically different or anything else. Those expatriates want nothing but some sense of their humanity. They are entitled to be treated as human beings, not as machines or robots, subjected to impulsive administrative decisions made in disregard for their disgraceful impact on victims.

It is such a shame to see hundreds lining up in queues to pay their health insurance fees, waiting there for endless hours. One of them told me that he went to the center at 3:00 am hoping to avoid standing in long queues, but discovered that over 200 people have already lined up there.

A photo published in a local daily showed one of those depressed people standing in line with a blanket wrapped around his shoulders to keep him warm during the cold night hours. It was a surreal scene, similar to those of the Syrian and Iraqi refugees fleeing civil wars in their homelands. There is no real war here, except one of bewilderment about what we are doing to expats and how we can 'squeeze' their manpower utility without paying a single fils from the state budget!

The Health Minister, who is currently out of the country and actually out of time, issued a decision to not renew the contract of the company that issues health insurance cards, which expires in July. "MOH (the Ministry of Health) is keen on public funds and cannot violate the contract conditions," said a spokesperson on behalf of the ministry that is responsible for those long, agonized queues. He added that an expat cannot renew residency visas unless they pay the health insurance fee.

It seems that the Interior Ministry, represented by the immigration department, has no connections with MOH, despite the fact that both of them are state departments. What to do, then, after the company laid off some of its employees in anticipation of its contract's termination? MOH waited for the return of the Health Minister and his assistant undersecretary for legal affairs to find a solution, leaving those depressed people lining up before dawn. Nothing to do but wait for 'His Excellency' to return with a magical solution. The scene of the queue full of tortured expats, the majority of whom are poor and forgotten, is a different face of the land of humanity.

— Translated by Kuwait Times



America's LGBT community awaits Trump's next move

TENSIONS FLARE BETWEEN ALLIES GREECE AND TURKEY



WASHINGTON: In this file photo, President Donald Trump, flanked by Vice President Mike Pence and Chief of Staff Reince Priebus, signs his first executive order on health care in the Oval Office of the White House in Washington.—AP

TRUMP’S GO-IT-ALONE STRATEGY CARRIES ITS OWN RISKS

US PRESIDENT TRIES TO MAXIMIZE EXECUTIVE MUSCLE

WASHINGTON: Like his predecessor, President Donald Trump seized on a go-it-alone strategy for fast-tracking his agenda. It took him two weeks to run into the nation’s system of checks and balances. The legal battle over his executive order on immigration and refugees is a surprisingly early demonstration of a lesson all presidents learn eventually. Governing by executive action may appear easier and faster, but it carries its own legal and political risks. President Barack Obama was confronted with that reality late in his tenure when, thwarted by the GOP-controlled House, he used what he called a “pen and phone” strategy to advance his agenda. He ultimately found one of his most sweeping actions, the expansion of a program deferring deportation for some immigrants, blocked by the courts, while Republicans blasted him for what they said was an abuse of power.

Republicans have been notably quiet as Trump has taken a similar approach, particularly taking advantage of the precedent giving the president broad leeway when it comes to immigration. A federal judge’s order in Seattle Friday evening blocking Trump’s ban on admitting travelers from seven predominantly Muslim countries showed the limits of the president’s powers and the role of checks and balances among the three branches of government. The administration appealed the judge’s order, but the higher court denied its request for an immediate stay that would have enabled Trump to reinstate the ban. The State Department cancelled visas for about 60,000 people from the affected countries; the legal setbacks had many rushing to restore their documents and find flights to the United States over the weekend.

Trump isn’t alone in trying to maximize executive muscle. Presidents rarely voluntarily restrict their own power. And recent presidents also have used a burst of unilateral action to spur progress at the start of their administrations and to set a tone for Congress, where legislation often moves slowly. Trump’s opening weeks have shown he’s likely to rely on the Republicans who hold a majority in Congress to pass top agenda items like overhauling the “Obamacare” law, changing the tax code and repairing aging roads and bridges. The president has also signed a blitz of actions on border security, health care and financial regulation, showing few signs of slowing down.

Mexico City policy

On Friday, Trump’s administration imposed sanctions on companies and individuals in response to Iran’s recent ballistic missile test - after months of bitter criticism of Obama’s landmark nuclear deal with Tehran. Still, his actions stand out for their sweep and haste. On some issues, Trump didn’t just leapfrog Congress, where his own party is in control, he cut Republicans out of the consultations and rollout of his plans. “I think that Trump has been unusually aggressive in the scope of what he is trying to do and also I think remarkably casual in issuing orders and other actions

that don’t appear to have gone through what would be a typical process of reviewing and vetting and consideration,” said Kenneth Mayer, a University of Wisconsin professor who has studied executive actions by presidents.

Since Inauguration Day, Trump has signed 20 memoranda and executive orders. That number is in line with Obama’s first two weeks. One of his orders directly reversed one of Obama’s early orders: The former president signed a memorandum in his first week in 2009 rescinding a ban on providing federal money to international groups that perform or provide information on abortions. Trump reinstituted the regulation, known as the “Mexico City Policy,” on his first day in office. In this, Mayer said Trump’s use of unilateral powers has shown some similarities to a general pattern set in 1993, 2001 and 2009 - when the White House switched parties. But he added that “there’s a big qualification.” None of those incoming presidents sparked the controversy that Trump did last week.

Chaos at airports and concern around the world quickly followed Trump’s signing of the executive order to temporarily ban all refugees and also travelers from seven Muslim-majority countries. The president said quick, forceful action was needed to reduce the threat of terrorist attacks. The executive actions on immigration have led to lawsuits. Interest groups also have vowed to challenge any unilateral efforts to curtail Obama’s environmental regulations and other rules. Despite his initial flurry of action, Obama became more reliant upon executive orders during his second term, when he faced opposition from Republicans.

Executive orders

“I’ve got a pen and I’ve got a phone,” he declared at one point, promising public orders and personal efforts to build support. When he acted unilaterally on immigration in 2014, providing temporary legal status to millions living in the US illegally, Republicans

insisted he was acting illegally. The House speaker at the time, John Boehner, accused him of acting like a king or an emperor. This time, with full control of the White House and Congress, Republicans have been largely muted in their assessments of Trump’s executive actions. A notable exception has been Arizona Sen. John McCain, who warned Trump not to allow the resumption of enhanced interrogation techniques such as water boarding following reports that the new administration was planning a review.

“The president can sign whatever executive orders he likes. But the law is the law. We are not bringing back torture in the United States of America,” McCain said. Democrats are broadly and bitterly opposed to Trump’s proposals - on the health care law, oil pipelines and the border wall - as well as the unilateral way he’s going about pursuing some of them. “What he is doing is reprehensible to them in most cases,” said Steve Elmendorf, a Democratic strategist and for-

mer aide to former House Democratic leader Dick Gephardt. The go-it-alone approach, Elmendorf said, is “going to inflame the base of the party and make it hard for Democrats to work with him on other issues.”

Even members of Trump’s own party have distanced themselves from the rollout of his executive orders on immigration. Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina said that Trump “didn’t think it through” and the orders were a “classic example of putting something out there that wasn’t ready for prime time.” But Graham said the bumpy start still pales in comparison to Obama’s use of executive action, pointing to federal courts blocking the former president’s executive actions on immigration and a piece of his health care overhaul. “Look what Obama did. His executive orders got struck down by the court. I’m not going to listen to a bunch of Democrats complain about Trump when they sat on the sidelines and did nothing about Obama,” he said.—AP

UNPREDICTABLE TRUMP FOREIGN POLICY MAY TEST US SPY ALLIANCES

WASHINGTON: Donald Trump’s unpredictable foreign policy could hamper longstanding US intelligence-sharing partnerships as countries react to a president who seeks closer ties to Russia and is unafraid to offend American allies by cracking down on immigration or getting angry with friendly leaders. Veteran spies say intelligence relationships are built to weather storms between political leaders. Even in the worst of times, allies share intelligence to thwart threats. But the lack of understanding about Trump’s foreign policy direction and his potential new friendship with Moscow are

creating jitters across the Western world.

“We are facing an unprecedented level of uncertainty today,” said John Blaxland, a former Australian intelligence official and professor at Australian National University. He said there is mutual benefit to these “broad, deep” intelligence sharing relationships, but added: “It is hard to calculate just how much damage the new president’s approach may have.” “It will be felt,” Blaxland predicted, “and it won’t be good.” Russia is a main concern. If Trump moves forward with efforts to improve US-Russian relations, European allies in particular will probably question

how safe their intelligence is in American hands. Russia’s annexation of Ukraine’s Crimean Peninsula in 2014 and threatening movements near the borders of NATO members in Eastern Europe have contributed to the perception of Moscow as a threat to national sovereignty. If American intelligence agencies are instructed to enhance cooperation with Russia, US allies see “significant counterintelligence threats that come with that,” said Steven Hall, a retired CIA chief of Russia operations. He said they “will be much more careful in the future.” As candidate and president, Trump has sparked widespread international unease by questioning the value of US military alliances, if not necessarily intelligence partnerships.

Reset policy

He called NATO “obsolete” and challenged countries such as South Korea and Japan to assume greater self-defense responsibility. In the last weeks, however, Trump advisers have gone out of their way to stress the durability of such arrangements and America’s commitment to its friends. Detente between Washington and Moscow is no sure thing, despite Trump’s intentions. Under President Barack Obama, relations between the former Cold War foes strained dramatically over Syria, Ukraine and alleged Russian meddling in the US presidential election after initially improving under a “reset” policy.

In recent days, Trump’s administration has reverted to criticizing the Kremlin after a flare-up of violence involving Russian-backed separatists in eastern Ukraine. Regardless of Trump’s new direction, Rep. Will Hurd, R-Texas, a former CIA officer and new member on the House Intelligence

Committee, said American intelligence professionals recognize the need to protect information they receive. “The point at which our allies will get concerned is if they believe that our intelligence professionals do not view Russia as an adversary,” he said. Trump’s sometimes impulsive style and lack of experience handling classified information also have foreign officials concerned.

Mark Galeotti at the Institute of International Relations in Prague, said European intelligence officials worry that Trump or his advisers will “blurt something out at the wrong moment or to the wrong person.” Allies might curtail what they share as a result, said Galeotti, who talks with intelligence officials in Europe and Russia. “It’s not so much about how much,” he said. “It’s precisely how heavily edited it is, how carefully it’s scrutinized to absolutely make sure that there is nothing that you are worried about leaking.”

Trump being Trump

Former French internal intelligence chief Louis Caprioli said European countries might hold information related to Ukraine or other issues closer, given the uncertainty of Trump’s relationship with Putin. But he said intelligence sharing will continue in critical areas, such as counterterrorism. “Intelligence services go beyond the political world,” Caprioli said. Still, allies fret about politics seeping into US intelligence findings. Trump has disparaged US intelligence agencies for past failures and publicly challenged their assessment that Russia meddled in the presidential election. A day after he was inaugurated, Trump delivered an unusual speech at the CIA headquarters criticizing the media’s coverage of his inaugural crowds.—AP



VIRGINIA: In this file photo, President Donald Trump, background, speaks at the Central Intelligence Agency in Langley, Virginia.—AP

MOSUL RESIDENTS OUTRAGED BY IS HOLE FEE

BAGHDAD: Cash-strapped jihadists punching holes in people's homes to move across west Mosul undetected are now asking victims to pay for the labor, several residents said yesterday. The fee is a modest 7,000 Iraqi dinars (around five US dollars) but adds insult to injury, said residents of Mosul's west bank, where the Islamic State group is digging in for a planned offensive by the Iraqi security forces. "Daesh is smashing holes in the walls of our homes without giving us a choice," said a resident of an area known as "Pepsi Street" who gave his name as Abu Asaad, using an Arabic acronym for IS.

"And they are forcing residents to pay 7,000 dinars to the workers who just

destroyed their homes," said Abu Asaad, who was among what he said were hundreds who had suffered the same fate. He said IS members told affected residents that the generated income would contribute to financing their defense of west Mosul against the security forces. Iraqi forces last month secured full control of the city's eastern half, marking the end of an important phase in the broad offensive launched on October 17 to retake the last major jihadist stronghold in the country.

"They gave us a choice to stay in our homes with the walls or leave," said Abu Asaad, who would not give his full name for fear of IS reprisals. Most residents of west Mosul have little or no electricity

and winter temperatures have regularly dipped below zero at night. The string of holes in adjacent homes acts like a street-level tunnel that allows fighters to move without losing their cover from the aircraft of the Iraqi government and its Western allies.

Human shields

Mohammed Jalil, who lives in the Najjar neighborhood near the Tigris river that divides the city, also saw his home pierced at both ends by IS sappers boring a covered pathway through his block. "We are all amazed that Daesh is still claiming to uphold Islamic values when they are tearing down the privacy of families whose houses are now open

and exposed to each other," he said. "I have a big family and, generally, we live in fear. We have nowhere else to go but if we stay we will be caught in the middle of the military operation," Jalil said.

"How can we all stay in a house that gunmen are going to use to fire on the security forces," he asked. IS fighters are reported to have fortified positions on the river front in a bid to defend their last bastions in Mosul against Iraqi forces expected to deploy pontoon bridges across the Tigris from the east bank. An assault on Mosul's west, which is home to the narrow streets of the Old City and some of the jihadists' traditional bastions, is widely expected to begin this month.

Zyad al-Zubaidi, a Mosul-born retired officer and civil society activist now based in the neighboring Kurdish region of Iraq, condemned IS's use of civilians in their military planning.

"These measures by Daesh are a filthy tactic. They are victimizing civilians very deliberately and using them as human shields," he said. "They know that the security forces have to move quickly on Mosul while causing as few civilian casualties as possible," he said. Former president Saddam Hussein used to levy a "bullet fee" on the families of executed prisoners. Many say officers of his Baath party formed the backbone of the Islamic State group that seized a third of Iraq in 2014.—AFP



ATHENS: This file photo shows Turkish officers being escorted by Greek special police forces as they leave the Greek Supreme Court in Athens. —AFP

TENSIONS FLARE BETWEEN ALLIES GREECE AND TURKEY

DISPUTES FUEL NATIONALISTIC SENTIMENTS AMONG PEOPLE

ISTANBUL: Turkey is once again facing off against historic foe-turned-ally Greece in one of their fiercest rows in years, though the war of words is unlikely to spill over into military confrontation. With some two months before Turks vote on a critical referendum to enhance presidential powers, this renewed dispute is fuelling nationalistic sentiment inside Turkey. Forging a less ideological and more pragmatic relationship with Athens has been seen as one of the major foreign policy gains of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's ruling party since it came to power in 2002.

But tensions over disputed Greek islets in the Aegean Sea, airspace violations and discord on how to handle Byzantine heritage inside Turkey have cracked open an old schism between the two NATO allies. The refusal in Jan of a Greek court to extradite eight former Turkish army officers over the failed July 15 coup widened that chasm. The eight fled to Greece by military helicopter on the night of the putsch, which Turkey says was masterminded by the US-based Islamic preacher Fethullah Gulen.

Defense Minister Fikri Isik slammed the Greek court's decision as a "complete disappointment." "Any decision taken by Turkey's partners in relation to the failed coup is bound to be highly controversial, be it Gulen's extradition from the US or the officers' extradition from Greece," said Marc Pierini, visiting scholar at Carnegie Europe.

Unwanted situation

In an apparent riposte, a Turkish naval vessel with Chief of Staff General Hulsi Akar onboard conducted a sail-by of two disputed islets in the

Aegean on Jan 29, prompting Greece to shadow the Turkish boats with its own forces. The uninhabited islets-known collectively as Kardak in Turkish and Imia in Greek-have long been a source of tension. A row over their sovereignty flared in Jan 1996, when the two countries sent marines to two neighboring islands in a sign of an imminent armed confrontation. They withdrew their troops after heavy diplomatic pressure from the United States, a fellow NATO member.

Greek Defense Minister Panos Kammenos later flew over the islets in a helicopter, throwing a wreath into the water to commemorate three Greek soldiers killed in a helicopter crash in the 1996 dispute. Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu warned that "if the situation escalates-God forbid, if an unwanted situation happens-it would be irreparable." Prime Minister Binali Yildirim accused Kammenos of posturing, arguing that there were "130 large and small rocks" in the Aegean whose status is disputed. But Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras warned Ankara its actions "would lead nowhere", insisting there were no "grey areas" of territory in the Aegean and that Turkey had simply violated Greek waters.

Too many risks

Greek Foreign Minister Nikos Kotzias blamed the tensions on Turkish domestic politics. "Many aspects of foreign policy have not gone as they wanted and they have big internal problems," he told Alpha Radio. Dimitrios Triantaphyllou, director for the Centre for International and European Studies at Kadir Has University in Istanbul, said Turkey and Greece have never formalized their partnership beyond

political dialogue and hopes to boost trade.

"Without a viable legal and political framework embedding the relations... the maintenance of the status quo holds far too many risks," he said. He argued that the standoff was being used by Turkey to show that "if it wants, it can bite" in the extradition row, at a time of political turbulence at home. Nationalist rhetoric traditionally escalates in Turkey ahead of elections and Turks are expected to vote in April in a potentially tight referendum on giving Erdogan extra powers.

No interest in escalation

Greece and Turkey joined NATO simultaneously in 1952 as postwar Europe and the United States worked to ensure they never again went to war. But the relationship remained explosive, not least when Turkish paratroopers invaded Cyprus in 1974 in response to an Athens-inspired coup seeking union with Greece. But those tensions were set aside with the so-called earthquake diplomacy of 1999 — where Greece responded quickly to a devastating earthquake in Turkey. Turkey then turned around and helped its neighbor when a deadly quake hit Athens a month later. The ascent to power of the Islamic-rooted government of Erdogan, who sought to distance Turkey from the vigorous secular nationalism of past administrations, further helped.

The relationship is of far more than just bilateral importance and Turkish officials have already indicated this new row could hurt a deal with the EU to cut the flow of migrants. The two sides are also working together to end the division of Cyprus. —AFP

TURKEY DETAINS HUNDREDS IN MASSIVE ANTI-IS OPERATION

ISTANBUL: Turkish police yesterday detained hundreds of suspected members of the Islamic State extremist group in nationwide raids, just over a month after an attack on an Istanbul nightclub claimed by the jihadists. Over 400 suspects were rounded up in Turkey's biggest police operation so far against IS since the New Year attack on the Reina nightclub just 75 minutes into 2017 that killed 39. Those detained included foreigners and those suspected of planning attacks in Turkey, the Dogan and Anadolu news agencies reported. Anadolu said according to the latest figure, 423 suspects were detained so far.

The operation around the country saw 150 suspects rounded up in Sanliurfa in the southeast and 47 in the nearby city of Gaziantep close to the Syrian border which has a known jihadist presence, Dogan said. Sixty suspects, mostly foreigners, were detained in four districts in the capital Ankara. Dozens more arrests were made in provinces ranging from Bursa in the west to Bingol in the east. In the usually peaceful Aegean city of Izmir, nine people suspected of travelling to and from Syria and planning attacks in the city were detained, Anadolu said.

One of the suspects detained in Izmir—a Syrian identified only as EA is said to have been in touch with people smugglers in a bid to help the IS members escape to Europe, Anadolu said. Eighteen people were detained in Istanbul and the neighboring province of Kocaeli on suspicion of planning attacks. Another 14 foreigners were due to be deported, including 10 children.

No idea of attack

Thirty-nine people, mainly foreigners, were killed on New Year's night when a

gunman went on the rampage inside a plush Istanbul night club. IS claimed the massacre, its first clear claim for a major attack in Turkey although it had been blamed for several bombings in 2016. Police detained the suspected attacker, Abdulgadir Masharipov, an Uzbek national, on Jan 16 after over two weeks on the run and authorities say he has confessed to the massacre. The Hurriyet daily reported after the attack that IS also planned a simultaneous New Year's strike in Ankara but dropped the plot after arrests by the Turkish authorities.

An Istanbul court on Friday placed a dozen people under arrest ahead of trial over the nightclub plot, including Masharipov's wife Zarina Nurullayeva. In her statement to investigators published in Turkish media, she said that she had "no idea" what her husband was planning and "most of the accusations against me are false". Turkey was in 2016 shaken by a string of attacks blamed on IS and Kurdish militants that left hundreds dead. It is also engaged in a battle with IS to take the Syrian town of Al-Bab, in the fiercest fighting yet of the Turkish military's campaign inside Syria that started in August.

At least 48 Turkish soldiers have been killed in the incursion so far, according to an AFP tally, the vast majority in the battle for Al-Bab since the fight for the town began in Dec. Turkey was long accused by its Western allies of not doing enough to stop the flow of jihadists across its borders and emergence of IS cells in its own cities. Ankara denies the charges, saying it listed IS as a terror group since 2013. However observers say Turkey has markedly stepped up its actions against IS in the last months and note that the capture of Masharipov alive may provide it with valuable intelligence. —AFP



TURKEY: Turkish anti-terrorism police stand by their armored vehicle during an operation to arrest people over alleged links to the Islamic State group, in Adiyaman, southeastern Turkey, yesterday. —AP

IRAN WELCOMES US WRESTLING TEAM AFTER TRAVEL BAN HALTED

TEHRAN: Iran said yesterday it would allow US wrestlers to compete in an international tournament after President Donald Trump's travel ban was halted by a federal court. "Following the court ruling suspending #MuslimBan...US Wrestlers' visa will be granted," tweeted Foreign Minister Mohammed Javad Zarif. Iran had blocked visas for US citizens in response to Trump's travel ban, preventing the wrestlers from competing in the event on Feb 16 and 17.

Meanwhile, a group of 72 academics from the prestigious Sharif University in Tehran signed a letter calling for the government to take the higher ground by offering visas-on-arrival to US citizens. "(We) request our government to act differently in response to this ungracious action (by the United States)," the letter said,

adding that US visitors should be encouraged to experience the "hospitality of peaceful Iranians and Muslims". Tensions between the two countries escalated after Iran tested a ballistic missile last week and Washington responded with a raft of new sanctions against individuals and groups linked to its weapons program.

Iran denies US claims that the missile test violated a UN resolution, and said it would impose its own sanctions on US individuals and companies which it says have supported extremist groups in Syria and elsewhere. Trump issued an executive order last week banning nationals from seven nations-including Iran—from entering the US. On Friday, a US federal judge suspended the ban, but Trump promised he would fight the decision. —AFP

140 SOMALI REFUGEES SET TO LEAVE FOR US SENT TO CAMP

NAIROBI: About 140 Somali refugees whose resettlement in the United States this week was stopped by President Donald Trump's executive order have been sent back to their refugee camp instead, one of the refugees said Saturday. It was not clear why they were returned a day after a US court order blocked Trump's ban on travelers and immigrants from seven predominantly Muslim countries, including Somalia. Officials with the International Organization for Migration, which runs the transit center in Nairobi where the refugees had been waiting for their flights to the US, could not be reached for comment.

"How would you feel? One day you are telling friends bye, wishing them well, and the next you are back where you started," 28-year-old Nadir Hassan told The Associated Press by phone from the camp. "My home for 27 years was a refugee camp. I was hoping to start a new

life in the US, get an education, a job, a life. We feel bad." He had been on a waiting list to leave for about a decade, he said. The fate of the Somali refugees is especially uncertain because Kenya's government has vowed to close their Dadaab camp, the world's largest, by the end of May, citing security concerns.

Kenyan officials say the refugees will be returned to neighboring Somalia, where the al-Qaida-linked al-Shabab extremist group continues to carry out deadly attacks in the capital, Mogadishu, and elsewhere. The Kenyan government says al-Shabab uses Dadaab as a recruiting and training ground for extremists who attack Kenya, but it has not presented any proof. Human rights groups have protested Kenya's plans to close Dadaab, saying some of the more than 250,000 refugees there have reported being pressured to leave the camp and that Somalia remains too unstable for people to return home. —AP



KENYA: In this file photo, refugees walk amongst huts at a refugee camp in Dadaab, Kenya. —AP

LIBYA RESCUES MIGRANTS OFF TRIPOLI COAST

TRIPOLI: More than 120 migrants including women and children were rescued by Libyan coastguards yesterday off the coast of Tripoli after their boat ran into trouble. The migrants set off Friday from Sabratha—a town 70 kilometers west of Libya's capital that has become a staging ground for traffickers but their boat's engine failed, a coastguard official said. An AFP photographer at the scene of the rescue said the vessel was intercepted by a coastguard patrol boat around 20 nautical miles northeast of Tripoli.

The official said those on board were of various African nationalities and included 10 women and five children, including a

baby. Libya said on Saturday it had intercepted more than 400 migrants bound for Europe in recent days. The announcement followed a meeting of European Union leaders in Malta where they agreed moves to curb mass migration from Libya. The plan includes funding and training Libya's coastguard to make it better able to intercept migrant boats and helping neighboring countries to close routes into Libya, according to a draft statement seen by AFP.

Lawlessness in Libya since a 2011 uprising that ousted longtime strongman Moamer Kadhafi has allowed smuggling networks to develop a lucrative trafficking trade. —AFP

PRIEST ABUSE VICTIMS' GROUP FOUNDER RESIGNS AFTER 29 YEARS

CHICAGO: The founder of the group that advocates for priest abuse victims has stepped down after three decades of campaigning to force the Catholic Church to recognize the extent of the scandal and compensate thousands of people affected. Barbara Blaine, president and founder of the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests, said she was abused herself and the organization was created through her

efforts to reach out to other victims, the Chicago Tribune reported.

"I knew there were other survivors out there and wondered if they felt the same debilitating hurt and if so, how they coped with it. I thought they might hold the wisdom I lacked. I looked for other survivors and asked if they would be willing to talk," Blaine said in a statement. Blaine did not say why she resigned. She and several other top

SNAP officials were sued last month by a former employee who says she was fired shortly after asking superiors whether SNAP was referring potential clients to attorneys in return for donations.

SNAP announced at the end of January that another one of those top officials, former Executive Direct David Clohessy, had resigned.

Blaine and Clohessy both said their resignations were unrelated to the law-

suit. Blaine founded SNAP in 1988, years after she was abused as an 8th grader by a Toledo, Ohio priest who taught at the Catholic school she attended, according to the organization's website. Her pleas for help to Toledo's bishop were ignored. The first SNAP meeting of victims was held at a Holiday Inn in Chicago.

The group gained prominence in 2002 after the Boston Globe's stories on

the priest sexual abuse scandal rocked the Catholic Church.

The organization now has more than 20,000 members and support groups meet in over 60 cities across the US and the world. "Her tenacity and fortitude helped expose abuse globally during the past three decades," SNAP board member Mary Ellen Kruger said in a statement. Blaine's resignation took effect Friday.—AP

PENCE WARNS IRAN AGAINST TESTING TRUMP'S RESOLVE

WASHINGTON: US Vice President Mike Pence in an interview airing yesterday warned Iran "not to test the resolve" of the Donald Trump administration, days after Washington slapped new sanctions on Tehran following a ballistic missile test launch. Relations between the two sides have deteriorated sharply since Trump took office last month promising a tough line on what he sees as Iranian belligerence toward US interests. "Iran would do well to look at the calendar and realize there's a new president in the Oval Office. And Iran would do well not to test the resolve of this new president," Pence told ABC News in an interview taped Saturday.

The tough talk came after Trump's Pentagon chief James Mattis declared last week that Iran was "the single biggest state sponsor of terrorism in the world." The charged rhetoric has raised questions over whether the United States will abandon commitments it made under a landmark deal-negotiated with several world powers and approved by president Barack Obama

in 2015 — that obliged Iran to curtail its nuclear program in exchange for relief from US and international sanctions. "The Iranians got a deal from the international community that again, the president and I and our administration think was a terrible deal," Pence said.

Although Mattis and Secretary of State Rex Tillerson have said the United States would stand by the agreement, Pence was less forthcoming. "Well, we're evaluating that as we speak," he said. "I think the president will make that decision in the days ahead. And he'll listen to all of his advisors, but make no mistake about it. The resolve of this president is such that Iran would do well to think twice about their continued hostile and belligerent actions." US officials said the new sanctions imposed Friday were in response to Iran's recent ballistic missile test and its support for the Huthi rebels in Yemen, who recently targeted a Saudi warship. The White House has said "nothing is off the table"—even military action.—AFP

IN TEARY VIGIL FOR LATE WIFE, LULA LASHES OUT AT DETRACTORS

SAO BERNARDO DO CAMPO, Brazil: Former Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva held a wake Saturday for his late wife, ending it with harshly worded criticism for the couple's detractors in an ongoing corruption scandal. Leftist party staff and hundreds of citizens, many wearing the red shirt of the Workers' Party and carrying posters that read "President Lula," went to Sao Bernardo do Campo in metropolitan Sao Paulo to offer their condolences to Latin America's most popular leftist leader. "Marisa died sad," Lula said at the headquarters of the Metalworkers' Union where they met four decades ago, before later breaking into tears.

She was affected by "the nasty remarks, the idiocy and the wickedness that they inflicted on her," he said of her critics, standing in front of her coffin which was draped with a Brazilian and red Workers' Party flag. Marisa Leticia Rocco, who was first lady from 2003 to 2011 and a veteran labor activist like her husband, was pronounced brain dead at 66 at the Sirio-Libanês hospital in Sao Paulo on Thursday. She had been treated in intensive care since January 24 with a brain hemorrhage due to a ruptured brain aneurism.

Lula ended his rule with sky-high ratings and took credit for Brazil's economic boom. But his legacy has been tarnished by a subsequent recession and a string of corruption charges last year in which his wife was also indicted. "I'm 71 years old and I think I'm going to live much longer because I want the criminals who insulted Marisa to have the humility to apologize," Lula said to applause. Lula's leftist party colleagues were quick to defend the political couple as they paid their respects, with several suggesting that the year of scandal had weakened the former first lady's health.

"It is not an exaggeration to say that they killed Dona Marisa," leftist senator Lindbergh Farias told journalists. "She was the victim of enormous persecution and couldn't take it." Lula received condolences and hugs from hundreds of Brazilian citizens throughout the morning. On Thursday evening conservative President Michel Temer—who replaced Lula's ally and successor in the presidency, Dilma Rousseff—offered his condolences at the medical center. The former first lady's remains were to be cremated in a private family ceremony following the wake.—AFP



NEW YORK: US Senator Charles Schumer speaks at a rally in front of the Stonewall Inn in solidarity with immigrants, asylum seekers, refugees and the LGBT community in New York. —AFP

AMERICA'S LGBT COMMUNITY AWAITS TRUMP'S NEXT MOVE

TRUMP TO PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF ALL AMERICANS

LOS ANGELES: America's LGBT community is watching warily to decipher President Donald Trump's intentions towards them, with many fearing a backlash is in store from the new administration-despite its efforts to reassure them. The presence in Trump's cabinet of arch conservatives, with a record of opposing same-sex marriage and other hard-fought LGBT rights, has set the community on edge. Since Trump's election in Nov, phones have been ringing off the hook at the Trevor Project, which provides counseling to people in the community who suffer from depression or are at risk of suicide.

The day after the vote, the organization was contacted 400 times—the biggest single day total all year. "Before this campaign, this election season, people were feeling in power to really be themselves, speak out. Because the direction was, after gay marriage, under (Barack) Obama, more moves to more openness and more security in terms of laws and policies," said Steve Mendelson, the organization's interim executive director. But now "there are a lot of messages that lead LGBTQ people to be frightened, to think that they can't come out," he said.

Those fears spiked last week, when a draft executive order outlining plans to roll back LGBT workplace protections created under Obama was circulated among journalists and progressive groups. The White House moved to quash the story in a statement on Tuesday. "President Donald J Trump is determined to protect the rights of all Americans, including the LGBTQ community," it read, promising Obama's anti-discrimination decree would remain intact.

Politico reported that Trump's daughter Ivanka and influential son-in-law Jared Kushner—who have both supported gay rights—led the charge to scuttle the draft. But members of the religious right quoted by Politico said they have been led to expect some changes will come

from Trump's administration—namely to let companies opt out of anti-discrimination rules on faith grounds.

Anti-gay cabinet

Trump spoke out in defense of the community last year after a shooting massacre at a gay nightclub in Orlando, Florida left 49 people dead. But his words have been eclipsed by the records of some of the appointees to his cabinet. Vice President Mike Pence, for instance, while serving in Congress for the state of Indiana, consistently voted against same-sex marriage and laws to protect gays from discrimination. He is accused of supporting conversion therapy—a treatment designed to change people's sexual orientation from homosexual to heterosexual. Pence denies this charge.

Activists say Trump's nominees for attorney general, Jeff Sessions, and education, Betsy DeVos, also have long records of opposing LGBTQ rights. "I think we should judge who he is and what he believes based on what he does, and what he has done so far is nominate the most hateful anti-gay cabinet imaginable," said Camilla Taylor, senior counsel for Lambda Legal, an NGO that works to defend the rights of LGBTQ people. With both houses of Congress now under Republican control, many in the community wonder if lawmakers might try to scrap laws legalizing gay marriage, say, or institute conversion therapy for children.

"This is the fight of our life. We are engaged in a resistance," Taylor warned. On Saturday, about 3,000 people demonstrated in New York to voice solidarity with LGBTQ groups, Muslims and others they fear the president could target. They massed around the historic Stonewall Inn, a powerful symbol of the gay community and its hard-won rights, chanting and waving rainbow and American flags.

Hard to reverse

Obama, before leaving office, said he was proud of the achievements made by the gay rights movement—and sought to reassure the community about the road ahead. "I don't think it is something that will be reversible because American society has changed," he told his farewell news conference. Though he noted: "That doesn't mean there aren't going to be some fights that are important, legal issues, issues surrounding transgender persons." Jim Obergefell, the widower behind the class action suit that led the US Supreme Court to legalize same-sex marriage nationwide in 2015, said it will be hard for the court to reverse that decision. In his view it would take an unlikely "perfect storm of the right case, the right judges, the right appeals court and Trump's nominated justices."

Things in common

Meanwhile, the Trevor Project's phone lines—manned 24 hours a day by volunteers in Los Angeles and New York—keep ringing. Most calls come from the southern United States, which tends to be conservative and where religion often plays a strong role in people's lives. "It's the effect of the rhetoric that is in use in politics," said David Bond, vice president of programs for the organization.

Seeking to counter some of that rhetoric, a TV mini-series on the fight for gay rights—entitled "When We Rise"—will start airing on Feb 27. Written and directed by Oscar winner Dustin Lance Black, the seven-part series tells the story of Cleve Jones, an activist in the fight for gay rights and against AIDS. Black, who comes from a conservative family, says he wrote the screenplay "for my family, for that other America, to say, 'Hey, we have more in common than you think.'"—AFP



BRAZIL: Brazil's former President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva stands next to the body of his wife Marisa Leticia Lula da Silva, during her wake in Sao Bernardo do Campo, in the greater Sao Paulo area, Brazil. —AP

TRUMP SAYS HE RESPECTS KILLER PUTIN

PALM BEACH: US President Donald Trump has rebuffed calls for a tougher stance on Russia, playing down political assassinations inside the country and Moscow's invasion of Ukraine. Trump—now two weeks into his four-year term—showed no signs of yielding to demands from within his own Republican Party to distance himself from President Vladimir Putin.

"I do respect him. Well, I respect a lot of people, but that doesn't mean I'll get along with them," Trump said in an excerpt of a Super Bowl interview with Fox News's Bill O'Reilly that will air in full yesterday. When pressed in relation to Putin's alleged links to the extrajudicial killing of journalists and dissidents, Trump said, "There are a lot of killers. We have a lot of killers."

"You think our country is so innocent?" Trump asked rhetorically. Michael McFaul, a former ambassador to Russia and advisor to former president Barack Obama, described Trump's comments as "disgusting." "This moral equivalency that Trump continues to draw between the USA and Russia is disgusting (and inaccurate)," he said on Twitter. Mainstream Republicans have repeatedly called on Trump to distance himself from Putin, with little impact.

Throughout the election campaign,

Trump refused to criticize the Russian leader, saying better relations with the Kremlin would be in the US national interest.

The new president has advocated working with Russia to combat the Islamic State group in Syria, where Moscow has deployed aircraft, naval assets and troops to support Bashar al-Assad's regime. In December, US intelligence agencies went public with their view that Russia conducted a hack-and-release campaign aimed at swinging the US election in Trump's favor.

Trump's repeated criticism of NATO—a common target for Putin—has only fueled suspicions that Trump is ready to side with Moscow over allies in Europe. Across Europe, there are growing concerns that the continent might be wedged between a hostile Russia and a hostile United States.

Trump's stance on Ukraine has also raised eyebrows. After a call with Ukrainian leader Petro Poroshenko on Saturday, the White House said the pair addressed "Ukraine's long-running conflict with Russia." Russia annexed the Ukrainian region of Crimea in March 2014 and has supported separatists in the east of the country.

Former national security advisor Susan Rice publicly criticized Trump's framing of the situation. "This distortion of even recent

history is deeply troubling," she tweeted.

We're watching

Trump's Vice President Mike Pence tried to explain the administration's approach to the conflict in eastern Ukraine, which had flared after Trump and Putin spoke by telephone a week ago.

"We're watching, and (we're) very troubled by the increased hostilities over the past week in eastern Ukraine," Pence told ABC's "This Week" news program. During the Trump-Putin call, the Kremlin said the two men had discussed improving economic relations, a potential signal of Trump's willingness to lift sanctions on Russia.

Asked whether the administration would be willing to ease sanctions while Russia is violating ceasefire agreements, Pence demurred. "I think that's a question that will be answered in the months ahead. And it just simply all depends," he said.

"If we have opportunities to work together, I think the president is looking for an opportunity to begin that relationship anew. "But make no mistake about it—those decisions will await action. And they'll be very dependent on how the Russians respond in the days ahead."—AFP



VIRGINIA: Work begins in clearing the track after a Norfolk Southern train carrying coal derailed near downtown Suffolk, Virginia. —AP

NO INJURIES REPORTED IN VIRGINIA TRAIN DERAILMENT

SUFFOLK, Virginia: Officials say a train has derailed in downtown Suffolk but no injuries have been reported. The city said in a statement that they were notified of the Norfolk Southern train derailment just before 7 am Saturday. The statement said that the derailment caused a coal spill in the area. Norfolk Southern spokeswoman Susan Terpay says the train was comprised of 161 coal cars and that the company is estimating 44 railcars derailed. The train was headed to Norfolk and the coal was to be exported.

The city, about 20 miles west of Norfolk, said that streets in the area are closed and train personnel are attempting to disconnect the cars remaining on the track to move them further down the line. The city says a warehouse building was damaged by coal that spilled from the train. A home and a car also had windows broken by coal or coal debris.

The city said clean-up efforts and track repairs are expected to be "extensive and ongoing."—AP

LE PEN RALLIES SUPPORTERS FOR FRENCH PRESIDENTIAL LAUNCH

LYON: French far-right leader Marine Le Pen gives a major speech yesterday to formally launch her presidential bid with a program featuring many of the themes that propelled Donald Trump to the White House.

Le Pen, who leads the National Front (FN), on Saturday published a list of 144 “commitments” built around putting France first, reclaiming sovereignty from the European Union, and clamping down on immigration. The 48-year-old is convinced that Trump and the Brexit vote in Britain point to the return of nationalism, while recent domestic events in France’s unpredictable election race could also help her.

“People are waking up. They see Brexit, they see Trump and they’re saying to themselves: ‘It’s worth going to vote,’” her party’s influential deputy leader

Florian Philippot said on Sunday ahead of Le Pen’s speech in the east-central city of Lyon. The French presidential race has been jolted after long-time conservative frontrunner Francois Fillon became embroiled in revelations his wife drew hundreds of thousands of euros in salary as his parliamentary assistant amid suspicions she never actually worked. And an incident at the Louvre museum on Friday, where a man with two machetes was shot after attacking a group of soldiers, has shifted the focus onto Le Pen’s preferred subjects of security, Islam and immigration.

Polls have shown for months that she will win enough votes on April 23 to reach the second round runoff on May 7, but they also currently show that a mainstream candidate will beat her at that stage. “French people on the whole share

our vision of the country, the themes which are ours: the patriotism on which our project is built, and then the defense of our civilization,” she said on Saturday. France was “undoubtedly at a crossroads where tomorrow we might not recognize our country any more,” she said. She will address supporters at 1400 GMT in the city where she once compared the sight of Muslims praying in the street to the Nazi occupation. Sources in her party say up to 10,000 people are expected, although the room was only half full on the first day of the rally on Saturday.

Nepotism claims

The election had long been seen as a two-horse race between Le Pen and Fillon, but his expenses scandal has further boosted the chances of 39-year-old centrist independent Emmanuel Macron. “On

paper, Macron has the strongest chance of winning,” one of Le Pen’s advisors conceded on Saturday, speaking on condition of anonymity. A former economy minister under unpopular Socialist President Francois Hollande, Macron is also running as a candidate outside the political establishment and has founded his own movement, En Marche (On The Move).

Benefiting from being a fresh face in a familiar field of characters, the pro-European moderate packed out a 8,000-place venue also in Lyon on Saturday and had thousands more watching on a big screen outside.

Macron said Le Pen “did not speak in the name of the people” and he took aim at nepotism in the FN, which was founded by her father, anti-Semitic former paratrooper Jean-Marie Le Pen. Marine’s 27-year-old niece, the hardline Marion

Marechal-Le Pen, is also a senior figure in the party.

Tough on crime and the EU

Among the key proposals in Le Pen’s “commitments” to the nation is a pledge to hold a referendum soon after taking power on whether France should remain in the European Union. She favors a radically overhauled EU which would repatriate almost all powers over economic policy, currencies and border control to member states. She also proposes “zero tolerance” of crime, 15,000 extra police, imposing higher taxes on foreign workers and imports, as well as freeing small firms from red tape. On economic policy, she wants to lower the retirement age and increase some welfare payments in an agenda designed to appeal to hard-pressed areas suffering from job losses. —AFP

ROMANIA DEMOS MAINTAIN PRESSURE ON GOVT THIEVES

PROTESTERS AWAIT DECREE TO BE REPEALED

BUCHAREST: Romanians braced for a sixth day of protests yesterday, seeking to maintain pressure on the government despite its climb down over contentious corruption legislation that sparked the biggest protests since 1989. Late on Saturday, the government pledged to repeal a decree widely seen as easing the penalties for corruption that sparked days of furious protests, saying it would meet to do so yesterday. But demonstrators were not convinced.

“Today we are going to break new records,” Florian, 40, said in Bucharest, saying he didn’t trust the government to retract the legislation as promised. “We don’t believe that,” the electrician said as he distributed free pretzels and tea at Victory Square, the epicenter of this week’s

protests. By midday (1000 GMT) yesterday, several hundred people could be seen gathering in the square but the crowd was expected to swell with thousands arriving on buses from outside the capital.

On Saturday, an estimated 330,000 people demonstrated across the nation, TV reports said, in what was the biggest turnout since the toppling of Dictator Nicolae Ceausescu in 1989. The crowds, largely young, have chanted, waved banners, blown vuvuzela horns in the national colors and paraded effigies of government officials in black-and-white prison uniforms. Critics say that the emergency government decree issued late on Tuesday represents a retreat on corruption, long the scourge of

this ex-communist nation. The government said it would align the penal code with the constitution but protesters saw it as a brazenly transparent attempt by the ruling Social Democrats (PSD) to let off many of its own officials and lawmakers.

In addition, the government, in office for barely a month, wants to release some 2,500 prisoners serving sentences less than five years, ostensibly to reduce overcrowding in jails. In recent years Romania, a European Union member since 2007, has won praise for its considerable progress tackling graft, but Tuesday’s decree sparked a chorus of alarm from both Washington and Brussels.

Must stay vigilant

On Saturday evening as the crowds swelled, Prime Minister Sorin Grindeanu finally announced the climb down, saying the government would meet Sunday to repeal the decree. “I do not want to divide Romania,” a pale and tired-looking Grindeanu said in a televised address, sparking cheers and celebrations late into the night from protestors outside. But he said the government still needed to bring laws into line with the constitution, slamming what he called a campaign of misinformation and “distortion”. Raluca, a demonstrator in her 30s, said she was delighted but that the government was still not to be trusted.

“People are going to remain very vigilant with this government,” she said. Her words were echoed on Sunday morning by Rado, one of a sweaty trio cycling on bikes fixed to the ground at Victory Square, who said he was “sick” of corruption. “Usually we do a Sunday trip, we cycle around 100-150 kilometers,” said the 27-year-old who works for an online sports shop. “And since we have to look out for the thieves in our government, we decided just to come here and train,” he said. “We just want someone competent to run the state for the people. Not for themselves, for their own benefit and bank accounts.” —AFP



UKRAINE: Ukrainian servicemen patrol at the humanitarian aid center in Avdiivka, Ukraine. —AP

UKRAINE TOWN CALM AS TRUMP PLEDGES TO HELP

AVDIIVKA, Ukraine: Fighting subsided around a flashpoint Ukrainian town yesterday following a week-long surge in violence that prompted US President Donald Trump to pledge to help bring peace to Europe’s backyard. The Ukrainian military said in the morning that no soldiers had been killed in the past 24 hours for the first time since fighting over the blue-collar town of Avdiivka soared last week. A total of 27 people have died in the battered town while eight more were killed in other parts of the war zone that covers the Russian-backed eastern separatist fiefdoms of Donetsk and Lugansk.

The streets of Avdiivka were quiet and no shelling could be heard from the outskirts of the town where both sides have their big guns stationed. Ukrainian military spokesman Sergiy Klymenko said that a pause in hostilities agreed by the two sides came into effect from 8.00 am (0600 GMT) but that it was only a verbal deal and not on paper. Klymenko said the truce was aimed at allowing workers to repair broken power lines after many in the town of 25,000 spent days without power or heat. Ukraine said overall the level of rebel shelling across the conflict zone had halved over the past day while the insurgents announced their frontline towns had not come under bombardment overnight.

Different spins

Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko’s first conversation with the new US leader since his inauguration took place as the former Soviet republic worries that Trump is seeking to build a friendship with Russia’s Vladimir Putin. Some analysts linked the escalation of the violence to this potential improvement in relations that had slumped to their lowest level since the Cold War while others attributed it to more local issues. In the call Trump promised to try to push for an end to the conflict in the east

but appeared to stop short of offering the sort of staunch backing Ukraine enjoyed under the Barack Obama administration. “We will work with Ukraine, Russia, and all other parties involved to help them restore peace along the border,” the White House quoted Trump as saying. The White House further said that the two leaders had a “good call” but provided few other details except to say that a meeting between Trump and Poroshenko was being arranged for the future.

Poroshenko himself put a more positive spin on the high-profile conversation with a statement saying he thanked Trump for his “firm support of Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity.” The statement said that the two leaders expressed “deep concern” about the spike in fighting in Avdiivka and underscored the need for an “immediate ceasefire.” The Ukrainian leader’s office said also that they “spoke in favor of energizing dialogue at all levels with the new US administration.” The talks follow Trump’s phone conversation with Putin on January 28 that both sides described as constructive.

Aggressive actions

The 33-month conflict began shortly after Ukraine ousted its Russian-backed leader in Feb 2014. Moscow responded by annexing Ukraine’s Crimean peninsula in March 2014 before allegedly plotting the eastern insurgency to keep Ukraine under its thumb. Washington’s UN ambassador Nikki Haley on Thursday condemned Russia’s “aggressive actions” in Ukraine—a surprising attack given Trump’s warm words toward Putin. Russia denies any responsibility for the conflict and blames the United States for igniting three months of massive street protests that turned Ukraine toward the West. The entire conflict has claimed more than 10,000 lives and has seen relations between Moscow and the West plunge to a post-Cold War low. —AFP



BUCHAREST: Pro-government demonstrators wave Romanian flags and hold a poster claiming the dismissal of the country’s President during a rally in Bucharest yesterday. —AFP

FRENCH INVESTIGATORS GRILL SUSPECT IN LOUVRE ATTACK

PARIS: French investigators began questioning yesterday a suspect in the attack on soldiers at the Louvre Museum in Paris, but the man refused to speak, a judicial source said. The suspect, believed to be an Egyptian national, was shot in the stomach and seriously wounded after lunging at the soldiers with two machetes on Friday. The attack was the latest in a string of assaults in France and thrust the issue of security back into the headlines three months ahead of the French presidential election. Investigators decided to question him at his hospital bed after his condition improved, the source said.

The man “is refusing to speak to investigators for now”, the source said, adding that investigators planned to question him again later yesterday. The suspect has been held at a Paris hospital since the attack near the museum on Friday morning. Based on his phone and visa records, he is thought to be Abdallah El-Hamamy, a 29-year-old Egyptian national living in the United Arab Emirates, who entered France legally on a flight from Dubai on Jan 26. Investigators believe Hamahmy rented an expensive apartment near the Champs Elysees.

DNA testing

Investigators say the attacker, who was carrying two machetes and wearing a black T-shirt with a skull design, lunged at four soldiers shouting “Allahu Akbar” (“God is greatest”). President Francois Hollande said that “there is little doubt as to the terrorist nature of this act”. French investigators have contacted Egyptian officials in hopes of confirming the suspect’s identity through DNA testing, a source close to the inquiry said. They also plan to contact officials in the UAE and in Turkey, since Hamahmy’s passport had two visas from Turkey, in 2015 and 2016.

Police are also examining Hamahmy’s Twitter account after around a dozen messages were posted in Arabic just minutes before the attack. “In the name of Allah... for our brothers in Syria and fighters across the world,” he wrote, before referring to the Islamic State jihadist group in another tweet a minute later. Speaking to AFP in Cairo on Saturday, a retired police general, Reda El-Hamahmy, said he believed the wounded suspect was his son, Abdallah, who had been in Paris on a business trip.

But he said there were no signs his son had been radicalized. “He went on a company trip and when it was over visited the museum. He was supposed to leave on Saturday,” he said, saying his son was married and his pregnant wife was currently staying in Saudi Arabia with their seven-month-old son. “He is a simple guy,” he said. “I can show you picture where he has no beard,” he said. Beards are often grown by devout Muslims. Over the past two years, France has suffered a string of bloody attacks by Islamic extremists and has been under a state of emergency since Nov 2015.

Security, immigration and the economy are all major issues for voters ahead of this year’s presidential and parliamentary elections which are expected to confirm the country’s shift to the right after five years of Socialist rule. The worries have taken a toll on the Louvre, a former palace in the heart of Paris, which has seen annual visitor numbers fall to 7.3 million since Nov 2015, a drop of around two million. After being closed immediately after the attack, the museum reopened Saturday under a heavy presence of police and soldiers. —AFP



PARIS: People walk past a police vehicle parked near the Louvre Museum in Paris. —AFP

US ENVOY EYES CUTS TO UN PEACEKEEPING

UNITED NATIONS: Washington’s new UN envoy Nikki Haley is putting in motion a far-reaching review of UN peacekeeping that is likely to lead to closures and downsizing of missions, according to diplomats. Haley took up her post with a vow to overhaul the United Nations and “do away” with what she termed as “obsolete” activities amid fresh clamor in Washington over US funding for the world body. During one-on-one meetings with Security Council ambassadors this week, the new US envoy raised peacekeeping as a priority for cuts, zeroing in on the UN’s flagship enterprise, according to three diplomats with knowledge of the discussions.

“On UN reform, I think there is a particular interest in peacekeeping,” said a Security Council diplomat. Haley is setting up a mission-by-mission review of all 16 peace operations and is “relatively skeptical” of the value and efficiency of many of the blue-helmet deployments, said the diplomat, who spoke on background. A senior Security Council diplomat said that peacekeeping reform was “a priority” for the new US ambassador “who wants to work closely with key partners on the issue in the coming weeks.” While the United States has few soldiers serving as peacekeepers, it is by far the biggest financial contributor to UN peacekeeping, providing nearly 29 percent of the \$7.9 billion budget for this year. During hearings at the US Senate last month, Haley made clear she was seeking

to bring the US share of funding for peacekeeping to below 25 percent and said other countries should step in to shoulder the burden. “We have to start encouraging other countries to have skin in the game,” she said. No list has been drawn up of missions that are to be axed, but diplomats said UN missions in Haiti and Liberia are probably headed for a rapid shutdown.

Get it settled and get out

The last remaining UN peacekeepers in Ivory Coast will pull out in June while the Security Council renewed the UNMIL mission in Liberia until March 2018 with the understanding that this would be the final year. UN peacekeeping chief Herve Ladsous is traveling to Haiti next week to carry out an assessment that could pave the way for a closure. For now, diplomats are welcoming the US scrutiny and agree that while some missions are operating in difficult political environments—Haiti, Cyprus or Kosovo for example—there is no major threat of conflict in those areas.

At the Senate hearing, Haley questioned the decision to send peacekeepers to South Sudan, citing opposition from President Salva Kiir’s government, even though some 200,000 civilians are sheltering in UN bases. There should be clear exit strategies, she argued, and new missions should be authorized only if there is a “secure base to start with.” —AFP

SERBS TEAR DOWN CONTESTED WALL IN DIVIDED KOSOVO TOWN

KOSOVSKA MITROVICA, Kosovo: Serbs in the northern Kosovo town of Mitrovica yesterday began tearing down a concrete wall on the banks of the Ibar River that had drawn the ire of the Kosovar authorities. The mayor of the city's Serb-dominated northern sector, Goran Rakic, had said the barrier was built last month to protect a new pedestrian zone near a bridge that connects to the southern zone, home to most of the

city's ethnic Albanian population. But the two-meter-high (six and a half feet) wall, stretching some 100 meters, was seen by many as an effort to cement the town's divisions.

Yesterday, two bulldozers were employed by a crew of workers to start knocking down the barrier, an AFP journalist reported. The move was the first evidence of a thaw between Belgrade and Pristina after weeks of strained rela-

tions, and came after EU-sponsored talks between leaders of the two sides in Brussels last week. "It's an extremely good sign, showing that both sides can reach an agreement given sufficient political will," said Nataliya Apostolova, the EU representative to Kosovo.

Tensions had been running high in Kosovo since last month, when Belgrade sent a train towards Kosovo painted in the colors of the Serbian flag, bearing

the words "Kosovo is Serbia" in multiple languages, and decorated inside with Serbian Orthodox imagery. Kosovo called it a "provocation", and the train was stopped from crossing the border over fears it would be attacked, according to Serbian Prime Minister Aleksandar Vucic.

Members of Kosovo's ethnic Albanian majority were also outraged by the arrest in France in January of for-

mer Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj, under an international warrant issued by Serbia.

Belgrade wants to try him for alleged war crimes committed against civilians during the 1990s conflict. Kosovo's ethnic Albanian insurgents fought Serbian forces in 1998-1999. The former province unilaterally declared independence in 2008, but Serbia denies Kosovo's sovereignty. —AFP

CHINA PUNISHES 11 FOR DERELICTION OF DUTY AFTER DEADLY BUS FIRE

BEIJING: The government of the northern Chinese region of Ningxia has punished 11 officials for dereliction of duty after a deadly bus fire last year killed 18 people in the regional capital Yinchuan. The man blamed for starting the fire, Ma Yongping, was executed in December. He set alight two plastic bags filled with gasoline on the bus after getting involved in a personal work dispute, according to an official account of his crimes.

In a statement late on Saturday carried by the ruling Communist Party's anti-corruption watchdog, the Ningxia government said the fire exposed a lack of concern and lack of sense of responsibility by

certain officials. Warnings that Ma could carry out an extreme act were ignored, and steps were not taken to prevent him starting the fire, it said.

Two of the 11 officials punished for dereliction have already been handed over to authorities for prosecution, including a senior Yinchuan police officer, while others have been given administrative punishments, the government said. Bus fires are not uncommon in China, where regulators have blamed some recent blazes on flawed design.

In 2013, a bus fire blamed on a suicidal man killed 47 in the coastal city of Xiamen. —Reuters

PAK THANKS INDIA FOR REUNITING KASHMIRI BOY WITH MOTHER

MUZAFFARABAD, Pakistan: Pakistan has sent a rare message of thanks to arch-rival India after a five-year-old boy who was taken to India by his father nearly a year ago was reunited with his Pakistani mother. Iftikhar Ahmed was handed over to Rohina Kiani by border officials in the town of Wagah in Punjab province on Saturday evening following a long legal battle seeking his return from his father, Gulzar Ahmad Tantray. The case created a media stir and shone a spotlight on the two countries' decades-long dispute over divided Kashmir, over which they have fought two full-scale wars.

Kiani, a resident of the Pakistani-controlled part of the territory, said yesterday she was overwhelmed with happiness and prepared to forgive her estranged husband, who is from Indian-controlled Kashmir. "I'm extremely happy and unable to express my joy. I pardon my husband and hope he will also join us soon to live with us here in Pakistan," she said. Tantray was among thousands who crossed the de facto border into Pakistani Kashmir while an insurgency was at its peak in the Indian

sector. He later married Kiani, but wanted the family to return to his home village following the birth of their son.

When Kiani refused, Tantray absconded with the child last March. Kiani pursued a custody case in an Indian court through the Pakistani embassy in New Delhi, and the court ruled in her favor. "We are thankful to Indian authorities for their cooperation in this humanitarian matter," Pakistan's high commissioner (ambassador) Abdul Basit tweeted. Kiani also thanked both governments, and urged them to come together to find a lasting solution to the Kashmir conflict.

"Thousands of people are suffering from grief and sorrow because of this dispute. The Kashmir issue must be solved to end problems of people living on both sides of Kashmir," she said. The Himalayan region has been divided between India and Pakistan since they won independence from Britain in 1947, but both claim the territory in its entirety. Several rebel groups have for decades fought Indian troops deployed in the region, demanding its independence or merger with Pakistan. —AFP



CHENNAI: This file photo shows VK Sasikala, general secretary of southern Tamil Nadu state's ruling All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK), gesturing upon her arrival to take up office at the AIADMK headquarters in Chennai. —AFP

POLITICAL NOVICE TO BECOME NEXT HEAD OF INDIAN STATE

FORMER CASSETTE SELLER TO BECOME TAMIL NADU'S CM

CHENNAI: A former video cassette seller with close ties to Tamil Nadu's late leader will become the next chief minister of the Indian state, capping a remarkable rise for the political novice. The ruling party in the southern state announced yesterday that VK Sasikala would become the next leader following the resignation of the acting chief minister. Her rise to the top office had been rumored since December, when beloved leader Jayalalithaa Jayaram died at the age of 68, plunging the state into political uncertainty.

Sasikala—a close confidante of Jayalalithaa but with no previous record of public office—was soon afterwards elevated to head the ruling All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam

(AIADMK) party, paving the way to the top job. "She is the next chief minister of Tamil Nadu. Like Amma, we wanted a strong woman leader to serve the people," party spokesperson C R Saraswathi said, referring to Jayalalithaa by her popular nickname. "O Panneerselvam has stepped down from the chief minister's post and he will continue to work for the party."

Panneerselvam had been filling in as chief minister since October when former film star Jayalalithaa was hospitalized. The date of Sasikala's swearing-in and other formalities will be announced soon. Although Sasikala had never held any official position in the AIADMK or the state government before her election, she has long been known as "Chinnamma" (aunt) to the

party because of her friendship with Jayalalithaa. The two met in the 1980s when Sasikala was running a video parlour and Jayalalithaa was a budding politician.

It marked the beginning of a decades-long friendship dogged by corruption scandals and intermittent spells of bad blood. In 2014 both were jailed for four years for corruption but were later acquitted. The death of Jayalalithaa on Dec 5 sparked a mass outpouring of grief across Tamil Nadu, with huge crowds lining the streets to pay tribute to her coffin. Unlike Jayalalithaa, a three-time chief minister who inspired a devotion that verged on the religious, Sasikala lacks popular support in Tamil Nadu and critics say she has yet to prove her mettle. —AFP



INDIA: In this photograph, Pakistani mother Rohina Kiani holds her son Iftikhar Ahmed after he was handed over by an official as she speaks with media representatives at the Wagah border with India. —AFP

POPE URGES PRAYERS FOR UNBORN CHILDREN UNDER THREAT



VATICAN: Pope Francis delivers his blessing from his studio window overlooking St. Peter's Square during his Angelus prayer, at the Vatican, yesterday. —AP

ROME: Pope Francis yesterday urged the faithful to pray for unborn children threatened by "the termination of pregnancy" in a throwaway culture marked by falling birthrates. "Every life is sacred. Let us promote a culture of life as a response to the logic of throwing away and in the face of demographic decline," he said in an address to mark the "international day for consecrated life." "Let us pray together for children threatened by the termination of pregnancy and also for people at the end of their lives," he said during his weekly Angelus prayer in Saint Peter's Square.

Since his election, the pope has expressed concern over the demographic decline in Europe and particularly in Italy, which the Catholic Church believes is fuelled in part by abortion—a practice which Francis, like his predecessors, fiercely opposes. But last year he granted priests the right to permanently forgive abortion, extending a temporary measure put in place during the Vatican's jubilee "Year of Mercy" which ended in Nov. The Catholic Church considers abortion to be a sin, with the priestly pardon applicable not only to women who have abortions but also to those who carry them out or are involved in any way. —AFP

DAYS OF HEAVY SNOW KILL 54 IN AFGHANISTAN

KABUL: The death toll from three days of heavy snow across Afghanistan rose to 54 yesterday and there were fears the toll could rise as rescuers began clearing roads to remote areas. Avalanches destroyed scores of homes and blocked roads in central and northeastern provinces, a spokesman for the ministry of natural disasters said. "So far, 54 persons have lost their lives and 52 were injured as a result of avalanches and freezing weather in 22 provinces," said Mohammad Omar Mohammadi.

He said 168 houses were destroyed and 340 cattle killed. Authorities fear the toll may rise sharply because rescue crews have yet to reach some of the worst-hit areas. In the badly hit northeastern province of Badakhshan at least 18 people, including three women and two children, were killed when avalanches hit their houses

overnight, said provincial spokesman Naweed Frotan. "Several dozen are still trapped, we are trying to rescue them," he said, adding that many roads were still blocked.

Five people were killed by avalanches in the Balkhab district of Sari Pul province in northern Afghanistan and at least 70 people trapped under the snow were being rescued, said provincial spokesman Zabiullah Amani. "The roads to Balkhab are still blocked and we are trying to open them," he said. Freezing weather killed at least two people and over 100 animals in the western province of Badghis. In Parwan province just north of Kabul, the spokesman for Governor Wahid Sediqqi said 16 people died.

Trapped
The government declared yes-

terday, a normal working day in Afghanistan, to be a public holiday to deter non-essential travel and ensure schools were closed. Unusually, snow even fell in the southern province of Kandahar. Neighboring Pakistan was also hit by severe weather, with at least 13 people killed in the northwest by avalanches or heavy rain.

An avalanche smashed into eight homes in the village of Shershal in Chitral district, killing nine people including four women and four children. The region has been hit by heavy snowfall that is four feet deep in some places.

Six people who had been trapped beneath the snow were rescued. A separate avalanche killed a soldier at a border checkpoint in Chitral district, a military statement said, while six more soldiers were injured.

Chitral district mayor Maghfiat

Shah said the city's airport was shut because of the weather. The region's electricity supply was also disrupted after the main power line was damaged.

In the Khyber tribal district on the Afghan border in the northwest, three infant girls were killed and two women injured when the roof of their house collapsed in heavy rain.

Deadly avalanches are common in Afghanistan's mountainous areas in winter and rescue efforts are frequently hampered by lack of equipment. Despite billions of dollars in international aid after the ousting of the Taliban government in 2001, Afghanistan remains among the world's poorest nations.

Last month heavy snowfall and freezing weather killed 27 children, all under the age of five, in Jawzjan province in northern Afghanistan. —AFP



KABUL: An Afghan pedestrian makes his way down a street past snow-covered trees in Kabul yesterday. —AFP

PHILIPPINES GOVT SAYS CHURCH OUT OF TOUCH IN ATTACKING DRUGS WAR

MANILA: The Philippine government derided Catholic bishops yesterday as “out of touch” after they used weekend sermons to attack a war on drugs they said had created a “reign of terror” for the poor. Members of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) had dramatized President Rodrigo Duterte’s campaign and, instead of criticizing, should focus on contributing to the “reign of peace” that innocent people now felt, presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella said. The church assailed bloodshed that had caused suffering, and said killing people was not the way to deal with illegal drugs.

In a pastoral letter read out on Saturday and repeated to congregations

at churches yesterday, bishops said it was disturbing that many Filipinos were indifferent to the killings, or even approved of them. Abella, a former pastor, said the war on drugs had made the country safer, “far from the ‘terror’ the bishops paint rather dramatically.” The officials of the CBCP are apparently out of touch with the sentiments of the faithful who overwhelmingly support the changes in the Philippines,” Abella said in a statement.

More than 7,600 people have been killed since Duterte unleashed a ferocious crackdown seven months ago, more than 2,500 in police raids and sting operations. Human rights groups believe

many other deaths that police had attributed to vigilantes were carried out by assassins likely colluding with police. The government and police vehemently deny extrajudicial killings have occurred. The CBCP’s message was read at numerous churches in Manila attended by Reuters, though not all. Church sources said the Archdiocese of Manila issued a circular telling parishes to read the pastoral letter, a copy of which was obtained by Reuters prior to the first readings.

The drugs war is a contentious issue, with some bishops keen to make a stand and others hesitant to risk a backlash by criticizing a campaign that enjoys broad public support. Duterte has routinely

attacked the Church, and as recently as this week called for a “showdown” with priests whom he has accused of having wives, engaging in homosexual acts, graft and child abuse.

Give them a chance

Katrina Rufael, an office worker who attended mass at the Baclaran Redemptorist Church, said the pastoral letter was justified. “We have to oppose the war on drugs, because we cannot just put an end to the life of people who have made mistakes,” she said. “Let’s give them a chance to change.” Elsewhere in Manila, at the Chapel of the Eucharistic Lord, a packed congregation listened attentively

to the plea to stop the killings. “Life is a gift from God, and only God can take it away,” said Ligaya Reyes, a government worker. “It was a strong statement; it should have been made a long time ago when the killing began.”

The statement was also heard at a chapel in the Philippine National Police (PNP) headquarters on Saturday. Not all agreed with it. “They’re not being killed if they just surrender,” said a policeman’s wife, who gave her name as Dolores and said the PNP had been unfairly depicted as murderers for shooting drugs suspects resisting arrest. “What the president’s doing right now ... he’s doing good. Because for the common people, it’s our safety.” —Reuters



JAKARTA: Indonesians hold a demonstration in support of Muslim clerics at the National Monument in Jakarta yesterday. —AFP

INDONESIA TAKES AIM AT RADICALS

FPI ORGANIZES MASS RALLIES AGAINST GOVERNOR

JAKARTA: Indonesia is moving to rein in a notorious Islamic hard line group which spearheaded protests against Jakarta’s Christian governor, but experts warn it will be tough to bring to heel a network with close ties to the establishment. The Islamic Defenders Front (FPI) has in recent years become the face of hard line Islam in the world’s most populous Muslim-majority country, growing in influence despite being a fringe organization whose extreme views are rejected by most.

The group has raided bars selling alcohol during the holy month of Ramadan, forced the cancellation of a concert by Lady Gaga-whom they dubbed “the devil’s messenger”—with noisy protests, and led demonstrations against the Miss World beauty pageant when it came to Indonesia. Led by firebrand cleric Rizieq Shihab, the FPI helped organize recent mass rallies—which attracted conservative and moderate Muslims—against Jakarta governor Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, an ethnic Chinese Christian, who is on trial for allegedly insulting Islam.

The protest movement against Purnama—accused of insulting the Quran while campaigning for re-election in polls later this month—propelled the hardliners from being a marginal group to the centre of national politics, alarming observers and some in the government. Now authorities are seeking to put the muzzle back on the radicals, with police stepping up an investigation into Shihab in a move seen as supported by President Joko Widodo and his administration.

“This is unprecedented, it is the first time that the president and the government is openly challenging this Islamist group,” Tobias Basuki, an analyst from Jakarta think-tank the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), said. Last week police named the cleric a suspect for allegedly defaming Indonesia’s founding president, Sukarno, and the state ideology in a speech several years ago, meaning authorities believe there is enough evidence for him to stand trial.

Make a stand

Basuki said successive governments had shied away from cracking down for fear of being accused of attacking Islam but the current administration decided to “make a stand” as concerns mounted about the hard-liners’ influence. The radicals have reacted angrily. Hundreds have rallied in support of Shihab—who has served two short jail terms in the past—whenever he is hauled in for police questioning. Authorities “want to stifle an Islamic people’s movement, which is demanding justice against a blasphemer”, FPI spokesman Slamet Maarif said.

While they often hit the headlines with their colorful, noisy protests, the FPI does not have a huge following in the country of 255 million people. The group claims to have four million members but Ian Wilson, an expert on the FPI from Australia’s Murdoch University, estimated the figure at a maximum of 200,000. That is a fraction of the tens of millions who are members

of Indonesia’s two major, moderate Muslim organizations, Nahdlatul Ulama and the Muhammadiyah. But efforts to tackle the FPI are complicated by its long history of links to some members of the establishment, who have in the past used the group to carry out their work, said Guntur Romli, a progressive Muslim activist.

“Some in the bureaucracy and opportunistic politicians like the group as they can be used as a weapon, while claiming to act in the name of Islam,” said the activist, who is also a member of Purnama’s election campaign team. The FPI was founded in 1998 as Indonesia transitioned from dictatorship to democracy, and experts believe the military and police had a hand in its formation, hoping they could use the group against their enemies during the tumultuous period.

The police have on many occasions been seen working with the FPI when it conducts raids, or standing by and taking no action, while members of the elite sometimes allegedly hire the group to help in their murky business dealings. While the current crackdown is viewed as long overdue, it may not do away with the FPI forever, with analysts doubting the government will disband the group as the process is complicated. They believe the moves against Shihab are aimed at preventing trouble in the coming months during the Jakarta election and Purnama’s court case. But once the current controversies blow over, “it is likely that it’s going to be back to business as usual,” Basuki of CSIS warned. —AFP

PHILIPPINES’ DUTERTE ENDS PEACE TALKS WITH REBELS

MANILA: Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte has angrily scrapped talks with communist insurgents aimed at ending their decades-long conflict after both the government and the rebels called off unilateral ceasefires. Duterte, a self-described socialist who had previously freed top communist leaders to jump-start the peace talks, condemned the insurgents for resuming hostilities and said he was ready for a prolonged conflict. “I told the soldiers to prepare for a long war. I said (peace) will not come during our generation,” he said late Saturday.

He later threatened to jail rebel negotiators should they return from peace talks overseas. “They are bandits... I do not think they are worthy of being called rebels. Plainly, they are terrorists,” he said yesterday. The government and the communists separately declared ceasefires in August, and the informal arrangement largely held as they continued discussions in Rome. The president said he was now ordering government negotiators to “fold their tents and return home from the overseas talks. “I am not interested in talking to them (the rebel leaders). I will refuse to talk about it anymore,” he told reporters.

Fifty years of fighting

“We have been fighting for 50 years. If you want to extend it for another 50 years, so be it, we will be happy to accommodate you.” The rebels last week announced an end to their five-month-old ceasefire, accusing Duterte’s government of treachery and human rights abuses. The government responded by calling off its own unilateral ceasefire.

Duterte also denounced the 4,000-strong communist New People’s Army for killing four soldiers in attacks last week,

saying one of the victims had been riddled with 76 bullets. Duterte’s peace negotiators appeared hesitant in describing the volatile president’s latest stance. Government negotiator Jesus Dureza said in a statement, “he (Duterte) has

clearly spoken on the directions we all in government should take. Let’s take guidance from these recent declarations.” “The road to just and lasting peace is not easy to traverse. There are humps and bumps, and curbs and detours along the way. What is important is that we all stay the course,” he said. Chief communist peace negotiator Luis Jalandoni told ABS-CBN television yesterday the rebels want talks to continue.

“The compelling reason is that the peace talks will try to achieve genuine peace based on justice, land reform, free distribution of land,” he said. “All of these things are still on the table and for the (communist leadership), it is worthwhile trying to continue the peace negotiations,” he added.

He added that the NPA had killed the soldiers only “to defend them and defend the communities”. Duterte had previously made dramatic overtures to the communists, releasing some captured leaders so they could go abroad for peace talks and even appointing to his cabinet leftist figures named by the rebels.

The talks with the communists had appeared to be moving forward, with both sides describing the meeting in Rome last month as “successful.” But Duterte had refused communist demands to free hundreds of their jailed comrades. The insurgency in the poverty-stricken country, which began in 1968, is one of the longest running in the world and has claimed an estimated 30,000 lives, according to the military. —AFP



PHILIPPINES: This picture shows, Philippine’s President Rodrigo Duterte gesturing as he delivers a speech during inauguration the M’lang Solar Powered Irrigation System in Barangay Janiuay, M’lang, North Cotabato on the southern Philippine island of Mindanao. —AFP

AUSTRALIAN ARMY CHIEF TO MEET INDONESIA MILITARY LEADERS AFTER SPAT

JAKARTA: Australian army Chief Angus Campbell will meet Indonesian military leaders in Jakarta on Wednesday, after defense cooperation was suspended last month over “insulting” teaching material found at an Australian base. Campbell is due to meet Indonesian military (TNI) chief, Gatot Nurmantyo and army chief of staff Mulyono, TNI spokesman Wuryanto said. Indonesia’s military chief declared the rupture in military ties after an Indonesian officer found “offensive” teaching material while on a language training course in Australia late last year.

Nurmantyo said that the material “discredited the TNI, the nation of Indonesia and even the ideology of Indonesia”, referring to material concerning East Timor and “Papua needing to be independent”, as well as mocking the country’s founding principles, known as Pancasila. Both governments moved quickly to try to cool tensions and Indonesia’s chief security minister, Wiranto, later said only cooperation related to the military’s Australia-based language training program had been suspended.

Australian media said Campbell would discuss the findings of an

investigation by the defense department into the issue after Indonesia had sought assurances over the training material.

TNI spokesman Wuryanto declined to comment on the agenda for Wednesday’s talks. A spokesman for Australian Defense Minister Marise Payne confirmed the visit but also declined to comment further on the talks. The countries have extensive military cooperation, which ranges from counter-terrorism cooperation to border protection.

But they have had a rocky military relationship in recent years. Australia stopped joint training exercises with Indonesian Special Forces (Kopassus) after accusations of abuses by the unit in East Timor in 1999 as the territory prepared for independence. Ties resumed when counter-terrorism cooperation became imperative after the 2002 nightclub bombings on the resort island of Bali that killed 202 people, including 88 Australians. Indonesia most recently suspended military ties in 2013 over revelations that Australian spies had tapped the mobile telephone of then president Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. —Reuters

AUSTRALIA’S LEADER SAYS TRUMP ISN’T CHASING A REFUGEE DEAL



CANBERRA: Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull comments on a deal with the United States accepting refugees from Australia at Parliament House in Canberra. —AP

CANBERRA: Australia’s prime minister yesterday ruled out any deal to get the United States to honor an agreement to resettle hundreds of Muslim refugees that President Donald Trump has described as “dumb.” Prime Minister Malcom Turnbull also dismissed a Nine Network television network journalist’s suggestion that he should be offended that White House spokesman Sean Spicer has repeatedly called him “Trump” in press briefings. Turnbull said, “The important thing is results.”

Spicer says Trump has agreed to honor an Obama administration deal to resettle up to 1,250 asylum seekers rejected by Australia. Trump made the agreement during a conversation with Turnbull last weekend, but said since tweeted, “I will study this dumb deal!” Turnbull said Trump had asked for nothing in return for resettling the mostly Muslim refugees from Africa, the Middle East and Asia.

Australia pays the impoverished Pacific countries of Nauru and Papua New Guinea to keep the refugees in camps. “Absolutely not,” Turnbull said.

“It’s a deal obviously that President Trump has said he wouldn’t have entered into, but he has committed to honor it,” Turnbull said there would be no link between the refugee resettlement and any future US request for military help in the Middle East or the South China Sea. Australia is one of the largest contributors to the US-led military campaign in Iraq and Syria. Australia has resisted US pressure to conduct freedom of navigation exercises close to artificial islands created by China in the contested South China Sea.

“We assess all requests for military assistance on their merits and there is no linkage at all between an arrangement relating to refugee resettlement and any other matters,” Turnbull said. The Obama administration agreed to resettle Australia’s refugees after Australia agreed in September last year to accept Costa Rican refugees fleeing drug wars. —AP

TRUMP CABINET PICK PAID BY CONTROVERSIAL...

Continued from Page 1

After fleeing Iran, the MEK joined forces with Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein. It later exposed details of the clandestine nuclear program run by Iran, which views the MEK as its sworn enemy.

"The Mujahedeen have backed the winning horse. They are going to have some at least entree into the administration," said Ervand Abrahamian, a professor at the City University of New York who wrote a book on the MEK. "I think it weakens the US because the more they have access to the administration, the more people in Iran are going to be scared of anything the US does."

The MEK long has cultivated a roster of former US and European officials to attend its events opposing Iran's clerically run government. It pays for the appearance of many. Chao, the wife of Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, spoke before an MEK conference in 2015 in Paris. She also had a seat next to Maryam Rajavi, the "president-elect" of the National Council of Resistance of Iran, the political arm of the MEK.

Chao received a \$50,000 honorarium from the MEK-associated Alliance for Public Awareness, according to a report she filed with the US Office of Government Ethics. Chao received another \$17,500 honorarium for March 2016 speech she gave to the Iranian-American Cultural Association of Missouri, which MEK opponents also link to the exile group.

The Department of Transportation said in a statement that Chao has a "strong record of speaking out in support

of democracy and women's rights in the Middle East" but "has not spoken to MEK events". It added that her speeches were delivered alongside bipartisan members of Congress, governors, prime ministers, ambassadors, generals, former FBI Directors and "many other influential voices."

Giuliani has acknowledged being paid for his appearances at MEK events. However, he hasn't filed a government disclosure form since his failed 2008 Republican presidential bid, so it's unclear how much the MEK has paid him in total. Giuliani did not respond to an AP request for comment sent through his aides. Gingrich has also spoken to the MEK before, including at a gala in 2016, although it is not clear whether or how much he was paid. Gingrich could not be reached for comment. The White House also did not comment.

The MEK welcomes the incoming Trump government, as "some people within this administration" plan to change American policies toward Iran, said Mohammad Mohaddessin, the chairman of the foreign affairs committee of its political arm. "The core of the policy that we are advocating is to be tough with the Iranian regime, to not ignore its crimes against the Iranian people," he said. The White House had no comment.

The MEK formed in 1965. They embraced both Marxism and the idea of an Islamic government after the violent overthrow of the American-backed shah who ruled Iran at the time. Their name, Mujahedeen-e-Khalq, means "the People's Holy Warriors". They carried out a string of targeted assassinations hitting Iranian officials. — AP

WORRIES ANEW THAT US COULD REVIVE...

Continued from Page 1

Those interrogations involved repeated waterboarding and other now-banned techniques.

On Friday, five top Democratic senators sent a letter to Pompeo and Defense Secretary James Mattis expressing alarm that the government could change policies and laws to resume the practice of torture, especially in the offshore black sites. The draft executive order and Trump's own comments in support of torture "have created alarm that this administration may be preparing a return to policies and practices that are ineffective, contrary to our national values, and damaging to our national security," the senators said. "Torture is immoral and deeply contrary to the principles of this nation. Beyond that, it is widely recognized as ineffective and even counterproductive, as it produces unreliable information."

But analysts and intelligence community officials say that, even if the Trump administration wanted to use torture, it would run into both a dense thicket of laws against the practice and extreme reluctance within the intelligence community to resume practices used on detainees in the four years after the 2001 terror attacks.

During his presidential campaign and since his election Trump repeatedly has said he thinks waterboarding and other techniques widely considered torture are

effective. "Absolutely, I feel it works," he said again last week in an interview. Moreover, he and key advisers have said they want to aggressively attack Islamic extremism, which is the focus of the draft order.

The draft would reverse key Obama orders from 2009 that required that detainees be handled in accordance with international laws including the Geneva Conventions and the Convention Against Torture, as well as with the US Army Field Manual, which sets clear limits on what can be done in interrogations. The draft calls for rewriting the Army Field Manual and loosening other laws restricting interrogation techniques. Such changes would be made "for the safe, lawful and effective interrogation of enemy combatants captured in the fight against radical Islamism," it says.

The fate of the draft remains unclear, and Trump acknowledged that his top security team could block the reinstatement of torture techniques. "I will rely on Pompeo and Mattis," the president told ABC News. "And if they don't want to do (it), that's fine. And if they do want to do (it), I will work toward that end." Mattis, who would be in charge of any rewriting of the field manual, has openly opposed enhanced interrogations. He has been clear "that he will abide by, and is committed to, upholding international law, law of armed conflict, Geneva Conventions and US law," Pentagon spokesman Captain Jeff Davis said last week. — AFP

ASSEMBLY TO HOLD DEBATE ON KHOR...

Continued from Page 1

MP Mohammed Al-Dallal called for consolidation against Iraqi provocations, while MP Safaa Al-Hashem said that these demonstrations reminded her of similar ones held over the Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port. She claimed this is a form of pressure to get more aid. MP Nasser Al-Dousari said allegations made by some Iraqi MPs are false and that they forgot that the estuary is named after Sheikh Abdullah Al-Sabah, who died in 1813. "Kuwait is fully capable of protecting its borders and security," he warned.

MP Osama Al-Shaheen warned that violating Kuwait's sovereignty at Khor Abdullah or in any other part of the country is totally rejected, and that the government should take all needed security and diplomatic measures. MP Riyadh Al-Adasani stressed that Kuwait is fully committed to international agreements and that the government must take Iraqi protests seriously, wisely and cautiously.

Meanwhile, Minister of Public Works Abdurahman Al-Mutawa said the Cabinet will discuss today whether to attend the Feb 8 Assembly session to vote on the no-confidence motion against Information and Youth Minister Sheikh Salman Al-Hmoud Al-Sabah following the Jan 31 marathon grilling on the sports suspension and alleged violations.

Speaker Ghanem saw no crisis over the issue, saying that a majority of MPs want to work and produce. He however charged some MPs' interpellations of ministers are politically motivated and not related to the grilling motions' topics. He added that a small minority in the house, "who are well known", does not want to work and deliver without problems. He said that the grilling should not be blown out of proportion and said he is confident things will return to normal as before the grilling.

In another development, the legal and legislative committee yesterday approved a draft law calling to set up a special authority for the demographic structure that will oversee a plan to make Kuwaitis form 50 percent of the population over the next seven years. MP Waleed Al-Tabtabaei said the Assembly is expected to vote on this draft law on March 14.

The government has already said that its demographic policy calls to reduce the number of expatriates from 70 percent now to 60 percent after 15 years. The seven-year plan means that a large number of expatriates, especially from large communities like Indians and Egyptians, will have to leave the country by the deadline. Tabtabaei said that the Assembly is scheduled to vote on draft laws calling to cancel the hike in petrol prices and to abolish the planned increase in the prices of electricity and water due to be implemented in May.

TRUMP IMMIGRATION BAN IN LIMBO

Continued from Page 1

Judges William Canby, Jr and Michelle Friedland did not give a reason in their two-paragraph ruling. However, they told the states of Washington and Minnesota, which had filed the original suit over the ban, to provide documents detailing their opposition to the government's appeal by 0759 GMT today. And the Justice Department was given until 2300 GMT today to supply more documents supporting its position.

Meanwhile, in line with Robert's ruling, travelers from the targeted countries with valid visas began arriving on American soil while others prepared to set off for the United States. In New York, 33-year-old Sudanese doctor Kamal Fadlalla rejoiced - after a week blocked in his home country, he was back in the Big Apple with friends and colleagues. "It feels great," Fadlalla told AFP in the arrival area of Terminal 4 at John F Kennedy International Airport. "It was a tough week actually. (...) It was really horrible, it was shocking for everybody."

"This is the first time I try to travel to America. We were booked to travel next week but decided to bring it forward after we heard," said a Yemeni woman, recently married to a US citizen, who boarded a plane from Cairo to Turkey yesterday to connect with a US-bound flight. She declined to be named for fear it could complicate her entry to the United States. Reacting to the latest court ruling, Iraqi government spokesman Saad Al-Hadithi said: "It is a move in the right direction to solve the problems that it caused."

In Tehran, a 30-year-old Iranian woman told AFP she had rebooked her tickets to the United States and was ready to travel late yesterday to see her brother. "Until yesterday, I was completely disappointed. We have some new hope after this news, but it's 50-50. I am willing to take this risk," said the woman, who did not want to give her name. The State Department has said visa holders from the seven countries are allowed to travel to the US as long as their documents have not been "physically canceled".

The department had earlier said up to 60,000 people had their visas revoked as a result of Trump's order. The Department of Homeland Security - which runs border agencies - also said it would cease implementing the order. The restrictions have wreaked havoc at airports across America and beyond, leaving travelers trying to reach the United States in limbo. The political backlash for Trump has been equally severe, with the order fueling numerous mass protests.

On Saturday, thousands of people marched from London and Paris to New York, Washington and Palm Beach, where Trump is spending the weekend at his Mar-a-Lago retreat - now dubbed the "Winter White House". In the US capital, hundreds marched from the White House to Capitol Hill. "Donald, Donald can't you see, we don't want you in DC," chanted the demonstrators in the largely Democratic-leaning city. Yesterday, Trump supporters were expected to rally in front of his Trump Tower in midtown Manhattan. — Agencies



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Focus

INDIA TECHIES FEAR
US CRACKDOWN ON
HIGH-SKILLED VISAS

Indian student Sunny Nair has always dreamt of working for a technology giant in the United States but fears that President Donald Trump will crush his life ambition. The 19-year-old worries that Trump's crackdown on immigration will include restrictions on so-called H-1B visas, which India's IT sector uses to send thousands of highly-skilled workers to America every year. Analysts say the issue also threatens to sour Trump and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's burgeoning relationship. The leaders have extended mutual invitations to visit their respective countries but are heading for a clash on visas.

"I had always dreamt about going to the US and working for a major company like Infosys but now all that will change," Nair told AFP despondently before trudging into class. The aspiring techie had planned to head to the United States for further study next year after completing his bachelor's degree in engineering at the Don Bosco Institute of Technology in Mumbai. He hoped that would help land him the opportunity of a lifetime at one of India's top information technology exporting firms, such as Infosys, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) or Wipro.

But Trump has pledged to prioritize jobs for Americans. Shares in India's three largest tech firms took a hit this week after White House spokesman Sean Spicer suggested that presidential and congressional action could be taken on H-1B visas as "part of a larger immigration reform effort". Three bills have been introduced to Congress which reportedly seek to restructure the H-1B visa program, including one that would raise the salary threshold, making it more expensive for Indian firms to send employees to America.

Scores of high-profile Indians, including Google chief executive Sundar Pichai, have followed a well-trodden path from Indian IT institutes to a master's degree in America before landing a plum job in Silicon Valley. Nair is now anxiously plotting a different road map for his future. "(Restrictions)... would be a major negative decision by Trump and would mean fewer international opportunities so my goals have shifted drastically now. I am looking at other venues for my future studies like Canada and Europe instead of USA," he said.

Government concerns

India's IT outsourcing industry is worth around \$108 billion, according to industry body NASSCOM, the National Association of Software and Services Companies, with almost four million people employed in the sector. Nasscom president R Chandrashekhar said restrictions would create uncertainty and leave US businesses short of the skilled workers they need. "It's a myth that these workers replace American workers," he told AFP. "Given that there aren't enough people with the qualifications to fill these jobs, two things can happen - these jobs can remain unfilled or companies can ship these jobs overseas. Neither is a good thing for the US."

India's IT sector has become a boom industry in recent years with companies, especially in developed nations, subcontracting work to firms such as TCS, taking advantage of the country's skilled English-speaking workforce. It makes more than \$60 billion alone from the American market, providing IT and engineering services to major US businesses. The United States offers 85,000 H-1B visas every year, most of which are snapped up by Indian outsourcing firms whose employees fill a skill gap in US engineering. Applications are vastly oversubscribed and are allocated via a lottery system.

Industry experts say any clampdown would force Indian tech titans to radically rethink their business models. "Indian IT firms may start focusing on Asia-Pacific and expand their businesses here instead of in the US," D D Mishra, an analyst at technology research company Gartner told AFP. Infosys has said it is looking into reducing its dependency on visas to stay competitive, while worried software executives are due to travel to the US later this month to press their case with lawmakers.

Tech Mahindra CEO C P Gurnani told AFP there would certainly be an impact, adding: "It is unfortunate that we are talking about protectionism and creating artificial trade barriers in the age of globalization." "(Any) restriction is always a concern and we hope that the Trump administration will take into consideration all factors, before making any decision," he added. A spokesman for India's external affairs ministry said earlier this week that New Delhi had conveyed India's "interests and concerns" to "senior levels" in the US administration and Congress. —AFP

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IRANIAN AMERICANS STUCK, CONFUSED, AFRAID

Iranian-American supermarket supervisor Alan Tahmasebi voted for Donald Trump last year, hoping a businessman would be more trustworthy than a politician. The 35-year-old now sorely regrets it, seeing the havoc wreaked upon his fellow countrymen - and his family - since the new president issued a temporary travel ban on refugees and citizens from seven Muslim-majority countries, including his former home.

Tahmasebi and his wife have spent more than \$7,000 on green card applications for their parents. Now, their parents are in limbo overseas as the Irvine couple awaits the birth of their second child. "It was a land of opportunity but now, I don't think so," he said. "They wish to come here and visit my new baby. They never worked with the army, with the government (in Iran) - I have no idea what is going on."

The ban has rattled Americans with ties to the listed countries, and its effects are perhaps most widespread among the country's thriving Iranian American community. The US has nearly 370,000 Iranian immigrants, according to US Census Bureau estimates, far more than the other countries targeted by the order. While Tehran and Washington have a lengthy history of friction, personal ties between residents of the two countries have held strong. Many Iranian Americans travel back to visit family or bring ageing parents to join them in the US.

Since Trump imposed the travel ban, tension between the two governments has continued to rise. On Friday, Iran barred US wrestlers from an important international tournament. The same day, the Trump administration imposed sanctions on 13 people and a dozen companies in response to Iran's recent ballistic missile test, increasing pressure on Tehran without directly undercutting a nuclear deal with the country.

Later Friday, a federal judge temporarily blocked the travel ban following a lawsuit by Washington state and Minnesota that said Trump's order is causing significant harm to residents and effectively mandates discrimination. A federal appeals court on

Sunday denied a Justice Department request for an immediate reinstatement of the ban, meaning the legal fight will continue for days at least. Iranian Americans said they are perplexed as to why Iran is even on Trump's list, noting the country is not mired in war like Syria and Yemen. In addition, many Iranians came to the United States after the 1979 Islamic Revolution in search of religious and personal freedom and continue to cherish those ideals.

"There's are two things in my country - one is people, one is government," Tahmasebi said. "This new law is not for the government. It's for the people, who like the United States." In the Southern California suburb of Irvine, a tidy strip mall hosts a pharmacy, bakery and dental office that cater to clients in English and Persian. At the supermarket, Tahmasebi said customers relish persimmon and other produce from Iran, but if relations between the countries sour further the

store may have to bring in Pakistani or Chinese goods instead.

'Tehrangles'

The vast majority of the country's Iranians and Iranian Americans live in California. The sizable community in Los Angeles - which includes members of diverse religious groups, including Muslims, Christians, Jews and Baha'i - has led some to adopt the nickname "Tehrangles". Jeannine Stepanian, a 32-year-old lawyer who helped travelers detained at Los Angeles International Airport last weekend, said she comes from a family of refugees. First, her Armenian grandparents fled to Iran. Then, her parents, who are Christian and were born in Iran, sought safe haven in the United States after the Islamic Revolution.

"I felt like it could have been any one of my relatives this could have been happening to," said Stepanian, adding she is outraged by the ban. Trump's order placed a

temporary halt on visitors and refugees from Iraq, Iran, Syria, Sudan, Libya, Somalia and Yemen. But citizens of these countries who are legal permanent residents in the United States initially were held for long hours at airports, and those who have immigrant visas also were denied entry.

Ali Vayeghan was stopped at the Los Angeles airport even though he had an immigrant visa. US authorities put him on a plane back to Iran, but lawyers intervened to get him returned to the United States so he could reunite with his wife and son and get his green card. His niece, 32-year-old artist Marjan Vayghan, said her friends have been nervously asking each other since the ban whether they have green cards or US citizenship. "There is this sense of, 'Are you a citizen, or do we need to Anne Frank you in our homes?' This is a situation where everybody is afraid," she said. "We don't know who among us is safe."

Now, many Iranians - even those who are legal permanent residents or American citizens - are rethinking their plans. Mehran Sahraeian, a 51-year-old pharmacy technician, said he's been pleading with his mother not to visit his sister in Canada lest she face problems returning. Eli Majd, a 37-year-old mother of two, said her husband is visiting family in Iran and she worries about him being able to return - even though he is an American. Sam Yebri, a 35-year-old lawyer, said his family probably won't vacation abroad for now because although he is a US citizen, his passport lists his birthplace as Tehran. "I have no problem with the security apparatus. There are concerns just about being an Iranian American at this time, I think, until cooler heads prevail," Yebri said.

At the Irvine supermarket, 45-year-old Iranian American Mary Far said she hasn't returned to Iran in two decades. She was hoping to go this summer to visit her brother and sister, whom she hasn't seen since she left the country. But with the travel ban, she isn't sure she'll make the trip. "It affects a lot of people," she said. Then she burst into tears. — AP



Ali Vayeghan gives a thumbs-up after arriving at the international terminal at Los Angeles International Airport on Feb 2, 2017. — AP

MAASTRICHT AIMS TO REKINDLE EUROPE DREAM

Maastricht, a picturesque Dutch city of cobblestone streets and medieval arches, on Tuesday marks the 25th anniversary of the European treaty bearing its name, showing rare optimism and hope amid rising euroscepticism. Sandwiched just a few kilometers between Liege in Belgium and Aachen in Germany, this southern provincial capital bore witness more than two decades ago to the birth of an audacious plan to integrate Europe's countries into one union.

On Feb 7, 1992, the whole town was swept up in the euphoria of the moment, recalled Limburg provincial governor Theo Bovens. "You could feel the pro-Europe atmosphere," he told AFP. "Every shopping street was linked to one country," he said - one for Belgium, another for Germany and yet another for Britain. "Shopkeepers decorated their street with goods and flags."

On that day, in a new provincial building on the banks of the River Maas, the 12 nations of the then European Economic Community signed the Maastricht Treaty, which paved the way for the foundation of today's European Union and the single currency, the euro. Twenty-five years on, after a series of crises - a plummeting euro, Greece's political and economic woes, a wave of immigration unprecedented since World War II and Brexit - Maastricht and its 120,000 inhabitants feel the city still has an essential, even existential, role to play.

'Spark is still there'

"I think we should try to light the candle again, this little spark that still is there, to make sure that this European dream that we had 25 years ago is going to be a dream again and not the nightmare that we are fearing now," said Maastricht mayor Annemarie Penn-te Strake. "Because this is the Maastricht treaty we feel indebted and have to pay attention to the fact that we are living in an era in which Europe ... has a lot of problems, a lot of scepticism, and a lot of anger."

Local authorities are pleading for a return to the ideals and values enshrined in the treaty, which they fear too many EU members have become disconnected from. They yearn for a renewed embrace of the idea of European citi-

zenship, for a better focus on improving working and living conditions, and to change labyrinthine structures that have become too institutional.

'Need another Europe'

Nestling in the crossroads of three countries in what it calls the "euregion", the small province will soon send to Brussels a program of ideas culled from a year of debates on how to reconstruct Europe in an organic fashion from the ground roots up. "We don't need less of Europe, we need another Europe," said Bovens, criticizing those countries he sees as still too inward-looking.

On Maastricht's main square, where the smell of frying doughnuts mingles with that of roasted chicken and carnival music tangles with a riot of different languages, locals appear to have kept faith. Here the EU is seen as a bulwark

against the current international climate of anxiety. "When I see all these changes happening in the United States, I think it's a good thing that the European dream still exists," said grocer Fabien Ruiter, 23.

To those filled with doubt and tempted to retreat behind national borders, 19-year-old Esmeel insisted "migration will still be a problem whether you are still in Europe or not". But Tine Raenarts, 54, standing at a table in the market square, remained unconvinced. "I have always had my doubts about Europe," she said.

Adapt or die

Charting a path towards a stronger EU is indeed a difficult task in "this Europe which is bigger, but also more divisive," said Sophie Vanhoonacker, an expert in European affairs at Maastricht University. — AFP



Limburg Province's Governor Theo Bovens and Maastricht's Mayor Annemarie Penn-te Strake stand in the streets of Maastricht on Feb 3, 2017. —AFP

TAKANASHI SOARS TO FRESH DOUBLE



HINZENBACH: Ski jumping World Cup leader Sara Takanashi took her victory tally for the season to eight yesterday dominating both legs of the Hinzenbach event after also winning Saturday's competition. The 20-year-old made it 52 World Cup career wins, as she prepares for the world championships at Lahti, Finland later this month. Germany's Carina Vogt was second after a great first jump had given the Japanese a fright. "Carina is a great competitor. She is very strong both mentally and physically. Her jump was a good motivation for me," Takanashi said. Vogt was delighted with her performance and the woman sixth in the overall standings said it was just what she wanted as a 24th birthday present. "It was the perfect birthday present for me. I think I am on a very good way and am looking forward to the next challenge." — AFP

KEMPES SACKED AS VALENCIA AMBASSADOR

MADRID: Valencia yesterday sacked former Argentina great Mario Kempes from his role as ambassador for the struggling Spanish side, the World Cup winner said. Kempes, who spent seven seasons at Valencia during two spells in the 1970s and 80s, has been a fierce critic of Singaporean owner Peter Lim despite his role with the club. "Today, officially, I have been told that I am no longer an ambassador for Valencia CF," Kempes posted on his official Twitter account. "But my feelings for his club will not change and I will continue to give my opinions over what is not correct from my point of view," he added. Kempes had criticised another poor Valencia performance Saturday as a 4-0 thrashing at home by Eibar left Los Che just six points above the relegation zone. After the match Valencia fans repeated their calls for Lim to leave the club. "Gentleman, unfortunately we are seeing a team that is lost," he tweeted. "There is no play, no direction and even little sign of desire." As one of Valencia's most decorated players, Kempes was named as an ambassador in 2013. The top scorer at the 1978 World Cup won a Cup Winners' Cup, Copa del Rey and UEFA Super Cup with Valencia. — AFP

DETERMINED QUINTANA SEALS VALENCIA WIN

VALENCIA: Nairo Quintana made the perfect start to a daunting season as the Movistar rider survived the elements to win the Tour of Valencia yesterday. Frenchman Bryan Coquard claimed the shortened fifth and final stage from Paterna to Valencia ahead of compatriot Nacer Bouhanni and Dutchman Coen Vermeltfoort in 1hr 01min 23sec. In strong winds that curtailed the stage, the Colombian Quintana finished safely among the peloton to stay 13 seconds ahead of Belgian Ben Hermans with his BMC Racing teammate Manuel Senni in third 19 seconds further adrift. Defending champion Wout Poels was 52 seconds back on Quintana in fourth for Team Sky. After winning the Vuelta a Espana last year, Quintana is targeting a Giro d'Italia-Tour de France double and showed fine early season form in storming to victory in Saturday's fourth stage to move to the head of the standings. — AFP



AL-MAZEEDI AND AL-FARRA CROWNED KU SQUASH CHAMPS

KUWAIT: Qais Al-Mazeedi and Ayman Al-Farra took first place of the Kuwait University Squash Open Tournament for Pioneers, Authorities and Clubs for the year 2017.

They won the gold medal for doubles after defeating Yasser Khan and Raed Al-Shatti from the Interior Ministry in the semifinals and Mahmoud Dashti and Abdelaziz Al-Misri in the finals.

The final match witnessed strong competition in which cool nerves and high concentration played a major role in deciding the outcome, as seasoned player Al-

Mazeedi resorted to the factor of experience and taking risks, and left Al-Farra to deal with fast balls which need skills and high physical fitness.

Ayman Al-Farra won the individuals gold medal after defeating Raed Al-Shatti who proved to be a highly experienced player with his outstanding performance.

The closing ceremony was held at the squash courts of Kuwait University, Shuwaikh Campus under the patronage of KU Secretary General Adam Al-Mulla who handed the winners and players their cups and prizes.

INDIA BEAT N ZEALAND 4-1 IN DAVIS CUP

PUNE: Ramkumar Ramanathan and Yuki Bhambri scored back-to-back wins over New Zealand yesterday to give India a 4-1 victory on the final day of the Davis Cup Asia/Oceania Group I tie in Pune.

New Zealand's Finn Tearney and Jose Statham both lost their reverse singles matches, with Ramanathan beating Tearney in the fourth match 7-5, 6-1, 6-0 followed by Bhambri's 7-5, 3-6, 6-4 win over Statham in the dead rubber.

Ramanathan, ranked 276, faced tough moments in the opening set that clocked in at nearly 51-minutes but prevailed over his opponent to win 7-5 at Pune's Balewadi Sports Complex before taking the next two sets in a 6-1, 6-0 rout.

India lost the doubles rubber on Saturday after New Zealand's Artem Sitak and Michael Venus overpowered Leander

Paes and Vishnu Vardhan to settle the score at 2-1. But the Indian singles players rose to the occasion on the final day of the tournament after beating the visitors in the opening matches on Friday 2-0.

In the fifth match Bhambri, ranked 368, won four-straight games against Statham in the first set to clinch the round 7-5. But the Kiwi, ranked 417, made a stirring comeback in the second to level the score.

In the decider the 24-year-old Indian proved too strong, winning the final set 6-3. India have not lost to New Zealand in the Davis Cup since 1978 when the visitors beat them 4-1 in Delhi. The victory sets up a showdown with Uzbekistan in April after the Uzbeks eased past South Korea 3-1 in their first round tie played in Gimcheon, Korea yesterday. —AFP



NIS: Serbia's Dusan Lajovic returns the ball to Russia's Konstantin Kravchuk during the Davis Cup World Group first round single match between Serbia and Russia at Cair sports hall in Nis, yesterday. — AFP

TENNIS

SERBIA IN DAVIS CUP LAST EIGHT, ARGENTINA STAY ALIVE

PARIS: Serbia reached the Davis Cup quarter-finals on Saturday to set up a possible mouthwatering clash between Grand Slam heavyweights Novak Djokovic and Rafael Nadal while champions Argentina stayed alive.

Serbia, the 2010 champions, took an unassailable 3-0 lead over Russia in their World Group opener in Nis when 40-year-old Nenad Zimonjic and Viktor Troicki downed Andrey Kuznetsov and Konstantin Kravchuk 6-3, 7-6 (7/3), 6-7 (5/7), 6-4. On Friday, Troicki beat Karen Khachanov 6-4, 6-7 (3/7), 6-3, 1-6, 7-6 (8/6) in the opening singles before Djokovic made it 2-0 when Daniil Medvedev retired with cramps in the fourth set allowing the 12-time major winner to claim a 3-6, 6-4, 6-1, 1-0 win.

"I have to congratulate Viktor for an excellent match after spending five hours on court Friday," said Zimonjic, the Serbia captain. "It was a massive challenge even though he's one of the fittest players on tour."

Djokovic could face Nadal in the last eight in April should five-time champions Spain see off Croatia in Osijek. Nadal was sitting out the trip to Croatia after reaching the Australian Open final last weekend but would be certain to return to face a Djokovic-inspired Serbia.

However, Croatia were trying their best to ignore the script when they took a 2-1 lead over the Spaniards thanks to Marin Draganja and Nikola Mektic carving out a 6-7, (6/8), 7-6 (9/7), 7-6 (7/5), 2-6, 6-4 win over Feliciano Lopez and Marc Lopez, the French Open champions.

Croatia, playing without top star Marin Cilic, saw world number 223 Franko Skugor unexpectedly defeat 26th-ranked Pablo Carreno Busta on Friday before world number 16 Roberto Bautista Agut levelled the tie overnight by beating Davis Cup debutant Ante Pavic, the world number 486.

Meanwhile, Carlos Berlocq and Leonardo Mayer kept defending champions Argentina in their tie against Italy in Buenos Aires with a marathon 6-3, 6-3, 4-6, 2-6, 7-6 (9/7) win over Simone Bolelli and Fabio Fognini.

That made the overall score 2-1 after Paolo Lorenzi and Andreas Seppi had won the opening day singles against an Argentina team missing Juan Martin del Potro and Federico Delbonis, the stars of their 2016 final triumph over Croatia.

AUSSIERS, FRANCE IN LAST EIGHT

On Saturday, Berlocq and Mayer needed six match points to secure their win. Australia, the 28-time champions, completed a 3-0 drubbing of the Czech Republic in Melbourne when John Peers and Sam Groth breezed past Jiri Vesely and Jan Satral, 6-3, 6-2, 6-2.

Australia, captained by Lleyton Hewitt, will now host the United States in the quarter-finals on April 7-9. The US, the 32-time champions, completed a 3-0 win over Switzerland in Birmingham, Alabama, on Saturday when Steve Johnson and Jack Sock beat Henri Laaksonen and Adrien Panasse 7-6 (7/3), 6-3, 7-6 (7/5).

Against a Swiss side missing Roger Federer and Stan Wawrinka, world number 20 Sock got

the United States off to a fast start on Friday, seeing off world number 146 Marco Chiudinelli 6-4, 6-3, 6-1. John Isner, ranked 23rd, had to work a little harder for a 4-6, 6-2, 6-2, 7-6 (7/1) victory over Laaksonen, ranked 127th in the world. Nine-time champions France wrapped up a 3-0 victory against Japan after Wimbledon winners Pierre-Hugues Herbert and Nicolas Mahut brushed aside Yuichi Sugita and Yasutaka Uchiyama 6-3, 6-4, 6-4.

France will play either Canada or Britain for a

place in the last eight. In Ottawa, Jamie Murray and Dominic Inglot defeated 44-year-old Daniel Nestor and Vasek Pospisil 7-6 (7/1), 6-7 (3/7), 7-6 (7/3), 6-3 as Britain took a 2-1 lead.

The two countries were locked 1-1 overnight after Dan Evans, his country's top player in the absence of world number one Andy Murray, beat 17-year-old Denis Shapovalov in straight sets. Pospisil pulled Canada-missing world number four Milos Raonic-level with a 6-4, 6-1, 7-6 (7/3) victory over Kyle Edmund. — AFP



PUNE: India's Ramkumar Ramanathan reacts after winning a point during a Davis Cup singles tennis match against New Zealand's Finn Tearney at the Balewadi Sports Complex in Pune yesterday. —AFP

CYCLING

HOWSON ECLIPSES FROOME TO WIN HERALD SUN TOUR

MELBOURNE: Young Australian Damien Howson upstaged international stars Chris Froome and Esteban Chaves yesterday, winning the overall Herald Sun Tour ahead of fellow countryman Jai Hindley.

Briton Ian Stannard (Team Sky) crossed the line first on the 121-kilometre (75.2-mile) fourth and final stage in Kinglake in Victoria state, just ahead of New Zealander Aaron Gate (Aqua Blue Sport).

Howson (Orica-Scott), 24, and 20-year-old Hindley (Australian National Team) led the overall standings since stage one on Thursday ahead of third-placed Frenchman Kenny Elissonde (Team Sky).

"I'm really happy to join that list of guys (of former winners including Froome and Bradley Wiggins)," Howson said.

"It's my first overall win ever. It's also nice to break into new territory for myself."

Defending champion and three-time Tour de France winner Froome (Team Sky)

hailed the Australian's efforts to become the overall winner of his country's oldest stage race.

"Damien Howson was really strong," said the 31-year-old Briton, who finished sixth in the overall standings. "He rode a great stage on Falls Creek and has defended the jersey really well."

Colombian Chaves was ninth in the overall standings. Froome's teammate Stannard, 29, attacked following the final climb, opening up a gap that his rivals could not close to take the stage.

"I knew the guys wanted to spice it up behind," Stannard said. "I wasn't sure how I felt. I had a big day chasing that last 30 kilometres yesterday. I went pretty deep and felt not great early and came around towards the end of the race."

Dutchman Taco Van Der Hoorn (Roompot-Nederlandse Loterij) crossed the finish line to be third for the stage. —AFP



ST PETERSBURG: France's Kristina Mladenovic poses with her trophy after the final match of the WTA St Petersburg Ladies Trophy 2017 tennis tournament against Kazakhstan's Yulia Putintseva at the Sibur Arena in Saint Petersburg yesterday. — AFP

SKIING

LINDSEY VONN SEEKING WORLD SHINE TO INJURY TORMENT

ST MORITZ: Lindsey Vonn will headline the World Ski Championships that get under way in St Moritz today, the American speed queen firing out a warning that, for once, she is in one piece.

Vonn is in the midst of a remarkable comeback from a broken right arm sustained in training late last year, the latest in a catalogue of injuries the media-friendly star has suffered and which has led her to dub herself the “bionic woman”.

She has had just five World Cup races back since that injury, but won at Garmisch-Partenkirchen for the 77th World Cup win of her career-leaving her just nine short of the all-time record-but also crashing out on a couple.

“Every year is different. Every year

you have different obstacles to overcome. This year, with little training, it’s been tough to come in and really attack,” Vonn said. “I’m in one piece, which is positive for me. It’s not often that I go into world champs in one piece, so that’s good,” she said, adding that she was aiming to compete in the downhill, super-G and combined events.

But she admitted that her participation in the latter will require a slalom, something she has not done since her latest injury.

“I really don’t know how that’s going to go. Hopefully my arm will be fine with it, but the plan is to try. When the World Championships come, it’s all or nothing, so hopefully I can get on the podium there. I’m looking forward to it.

“A medal in St Moritz would be the

cherry on top of the cake-the crowning moment of my comeback and a great achievement,” Vonn added with the women’s downhill race on February 12.

The 32-year-old, who will face stiff competition from local hope Lara Gut, last season’s overall World Cup winner, heads up a strong US team that also includes Mikaela Shiffrin but is missing Ted Ligety, Bode Miller and Steve Nymann.

LACK OF TRAINING

Shiffrin is currently atop the overall and slalom World Cup standings and will be seeking to notch up a third consecutive world slalom title despite admitting to a lack of decent slalom training early in the season.

“I’ve gotten a little bit more training

than I’ve gone into this season with. I didn’t expect how busy the beginning of the season was going to be,” Shiffrin said “I’m very, very excited to just get some time on my skis training before St Moritz.” The high-end Swiss resort, a two-time host of the Winter Olympics, last held the world champs in 2003, and the February 6-19 competition which will feature almost 600 athletes from 76 countries will also be an opportunity for Austrian Marcel Hirscher to shine.

Hirscher is presently on line to win a sixth consecutive World Cup overall crystal globe, but is undecided about defending his combined title.

“In front of us are 14 hard days of racing action,” the Austrian said, adding that he would test the lay of the land in downhill training before deciding on

whether to race the combined.

“It is important for me to estimate the downhill course in the first couple of training sessions so I can make a call on what my medal opportunities may be.

“If I’m five seconds off the pace in the downhill, that most likely rules out the combined because that’s too big a deficit to make up in the slalom.”

Austria are historically the world’s leading ski team and apart from Hirscher, there are two other defending champions in their line-up in Anna Veith (giant slalom, slalom) and Hannes Reichelt (super-G). Ten individual gold medals are up for grabs with the world’s top men and women racing for downhill, slalom, alpine combined, super-G and giant slalom titles, plus the team competition. —AFP

RUGBY

WALES OVERCOMES SLOW START TO BEAT ITALIANS

ROME: Wales overcame a sluggish start for a 33-7 win over Italy in a rainy Six Nations match yesterday, narrowly missing out on a bonus point.

Jonathan Davies, Liam Williams and George North scored tries after the hour mark and Leigh Halfpenny kicked for 18 points as the visitors overturned a 7-3 half-time deficit to match England and Scotland with wins on the tournament’s opening weekend.

“We started slowly but the character showed,” said new Wales captain Alun Wyn Jones, who missed 10 minutes shortly after kickoff due to a blood issue. “We worked a little harder, kept the ball and we came together in the second half. We are a day behind everyone else so it is a foot in the door.” Edoardo Gori scored a first-half try and Italy ruled the scrum early on but, as has often been the case, the Azzurri appeared to tire as the match wore on and committed a series of errors to let Wales take control. Williams almost got a fourth try - and the bonus point - but lost the ball as he went over the line in the final minute. New tournament rules introduced for this season award winners an extra point if they score four tries.

The match turned when Andrea Lovotti was sent to the sin bin for Italy’s second scrum penalty in quick succession midway through the second half. Davies slid over the line as Wales rapidly spun the ball around and Williams ran in untouched six minutes later.

Two minutes from the end, North ran in all the way from his own half as Wales finally asserted total control. “The first half, the weather came down and it was going to be a tight game anyway,” North said. “We had to fight to the end, every inch, but we’re happy with the performance. We know they are a passionate team but we backed ourselves and it showed.”

WOODEN SPOON

It was Wales’ 11th straight win over Italy,

which picked up the wooden spoon last season with its sixth whitewash since joining the competition in 2000. New Italy coach Conor O’Shea was making his tournament debut with the Azzurri after guiding his men to a historic win over South Africa in November and the Stadio Olimpico crowd was fired up after Italy President Sergio Mattarella greeted all of the players on the pitch before kickoff.

However, Italy quickly dropped to the bottom of the standings with zero points. France and Ireland had each picked up one bonus point after losing by seven points or fewer. “We know Wales were the better side today in the end but I thought we were the better side in the first half,” O’Shea said. Italy committed 16 penalties to Wales’ five.

“We lost our discipline in the second half,” O’Shea said. “The way Wales brought energy it was difficult to maintain the way we played in the first half, where we were magnificent at times. We can’t get frustrated when decisions go against us.

“There are a lot of things that we have to change and we’ll keep on working,” O’Shea added. “It’s not an energy issue. We drained the energy out of ourselves in the first 20 minutes of the second half by losing our discipline.”

It was a tale of two halves as Italy took advantage of a failed try attempt by Wales and quickly charged down to the other end with a try from Gori near the half-hour mark. A few minutes after Sergio Parisse stormed through the Wales defense, only to be stopped just short of the try line, the Italy captain picked up the ball off the back of the scrum and then a forward push saw Gori across.

Carlo Canna made the conversion to give the Azzurri a 7-0 lead. However, Halfpenny recovered from an early miss and made four straight penalties to put Wales ahead.

Wales hosts defending champion England and Italy welcomes Ireland to the Stadio Olimpico next weekend. — AP



SHUMEN: Iranian volleyball players Maedeh Borhani (back, L) and Zeinab Giveh (back, R) warm up in the sport hall of YEB Shumen volleyball club in the city of Shumen on Saturday. Maedeh Borhani, 29, and Zeinab Giveh, 33, moved to Bulgaria last month, making history as the first Iranian female volleyball players to join a team abroad, hoping that their transfers here will encourage other players from native Iran to follow in their footsteps. — AFP

VOLLEYBALL

IRANIAN PIONEERS SHRUG OFF ISLAMIC HEADSCARF TAUNTS

SHUMEN: Maedeh Borhani and Zeinab Giveh, the first Iranian women to play professional volleyball outside their country, are easy to recognise-they play in hijab scarves and long leggings. Islamic dress was a condition imposed by the Iranian volleyball federation when Borhani, 29, and Giveh, 33, were allowed to move to YEB Shumen in Bulgaria where they played and lost their first official match against Kazanlak on Saturday.

Some opposing players have made fun of their Islamic dress. The women say they do not take the taunts seriously. Their coach Mehmed Basharan is more nervous about possible “provocations” however after rival team members posted social media pictures last week, “their heads and faces wrapped up like bedouins.”

“They want to tease us but we will not take offence. Yet, this is unnecessary, it is not fair play,” he said. Borhani and Giveh say they want to be an example to other Iranian women. “We are proud that we are the first Iranian women who can play in Europe and make history for Iran,” Borhani told AFP ahead of Saturday’s match. “One of the reasons why we wanted to come here was to open the way for other talented Iranian players to go abroad,” she said. “It was a very easy decision, like opening the door and stepping out,” Giveh, who is captain of the Iranian women’s national team, added. YEB manager Basharan, 48, said he wanted the pair as attracting players of similar class from another country would cost 10 times more. YEB are sixth in the Bulgarian league but need to be in the top four to get a place in European tournaments next year. Volleyball is one of the most popular sports in Iran but women are not allowed to attend men’s matches because of Islamic rules. Wearing the hijab and leggings is also compulsory for women during games.

PERMISSION

Borhani said they had no problem keeping the rule in Bulgaria to get permission for the move from Iran’s volleyball federation and sports ministry. “We are here to play volleyball and our religion and its rules should not be a problem,” Borhani said.

“Wearing hijab is a habit, a style that we are used to,” she added, her lipstick-covered mouth curling into a smile as she recounted how much they have been made welcome in Shumen.

“When we walk in the street all people know us and we like it” Bulgaria banned the wearing of a full face veil in public in September amid rising nationalism and a refugee influx.

But the two women’s loosely tied dark blue headscarves do not turn eyes in the town like Shumen that has a large Muslim minority. Other women can be seen in the street wearing headscarves. “Life is easy and simple in Bulgaria, the weather is nice and the people are very kind,” said Giveh, adding that she felt happy. — AFP

PREVIEW

COACH JONES VOWS TO IMPROVE ‘AWFUL’ ENGLAND

TWICKENHAM: England coach Eddie Jones promised to do a better job after his “awful” Grand Slam champions launched the defence of their Six Nations title with a scrappy 19-16 win over France at Twickenham.

France had much the better of the play but England, yet to lose under Australian boss Jones, were able to grind out an ‘ugly’ win as they secured a national record 15th consecutive Test victory. The visitors were 16-12 up on the hour when replacement prop Rabah Slimani went over for a try France had long threatened.

But in the end it was England’s bench strength that proved decisive, with replacement back Ben Te’o’s try nine minutes from time giving England a lead extended by Owen Farrell’s conversion. “It is always good to win when you do not play well, and we did not play well,” Jones said. “I take full responsibility for the performance.”

‘NEVER SAY DIE’

The former Australia and Japan coach added: “I thought we were awful, but I thought we were always going to win the game and that is what I like about these boys. They have got a never-say-die attitude.” Jones sent on several replacements after Slimani’s try, with back-row James Haskell, returning after a broken toe, and

Auckland-born Te’o, whose maiden Test try came just moments after he took the field, making the biggest impact “The bench definitely made a difference,” Jones said. “Haskell, for a guy that has played 35 minutes and 35 seconds this year was brilliant, and Ben Te’o did really well for us, too.” As for France, Jones said: “I think they are selecting right, they’ve got a big physical team and they are starting to understand how to make modern French flair.”

Next up for England is a February 11 clash in Cardiff against Wales, who begin their Six Nations away to Italy in Rome on Sunday. “I did not prepare the team well enough,” said Jones. “I have got a lot of homework to do over the weekend.” He added: “England versus Wales in Wales, can you believe the Test record? Sixty percent of the Tests have been won by Wales, and 40 percent have been won by England.

“I’ve been to the Principality Stadium and it’s just another ground.

“So I need to work out why the English don’t play well in Wales.” Victory maintained England’s bid for back-to-back Grand Slams did and saw them top the previous Red Rose record of 14 straight wins they had shared with Clive Woodward’s celebrated 2003 side, who went on to win that year’s World Cup by beating an Australia team coached by Jones in the final.—AFP



LONDON: England’s Nathan Hughes carries the ball in a maul during their Six Nations international rugby union match between England and France, at Twickenham stadium in London, Saturday. — AP

SCOTLAND DREAM OF END TO 18-YEAR WAIT

EDINBURGH: Scotland head coach Vern Cotter believes his team’s thrilling 27-22 opening day win at home to Ireland has “changed the dynamics” of their Six Nations campaign.

Having let slip a 21-5 lead to trail Ireland 22-21 midway through the second half, two penalties in the last eight minutes by captain Greig Laidlaw secured Scotland’s first victory in an opening Six Nations fixture since they beat France at Murrayfield in 2006 — potentially putting them in contention for their first Championship title in 18 years. “It certainly changes the dynamic,” said Cotter, who is aiming to finish his three-year tenure on a high before making way for Glasgow coach Gregor Townsend in June. “You can feel it. You start the Six Nations with a win and everybody speaks about it. “But it’s only one game. I know the feet will be on the ground very quickly come today morning, just to make sure we

back this up with another good performance.” Next up for Cotter’s side are France away next Sunday and Scotland have not won in Paris since 1999, when Townsend inspired them to their last Championship success, in the final year of the Five Nations.

They will certainly travel with renewed confidence, having rocked Ireland, who beat the All Blacks in November, with a dynamic first half performance that yielded two tries for the brilliant full back Stuart Hogg and a cunning score directly from a line out by centre Alex Dunbar.

“The last time we were in Paris we were close to winning,” said Laidlaw, referring to a 19-16 loss in a World Cup warm up in September 2015. “We can take heart out of that and I think we’ve moved forward even since then. “We’ll enjoy this tonight and we’ll get our feet back on the ground tomorrow morning. We’ll not get ahead of ourselves.”—AFP

INDIA’S CRICKET BOARD REJECTS PROPOSAL TO TRIM REVENUE

NEW DELHI: India has voted against a proposed shake-up of cricket’s global governing body that threatens its influence as one of the game’s “Big Three” powers along with Australia and England.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India rejected a proposal to radically alter the financial and governance structure of the International Cricket Council, a move that would curb its earnings and clout. A majority of Test playing nations-including Australia and

England-agreed to the proposed restructure at the ICC’s headquarters in Dubai.

But India and neighbouring Sri Lanka rejected the idea, and unsuccessfully sought to postpone a decision until the next ICC gathering in April.

Vikram Limaye, India’s representative in Dubai, said the board had insufficient time to “take an informed view” on the proposal.

The ICC announcement comes just days after India’s Supreme Court

appointed a new team to oversee the cricket board, after sacking its top officials for failing to implement reforms.

India’s cricket body is the wealthiest in the world, attracting one-fifth of all ICC global revenue. If adopted, the proposal would reverse a 2014 decision to cede control of the ICC to the “Big Three”, a move which saw Australia, India and England attract the lion’s share of the game’s global revenue.

The ICC, under the guidance of India’s Shashank Manohar, wants to

revise the revenue sharing model to ensure equitable distribution and equal weight of votes for all 105 board members, regardless of their membership status.

“Today was an important step forward for the future of the ICC and cricket around the world,” said Manohar Saturday, referring to progress on the proposed reforms.

Cricket’s global governing body said Saturday it had reached ‘agreement in principle to constitutional and financial

change”, adding a detailed proposal will be put to the ICC board in April.

India’s cricket board has been undergoing its own sweeping changes, with a panel headed by former government auditor Vinod Rai the latest development in its shakeup. The board has been embroiled in a series of scandals, including accusations of corruption in the Indian Premier League (IPL) and a betting scandal involving an IPL team linked to its former head Narayanaswami Srinivasan. —AFP

NHL

BACKSTROM SCORES IN 3RD AS CAPITALS TOPPLE CANADIENS

MONTREAL: Nicklas Backstrom’s power-play goal stood as the winner to lift the Washington Capitals to a 3-2 road win against the Montreal Canadiens on Saturday. Jay Beagle and Andre Burakovsky also scored for Washington (35-11-6), which got 19 saves from Braden Holtby.

KINGS 1, FLYERS 0 (OVERTIME)

Jeff Carter scored the winner in overtime against his former team as the Los Angeles Kings continued their hot streak with a 1-0 result over the Philadelphia Flyers. Los Angeles goaltender Peter Budaj turned aside all 17 shots he faced to record his seventh shutout of the season and his third during a five-game win streak in which he has allowed just three goals.

AVALANCHE 5, JETS 2

Matt Nieto scored twice, Jarome Iginla had a goal and an assist, and the Colorado Avalanche beat the Winnipeg Jets 5-2 for a rare home win. Nathan MacKinnon and Carl Soderberg also scored as the Avalanche snapped a nine-game winless streak and won for second time in 17 home games.

PENGUINS 4, BLUES 1

Sidney Crosby scored two goals and assisted on another Saturday night to lead the Pittsburgh Penguins past the St. Louis Blues 4-1 for their third straight victory. Crosby, who did not record a point against Columbus on Friday, has not gone two consecutive games without a point since Feb. 24-27 of last year. He scored at least one point in 35 of the 45 games he played this season. Crosby’s second goal of the game, his league-leading 30th of the season, came into an empty net with 18 seconds to play.

MAPLE LEAFS 6, BRUINS 5

Rookie William Nylander had three goals for his first career hat trick and James van Riemsdyk scored with 1:36 remaining as Toronto snapped a three-game losing streak. The young Maple Leafs blew leads of 4-1 and 5-4 before van Riemsdyk beat Boston backup goaltender Zane McIntyre only 1:18 after Patrice Bergeron tied the score with a power-play goal. Van Riemsdyk untied it with his 19th of the season. The win was the third in as many tries for Toronto over the Bruins this season. The Maple Leafs scored 14 goals in the three games. Goaltender Frederik Andersen was the winner in all three and is 7-0 lifetime against Boston.

WILD 6, CANUCKS 3

Mikael Granlund scored his first career hat and added an assist as Minnesota defeated Vancouver. Granlund extended his franchise-high points streak to 12 games (five goals, 12 assists). It’s the longest points streak in the NHL this season. He’s also set career highs with 15 goals and 48 points. Mikko Koivu, Mike Reilly and Zack Parise also scored for the Wild. Jared Spurgeon had two assists for Minnesota, who improved their league-leading road record to 17-6-5. Brandon Sutter (two goals) and Bo Horvat scored for the Canucks.

BLACKHAWKS 5, STARS 3

Trevor van Riemsdyk scored the game-winning goal with 4:03 remaining and Corey Crawford stopped 31 shots as Chicago improved to 4-0-0 versus Dallas this season. Ryan Hartman, Gustav Frosling, Patrick Kane and Jonathan Toews also scored for Chicago, which also got two assists from Artem Anisimov. Dallas (21-22-10) got goals from Radek Faksa, Jamie Benn and Tyler Seguin. The Stars finished their season-long six-

game homestand at 2-2-2. Dallas fell to 0-18-2 when trailing after two periods.

DEVILS 5, BLUE JACKETS 1

Corey Schneider made 32 saves as New Jersey topped Columbus. Taylor Hall scored two goals, including an empty-netter with 3:12 remaining, and Travis Zajac added a goal and an assist as the Devils won their fifth straight on the road. Defenseman Seth Helgeson added the final goal-his first-with 29 seconds left. Matt Calvert scored a short-handed goal for the Blue Jackets. Columbus, which entered Saturday leading the NHL in power-play percentage at 24.6, is 0 for 4 with the man advantage over its last five games after going 0 for 2 on Saturday.

LIGHTNING 3, DUCKS 2 (OVERTIME)

Brian Boyle had the deciding goal in the fourth round of the shootout to lift Tampa Bay past Anaheim. Nikita Kucherov, who finished with two assists, scored in the third round to keep the shootout alive. Jonathan Drouin and Alex Killorn scored in regulation for the Lightning while Ben Bishop made with 14 saves in regulation and overtime. Brandon Montour, called up earlier in the day, scored his first NHL goal and Ryan Getzlaf also tallied for the Ducks. Jonathan Bernier made 35 saves.

COYOTES 3, SHARKS 2 (SHOOTOUT)

Brendan Perlini and Radim Vrbata scored goals and goaltender Mike Smith stopped two of three shots in the shootout as Arizona defeated San Jose. Shane Doan snapped a 16-game goalless drought with his 401st career goal for the Coyotes. Smith made 38 saves in regulation and overtime. Patrick Marleau, who scored his 500th career goal Thursday, extended his points streak to a season-high six straight games with an assist for the Sharks.

RED WINGS 1, PREDATORS 0

Mike Green’s goal and Petr Mrazek’s 42 saves carried Detroit past Nashville. Green scored his 10th goal of the season on a wristler from the high slot at 18:30 of the first period that found its way through traffic at the goalmouth and appeared to tick off Pekka Rinne’s catching glove before finding the net. The Red Wings won their second straight game after losing five in a row and swept the season series from the Predators for the third straight season. The result snapped Nashville’s six-game point streak at home dating to Jan 3.

HURRICANES 5, ISLANDERS 4 (OVERTIME)

Ron Hainsey scored with 2:08 left in overtime-his second goal of the game-as Carolina outlasted New York. Jacob Slavin, Lee Stempniak and Teuvo Teravainen also scored for the Hurricanes, who won three straight after a five-game losing streak. Goaltender Cam Ward had 33 saves. Anders Lee, Casey Cizikas, Brock Nelson and Josh Bailey scored for the Islanders, who have lost two straight (0-1-1) for the first time since a three-game skid from Jan. 6 to Jan. 11. Goalie Jean-Francois Berube made 20 saves.

SABRES 4, SENATORS 0

Robin Lehner made 37 saves and four players scored for Buffalo. It was Lehner’s first shutout of the season and the fourth of his career. Kyle Okposo, Ryan O’Reilly, Sam Reinhart and Marcus Foligno scored for the Sabres, who snapped a three-game losing streak. Mike Condon made 21 saves for Ottawa before being pulled for Andrew Hammond midway through the third period. — Reuters



MONTREAL: Andre Burakovsky #65 of the Washington Capitals and Torrey Mitchell #17 of the Montreal Canadiens chase after the puck during the NHL game at the Bell Centre on Saturday in Montreal, Quebec, Canada. The Washington Capitals defeated the Montreal Canadiens 3-2. —AFP



HAMILTON: New Zealand celebrate after winning the Chappell Hadlee series 2-0 after the one-day international cricket match between New Zealand and Australia at Seddon Park in Hamilton yesterday. — AFP

CRICKET

BOULT KNOCKS AUSSIES FOR SIX AS NZ TAKE SERIES

HAMILTON: A six-wicket haul for Trent Boult and a Ross Taylor century brought New Zealand a 24-run victory over Australia in the third one-day international yesterday to win the series 2-0. Their masterclass saw New Zealand reclaim the Chappell-Hadlee Trophy while Australia lost their outright hold on the world number one ODI ranking. They slipped to 118 points, equal with South Africa, who beat Sri Lanka in Johannesburg on Saturday to go 3-0 up.

South Africa will overtake Australia if they win the remaining two matches in that series. New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson said the series victory was the right response to the “tough times” when the Black Caps were beaten 3-0 in Australia two months ago, and Taylor paved the way. “The way he rotated the strike was superb”, he said. “He faced hardly any dot balls, was able to build partnerships with the top order and the lower order.”

New Zealand made 281 for nine, and although Australian captain Aaron Finch felt the target was gettable they were bundled out for 257 with three overs remaining.

“New Zealand bowled fantastically well and when you see Ross Taylor get a hundred, we had a couple of guys get fifties and they don’t win games at this level,” Finch said.

“The top order are there to make runs but it wasn’t to be.” Williamson won the toss and had no hesitation in batting first on the Hamilton wicket, correctly forecasting it would slow up as the day wore on and Boult would come into his own. But given the prime early batting conditions, New Zealand appeared to have under-performed despite Taylor’s 107 off 101 balls and his century partnership with Dean Brownlie, who made 63. With rankings and the series at stake after New Zealand won the first ODI by six wickets and the second was washed out, Finch and Shaun Marsh made a flying start to Australia’s reply, averaging more than six an over. They were particularly harsh on Tim Southee, whose opening four-over spell cost 30 runs, while new ball partner and man-of-the-match Boult had one for 10 at the time.

TAYLOR’S 16TH HUNDRED

Marsh was first to fall, run out for 22, and Peter Handscomb was bowled first ball by Boult.

Finch and Travis Head continued the charge with a 75-run stand for the third wicket before New Zealand broke through with their second two-wicket burst.

Williamson had Finch caught by Boult at deep midwicket for 56 and Glenn Maxwell was caught behind off Mitchell Santner without getting on the board, leaving Australia 120 for four.

Head and Marcus Stoinis looked to have the run chase under control in a 53-run partnership, until Boult came back for his second spell and claimed Head for 53 and James Faulkner for nought in the space of four balls. Stoinis pressed on to 42 before Santner claimed his wicket, while Mitchell Starc, who scored 29 not out, and Pat Cummins’ 27 took Australia to within 32 runs of their target at 249 for seven.

But Boult broke through again to claim the last three wickets in his final two overs and finish with six for 33.

Taylor was key to the New Zealand innings as he equalled Nathan Astle’s New Zealand record of 16 ODI centuries. He went to the middle with New Zealand 76 for two and Brownlie on 30. By

SCOREBOARD			
HAMILTON, New Zealand: Complete scoreboard from the third and final one-day international between New Zealand and Australia at Seddon Park in Hamilton yesterday.			
New Zealand		Australia	
D. Brownlie c Handscomb b Faulkner	63	A. Finch c Boult b Williamson	56
T. Latham c Hazlewood b Starc	0	S. Marsh run out (Santner/Latham)	22
K. Williamson c Handscomb b Cummins	36	P. Handscomb b Boult	0
R. Taylor c Stoinis b Faulkner	107	T. Head c Brownlie b Boult	53
N. Broom c Handscomb b Faulkner	8	G. Maxwell c Latham b Santner	0
C. Munro c Starc b Hazlewood	3	M. Stoinis c Neesham b Santner	42
J. Neesham b Hazlewood	1	J. Faulkner c Taylor b Boult	0
M. Santner not out	38	P. Cummins c Santner b Boult	27
T. Southee b Starc	10	M. Starc not out	29
L. Ferguson b Starc	0	A. Zampa c Taylor b Boult	1
T. Boult not out	1	J. Hazlewood b Boult	4
Extras: (lb6, w7, nb1)	14	Extras: (lb 12, w 11)	23
Total (9 wkts, 50 overs)	281	Total: (all out; 47.0 overs)	257
Fall of wickets: 1-6 (Latham), 2-76 (Williamson), 3-176 (Brownlie), 4-198 (Broom), 5-205 (Munro), 6-209 (Neesham), 7-246 (Taylor), 8-265 (Southee), 9-265 (Ferguson)		Bowling: Southee 8-0-39-0 (2w), Boult 10-1-33-6 (1w), Ferguson 9-1-62-0 (2w), Neesham 3-0-17-0 (1w), Santner 10-0-50-2, Williamson 7-0-44-1 (1w)	
Bowling: Starc 10-1-63-3 (1w, 1nb), Hazlewood 10-0-44-2 (1w), Stoinis 4-0-22-0, Cummins 10-0-47-1 (Sw), Zampa 7-0-41-0, Faulkner 9-0-59-3		Toss: New Zealand	
		Result: New Zealand won by 24 runs.	

the time he reached his 50, Brownlie, back in the side for the first time in two years, had advanced only to equal his previous best 47. While Taylor thundered along, New Zealand looked set to surpass 300 but when Brownlie went for 63 it

triggered a middle-order collapse in which four wickets fell for 33 runs. Faulkner, whose subtle changes of pace disrupted the New Zealanders, took three for 59 including the key wickets of Brownlie and Taylor. —AFP

NFL

PATRIOTS, FALCONS CHASE HISTORY AT SUPER BOWL

HOUSTON: Tom Brady and the New England Patriots will be chasing history as they attempt to stop the Atlanta Falcons from claiming their first Super Bowl crown.

More than 100 million homes across the United States and millions more worldwide will tune in for the American football showpiece in Houston, which sees Brady aiming to become the most decorated quarterback of all time. The 39-year-old superstar will become the first quarterback to win five Super Bowl crowns if he manages to guide the Patriots to victory over the Falcons before a crowd of around 72,000 spectators at the NRG Stadium. Blanket security will be in place for the game, which takes place at a time of roiling political tensions across the United States following President Donald Trump’s controversial immigration order.

Pop diva Lady Gaga, an outspoken critic of Trump, will have the eyes of the nation—including US Vice President Mike Pence inside the stadium—on her during the halftime show.

A win would come 15 years after Brady and Patriots head coach Bill Belichick’s first Super Bowl triumph in 2002. It would also represent a satisfying last laugh for Brady following his long-running battle with National Football League commissioner Roger Goodell.

Brady was forced to miss the first four games of the season after losing a legal battle against the NFL over the 2015 Deflategate

scandal, which saw the Patriots superstar accused of cheating by attempting to alter the pressure of balls to his advantage during a key championship game.

REVENGE AND REDEMPTION

It has led to the prospect of Goodell having to possibly hand over the Vince Lombardi Trophy to Brady and his teammates on Sunday. Goodell, for his part, has attempted to damp down any possibility of an awkward trophy presentation, acknowledging Brady’s glittering career during the build-up.

“Tom Brady is one of the all-time greats. He has been for several years,” Goodell said, adding it would be an “honor” to present the Lombardi Trophy to the quarterback.

Brady has done his talking on the field this season. He averaged just under 300 passing yards a game in the regular season, and was magnificent in a comprehensive 36-17 demolition of the Pittsburgh Steelers in the AFC Championship game two weeks ago.

But even Brady’s stats pale in comparison with those of his opposite number, Matt Ryan, who received recognition for a stellar season on Saturday after being named the NFL’s Most Valuable Player for 2016.

Ryan has led the most potent offense in the league, averaging more than 365 yards a game in the post-season, and just over 300 yards during the regular season. —AFP

KUWAIT TIMES NBA POWER RANKINGS

By Ahmad Jabr

KUWAIT: In addition to its usual coverage of the NBA, Kuwait Times introduces a new feature this year: the NBA Power Rankings. It is a weekly list ranking each team based on its performance during the week. This week's edition saw several teams advance behind solid defensive showings while others slid as a result of poor defensive performances. (For any comments or suggestions, e-mail the writer at: a.jabr@kuwaittimes.net)



1- Golden State Warriors (43 - 8) Last week: 1 - Stephen Curry is officially back to his MVP form: he has scored at least 20 points in 16 straight games, which is the longest streak by a Warriors player since Chris Mullin (21 games in 1991-92) (via Elias Sports Bureau).



2- San Antonio Spurs (39 - 11) Last week: 2 - The Spurs' victory over the Nuggets on Saturday also meant that Gregg Popovich has earned his 1,128th win to pass former Utah coach Jerry Sloan as the most winning coach with a single franchise in league history.



3- Cleveland Cavaliers (34 - 15) Last week: 4 - The Cavs are back in the top three following solid play from LeBron James this past week. After passing the 20,000 career points' milestone for the first time in franchise history, 'The King' now has 56 career games with 30 points and 10 assists, the fifth-most in NBA history (via Elias Sports Bureau).



4- Boston Celtics (32 - 18) Last week: 5 - Boston secured the second-best record in the Eastern Conference through the All-Star Game after beating the Lakers on Friday, thus making sure that Brad Stevens will coach the East All-Star team.



5- Washington Wizards (30 - 20) Last week: 8 - The Wizards are having a turnaround season and making their early-season struggles seem like a distant memory. They enter today on a seven-game winning streak, on top of the Southeast Division and third in the Eastern Conference standings.



6- Houston Rockets (37 - 17) Last week: 3 - All the talk about the Rockets' significantly improved offense under coach Mike D'Antoni this season often overshadows how their defense can also be good. Trevor Ariza's play guarding Dwayne Wade in overtime was key in Houston's victory over Chicago on Friday.



7- Utah Jazz (32 - 19) Last week: 6 - Gordon Hayward and Rudy Gobert continue to carry most of the load as the rest of the team have struggled with injuries all season. They scored 27 and 26 points respectively in Wednesday's win over Milwaukee.



8- Memphis Grizzlies (31 - 22) Last week: 10 - Marc Gasol, Tony Allen and Chandler Parsons all missed Saturday's match for rest, but JaMychal Green stepped up with a career-high 29 points to lead his team to victory over Minnesota.



9- Indiana Pacers (28 - 22) Last week: 13 - The Pacers' defense has remarkably improved as of late, and has been a key factor to their recent success. They rank third in the league in defensive ratings in their last six games - all wins.



10- Miami Heat (21 - 30) Last week: 19 - The Heat's sudden surge can be attributed to their defense - the team ranks first in the league in defensive efficiency during their ongoing 10-game winning streak. With two wins away from the eighth seed in the East, the Heat - who play their next five games against sub-.500 teams - are suddenly back in the playoffs' picture.



11- Atlanta Hawks (30 - 21) Last week: 11 - Dwight Howard had a triumphant return to Houston on Thursday, finishing with 24 points and 23 rebounds to lead the Hawks to a comeback victory over the Rockets. It was his 47th career 20-20 game (that's 31 more than any other player since he entered the league in 2004-05) (via ESPN Stats and Info).



12- Oklahoma City Thunder (29 - 22) Last week: 7 - In Friday's win over the Grizzlies, Russell Westbrook scored 15 points in the final 2:45 minutes of the game, and finished with a triple-double (his 25th this season) to lead Oklahoma City to victory. He became the first player since Michael Jordan to score the last 12-or-more points of a game (via Elias Sports Bureau).



13- Los Angeles Clippers (31 - 19) Last week: 12 - The Clippers will surely miss their starting point guard Chris Paul during a six-game road trip that started with a match against the streaking Celtics last night. They return home for one game after that trip, before traveling to play the Warriors whom they lost to twice last week.



14- Toronto Raptors (30 - 21) Last week: 9 - While strong defense has been the common denominator among teams currently on winning streaks, lack of it has been a shared attribute among teams on a current skid. The Raptors have handed the Magic - who enter today ranking second to last in the league in offensive ratings - their only two wins in their last eight games; even allowing them to score 114 points on Jan 29.



15- Portland Trail Blazers (22 - 29) Last week: 15 - CJ McCollum announced that he will compete in the three-point shootout at All-Star Weekend, thus being the only



Blazer to represent his team in the annual extravaganza. He enters Monday ranking 12th in the league in made three pointers and three-point percentage.



16- Denver Nuggets (22 - 28) Last week: 14 - Nikola Jokic returned after missing three games with injury to help Denver beat Milwaukee on Friday with 20 points, 13 rebounds and 11 assists - the first triple-double of his career.



18- Chicago Bulls (25 - 26) Last week: 18 - The Bulls are showing interest in trading for Philadelphia's center Jahlil Okafor, but it remains to be seen whether they have enough assets to offer or are willing to part ways with important pieces to acquire the former third overall draft pick.



19- Detroit Pistons (23 - 28) Last week: 16 - It might be hard to believe, but advanced stats show that the Pistons' defense could be better without Andre Drummond - the team has a negative net rating when he is playing and a positive rating when he is on the bench.



20- Milwaukee Bucks (22 - 28) Last week: 20 - The Bucks scored 137 points to beat the Suns on Saturday and end a five-game losing streak. Meanwhile, Khris Middleton is set to make his season debut on Wednesday against the Heat after being medically cleared to return to game action.



21- Charlotte Hornets (23 - 28) Last week: 17 - The Hornets' defense ranked 28th in the league during their current seven-game losing streak, and it is hard to see how newly-acquired center Miles Plumlee, who is not known for his remarkable defense, can help in that department.



22- Sacramento Kings (20 - 31) Last week: 25 - With his 32 points and 12 rebounds in Saturday's win over the Warriors, DeMarcus Cousins has recorded his 13th 30-point, 10-rebound game this season, the third-most in the NBA (via ESPN Stats and Info).



23- Minnesota Timberwolves (19 - 32) Last week: 21 - Zach LaVine will miss the remainder of the season after suffering a torn ACL in Saturday's loss to the Grizzlies. He averaged career-highs in points (18.9), rebounds (3.4) and field-goal percentage (46 percent) this season.



24- New York Knicks (22 - 30) Last week: 24 - The Knicks find themselves under pressure to perhaps make lineup changes in order to keep their postseason hopes alive as fellow Eastern Conference playoff contenders are expected to make pushes in the last two months of the regular season.



25- Philadelphia 76ers (18 - 32) Last week: 23 - Joel Embiid was chosen as the Eastern Conference Rookie of the Month after he averaged 23 points, nine rebounds, three assists and three blocks in only 27 minutes per game during nine games in January.



26- New Orleans Pelicans (19 - 32) Last week: 22 - The Pelicans have lost four straight games and seven of their last ten to drop to the 12th place in the Western Conference standings with the league's fifth worst record.



27- Orlando Magic (20 - 33) Last week: 27 - It seems that the Serge Ibaka experiment might be over too soon in Orlando. After acquiring the shot-blocking forward in the offseason, rumors are indicating that the Magic are looking to trade him (and his expiring contract) before the Feb 23 trade deadline.



28- Phoenix Suns (16 - 35) Last week: 28 - Rookie forward Marquese Chriss was named as the Western Conference Rookie of the Month for January after averaging 8.3 points and 3.6 rebounds per game while shooting 45.9 percent from the floor to start 2017.



29- Los Angeles Lakers (17 - 36) Last week: 29 - Not only have the Lakers lost to the Celtics on Friday, but they also surrendered the title of the team with the most regular-season wins in NBA history to their historical rivals.



30- Brooklyn Nets (9 - 41) Last week: 30 - It must be hard for Nets' fans to watch Yogi Farrell, the undrafted rookie who Brooklyn waived on Dec 8, blossom when given a chance to play as a starter in Dallas.



NEW YORK: Cleveland Cavaliers' LeBron James (23) drives to the basket against New York Knicks' Carmelo Anthony, center, as Cleveland Cavaliers' Tristan Thompson slows Anthony during the first half of an NBA basketball game, Saturday, in New York. — AP

JAMES, LOVE LEAD CAVALIERS TO 111-104 WIN OVER KNICKS

NEW YORK: LeBron James poured in 32 points and became the youngest player to score 28,000 in a career as the Cleveland Cavaliers knocked off the New York Knicks 111-104 on Saturday night at Madison Square Garden. The 32-year-old James has scored 28,020 points, good for eighth place on the NBA list. He also had 10 assists. James is two assists from passing Lenny Wilkens (7,211) for 13th place on the NBA's career list. Kyrie Irving was out for the Cavaliers (34-15) with right quad soreness. He was replaced with DeAndre Liggins, who scored five points without an assist. Kevin Love returned to the Cavaliers after missing the past two games with lower back spasms. He had 23 points and 15 rebounds.

SACRAMENTO 109, GOLDEN STATE 106 (OT)

A spirited effort by Sacramento put Golden State on the ropes, and then the Kings knocked out the NBA's best team in overtime. DeMarcus Cousins had 32 points-six in overtime — 12 rebounds and nine assists, and Matt Barnes had a double-double of 11 points and 14 rebounds as the Kings handed Golden State just its eighth loss of the season and snapped a 13-game losing streak to their Northern California counterparts. Stephen Curry led the Warriors (43-8) with 35 points on eight 3-pointers and added nine assists. He had a pair of contested layup attempts that would've given Golden State the lead inside the final eight seconds of overtime, but neither would go down.

WIZARDS 105, PELICANS 91

John Wall had 24 points and 13 assists as Washington extended their NBA-high home winning streak to 17 games with a victory over New Orleans on Saturday night. The Wizards (30-20) closed the game with a 15-0 run, holding the Pelicans without a point for the final 5:51. All five starters scored in double figures for the Wizards as they used a balanced attack to win their seventh in a row overall and fend off the Pelicans for the second time this week. After Tyreke Evans's basket put the Pelicans up 91-90, Wall fed Markieff Morris for a dunk. Morris scored seven of his 18 points and Wall added six in the closing stretch. The victory improved Washington to 22-6 at home, matching last season's win total. They put both winning streaks on the line today against the Eastern Conference-leading Cleveland Cavaliers. Anthony Davis had 25 points and 10 rebounds for the Pelicans, who have lost four in a row and finished their road trip 0-3.

HEAT 125, 76ERS 102

Hassan Whiteside produced 30 points, 20 rebounds and three blocks

to lead Miami over Philadelphia for its 10th straight victory. Miami also got strong games from its guards as Dion Waiters recorded 21 points and seven assists, Goran Dragic registered 16 points and eight assists, and Tyler Johnson had 16 points and six assists. The Heat (21-30) has the second-longest win streak in NBA history by a team that is still under .500. The 1996-97 Phoenix Suns set the mark with 11 straight below-.500 victories. Miami also has the longest active win streak in the NBA and is tied for the second-longest run in the league this season. Philadelphia was led by Ersan Ilyasova's 19 points.

SPURS 121, NUGGETS 97

Manu Ginobili and Tony Parker scored 18 points apiece and combining to make 13 of 14 shots from the floor as San Antonio waltzed past Denver on a record-setting night for coach Gregg Popovich. Popovich, in his 21st season leading the Spurs, moved to the top of the standings for coaching wins with one franchise in league history with the victory. Popovich has compiled a 1,128-496 record since replacing Bob Hill as San Antonio's coach on Dec. 10, 1996 (after the 18th game of the 1996-97 season) and passed former Utah coach Jerry Sloan. Legendary Boston Celtics coach Red Auerbach is third on the list with 795 wins.

PACERS 105, PISTONS 84

Paul George led six players in double figures with 21 points and Indiana pulled away from the Detroit Pistons. The victory extended Indiana's season-long winning streak to six. Detroit had a two-game winning streak snapped. Lavoy Allen, on his 28th birthday, added a season-high 18 points and 10 rebounds for Indiana. CJ Miles, Al Jefferson and Myles Turner each scored 13 points and Jeff Teague had 11. Marcus Morris led Detroit with 19 points, Jon Leuer had 14 and Andre Drummond finished with 13. The Pistons made only nine second-half field goals.

HAWKS 113, MAGIC 86

Atlanta, which overcame a 20-point deficit in the final eight minutes at Houston in its previous game, didn't have to worry about staging a comeback this time. The Hawks led by 26 points at halftime and coasted to their 15th victory in the past 20 games, defeating Orlando. Tim Hardaway Jr., who sparked the Atlanta comeback against Houston with 23 of his career-best 33 points in the fourth quarter, scored 21 against the Magic. Paul Millsap also had 21 points before taking a seat for the fourth quarter with most of the other starters for the Hawks, which remain a half-game behind Washington in

the Southeast Division. Aaron Gordon scored 16 points for the Magic, who couldn't follow up a home victory over Toronto on Friday. Orlando made just 7 of 27 3-point attempts and shot 35.1 percent overall, compared to 52.6 percent for Atlanta.

JAZZ 105, HORNETS 98

Gordon Hayward scored a season-high 33 points and George Hill added 25 points to help Utah rally late to beat Charlotte. Joe Johnson chipped in 18 points off the bench to help Utah win its second straight at home. The Jazz shot 10 for 18 from the field in the fourth quarter while holding Charlotte to six points over the final 8 1/2 minutes. Kemba Walker scored 18 points and dished out six assists and Marvin Williams added 16 points and 12 rebounds to lead the Hornets. Charlotte (23-28) lost its seventh straight game. Walker (7,448 points) passed Gerald Wallace for second place on the Hornets' all-time scoring list.

BUCKS 137, SUNS 112

Giannis Antetokounmpo scored 18 of his 30 points in the first quarter and Milwaukee weathered a 27-point second quarter by Phoenix guard Devin Booker and steamrolled the Suns. Mirza Teletovic had 19 points and Jabari Parker added 18 for the Bucks, who ended a five game losing streak. Six Bucks finished in double figures and Milwaukee set a season high for points. Booker finished with a game-high 31 points for the Suns, who have lost six of the last seven overall and five straight at home. Marquese Chriss added a career-high 27 points for Phoenix, which fell behind 25 points in the second quarter and couldn't recover even with Booker's flurry.

GRIZZLIES 107, TIMBERWOLVES 99

JaMychal Green scored a career-high 29 points and Mike Conley added 20 points and eight assists as short-handed Memphis managed a gritty win against Minnesota. James Ennis added 13 points for Memphis. Zach Randolph had nine points and 10 rebounds before fouling out with five minutes left for the Grizzlies, who were without three starters. Playing its sixth game in nine days, Memphis rested All-Star center Marc Gasol, forward Chandler Parsons and guard Tony Allen. Karl-Anthony Towns had his 10th straight double-double with 27 points and 16 rebounds for Minnesota, which was playing its first game since guard Zach LaVine tore his ACL. Andrew Wiggins added 23 points and Ricky Rubio scored 14, but the Timberwolves lost their third straight game. —Reuters

NBA results/standings

Sacramento 109, Golden State 106 (OT); Milwaukee 137, Phoenix 112; San Antonio 121, Denver 97; Memphis 107, Minnesota 99; Utah 105, Charlotte 98; Cleveland 111, NY Knicks 104; Miami 125, Philadelphia 102; Atlanta 113, Orlando 86; Indiana 105, Detroit 84; Washington 105, New Orleans 91.

Eastern Conference					Western Conference				
Atlantic Division					Northwest Division				
	W	L	PCT	GB					
Boston	32	18	.640	-	Utah	32	19	.627	-
Toronto	30	21	.588	2.5	Oklahoma City	29	22	.569	3
NY Knicks	22	30	.423	11	Denver	22	28	.440	9.5
Philadelphia	18	32	.360	14	Portland	22	29	.431	10
Brooklyn	9	41	.180	23	Minnesota	19	32	.373	13
Central Division					Pacific Division				
Cleveland	34	15	.694	-	Golden State	43	8	.843	-
Indiana	28	22	.560	6.5	LA Clippers	31	19	.620	11.5
Chicago	25	26	.490	10	Sacramento	20	31	.392	23
Detroit	23	28	.451	12	LA Lakers	17	36	.321	27
Milwaukee	22	28	.440	12.5	Phoenix	16	35	.314	27
Southeast Division					Southwest Division				
Washington	30	20	.600	-	San Antonio	39	11	.780	-
Atlanta	30	21	.588	0.5	Houston	37	17	.685	4
Charlotte	23	28	.451	7.5	Memphis	31	22	.585	9.5
Miami	21	30	.412	9.5	Dallas	20	30	.400	19
Orlando	20	33	.377	11.5	New Orleans	19	32	.373	20.5

WOMEN AND CHILDREN ATTACKED IN DORTMUND FAN CLASH

BERLIN: Hardcore Borussia Dortmund fans attacked terrified RB Leipzig supporters, including children and women, in football battles that led to 28 arrests, German authorities said. A crowd of 81,360 saw Dortmund's 1-0 home win over second-placed RB Leipzig on Saturday, but there were ugly scenes outside Borussia's Signal Iduna Park stadium before kick-off when some of the 8,500 visiting fans were targeted. "In the build-up to the match, in the Strobelallee area (outside the ground), RB Leipzig supporters were bombarded with stones and cans from Borussia

Dortmund fans," police said in a statement. RB Leipzig were unable to tell SID, an AFP subsidiary, how many of their fans were hurt, but German daily Bild claim at least 10 visiting supporters were hospitalised.

After a group of around 500 hardcore 'Ultra' Dortmund fans went on the rampage, police weighed in with pepper spray and batons. Arrests were made for offences including assault, grievous bodily harm, breach of the peace, insulting behaviour and resisting arrest. "All in all, there was extreme aggressiveness and violence from Dortmund support-

ers, which was directed against any person recognised as a Leipzig fan, regardless of whether they were small children, women or families," said Dortmund police.

"In connection with this, four officers and a police dog were injured," Borussia Dortmund said they "deeply regretted the riots" and wished the injured Leipzig fans a speedy recovery.

Leipzig, who are in their first season in Germany's top flight, have demanded an explanation from Dortmund's CEO Hans-Joachim Watzke and president Reinhard Rauball.

"The attacks of Dortmund fans against opposing spectators and the police, plus insults and offenses against women and children, are not acceptable and are embarrassing for the whole of football in Germany," said RB Leipzig in a statement.

"The fact that people were confronted with violence at a football match is unacceptable.

"We expect from Mr Watzke and Mr Rauball that these scenes, which were committed by several perpetrators, will be fully explained in the interests of the entire Bundesliga.

"We are glad that, according to our information, the injured RB Leipzig fans were able to return home."

RB Leipzig, who are backed by energy drinks giant Red Bull, are unpopular amongst German fans for the commercialism the club is perceived to represent, but Dortmund fans were particularly unwelcoming.

There were several offensive banners in the Dortmund stadium aimed at RB, including "Burnout Ralph, go hang yourself" after Leipzig's sports director Ralf Rangnick resigned from Schalke in 2011 with burnout. —AFP

SEVILLA LOSES GROUND AFTER HOME DRAW WITH VILLARREAL

MADRID: A wasted penalty. A goal disallowed for offside. An inspired goalkeeper. It all led to another disappointing setback for Sevilla, which was held by Villarreal to a 0-0 draw at home yesterday and missed a chance to move closer to the Spanish league lead.

Samir Nasri failed from the penalty spot in the 49th minute, Wissam Ben Yedder had his goal disallowed for offside in the 59th, and Vicente Iborra's close-range header was brilliantly saved by Villarreal goalkeeper Sergio Asenjo in the 82nd, stopping Sevilla from gaining much ground in the standings.

The result left Sevilla in third place with 43 points, two behind Barcelona and three behind leader Real Madrid. Barcelona defeated Athletic Bilbao 3-0 on Saturday, while Madrid had its Sunday game at Celta Vigo postponed because of wind damage to Celta's Balaídos Stadium. Madrid will have two games in hand over Barcelona and Sevilla after this weekend's matches.

"It's frustrating to lose these two points," Sevilla coach Jorge Sampaoli said. "We played up front from the start and we tried to score the goal until the last minute. We deserved a better result."

Sevilla was coming off a 3-1 loss at Espanyol, a result that halted its five-game winning streak in the league, which revived its hopes of contending for the title. Villarreal, which lost only once in its last eight league games, stayed in fifth place with 35 points, four behind Atletico Madrid, which beat Leganes 2-0 on Saturday at its Vicente Calderon Stadium.

"Sometimes things go your way. We earned a point in a very difficult field against a Sevilla team that pressures a lot,"

Asenjo said. "We played a very complete game and I'm very happy with the outcome. Credit goes to these 10 'beasts' that I have as teammates."

Asenjo was crucial for Villarreal's draw at the Ramon Sanchez-Pizjuan Stadium in Seville. In addition to guessing right to make the stop in the penalty kick taken by Nasri, he made two superb saves from close-range headers, one in each half. The most spectacular one came after Iborra's attempt near the end.

"We created a lot of scoring chances," Sevilla defender Adil Rami said. "Their goalkeeper must be very happy because he alone salvaged a point for his team. For us this point is not good."

Forward Adrian Lopez had a couple of clear chances for Villarreal, also one in each half, but failed to capitalize on them.

Ben Yedder's goal was disallowed in a very close call for offside not long after Nasri's missed penalty. The league was yet to set a date for the match between Celta and Madrid, which had to be called off after Vigo officials said they could not guarantee the "safety of spectators and players" after winds tore off parts of the roof at Balaídos Stadium. There are few dates open to reschedule the game, as Madrid is still playing in the Champions League and Celta in the Copa del Rey.

Madrid also still has to play a league game at Valencia after it was postponed because of Madrid's participation in FIFA's Club World Cup in December.

On Friday, bad weather in northwestern Spain also forced the postponement of the match between Deportivo La Coruna and Real Betis. Deportivo's Riazor Stadium also was damaged by heavy winds. —AP



MANCHESTER: Swansea City's Spanish striker Fernando Llorente (C) vies with Manchester City's Serbian defender Aleksandar Kolarov (R) during the English Premier League football match between Manchester City and Swansea City at the Etihad Stadium in Manchester, north west England, yesterday. — AFP

SOCCER

JESUS SAVES MAN CITY WITH LAST-GASP WINNER



Man City

2



Swansea City

1

MANCHESTER: Gabriel Jesus scored two goals including an injury-time winner as Pep Guardiola's Manchester City recorded a dramatic 2-1 victory over struggling Swansea City at the Etihad Stadium yesterday.

The home side looked in complete control during a dominant first-half showing only to surrender an 81st-minute equaliser to Gylfi Sigurdsson. The Iceland international capitalised on some poor defending, collecting Luciano Narsingh's pass, switching the ball to his left foot and scoring with a brilliant low drive from just outside the area. But deep in injury time David Silva's right-wing cross found Jesus and after his initial header had been saved by Lukasz Fabianski, the 19-year-old Brazilian tapped the rebound into an open goal.

Jesus, a January arrival from Palmeiras, had required just 11 minutes of his full home debut to score the first of what City supporters hope will be many goals for them.

The goal was created by the excellence of Silva, who beat defender Federico Fernandez along the byline before pulling the ball back towards Raheem Sterling.

Martin Olsson managed to block the England forward on the six-yard line, but Jesus reacted like lightning, pouncing on the loose ball and making no mistake with a close-range volley.

City's first-half dominance was complete and Willy Caballero, continuing to deputise for the dropped Claudio Bravo in the home goal, had not one moment of concern.

The afternoon might have been put beyond the grasp of Swansea, showing signs of improvement under new manager Paul Clement, had referee Mike Dean judged that Alfie Mawson had fouled Jesus in the area on seven minutes.

Shortly after the goal, Yaya Toure almost doubled the lead from a 25-yard free-kick that was heading into the top left-hand corner until Fabianski made a superb diving save.

Fernandinho, playing at right-back, sent Sterling away and his cross was almost converted by Jesus, who was only denied by a fine piece of defending from Fernandez.

SANE HITS POST

From Silva's resulting corner, Toure should have made better contact with an unmarked shot that passed harmlessly wide.

Kevin De Bruyne then fired into the side-netting and Toure's 18-yard shot was smothered, at the second attempt, by Fabianski.

A long Silva pass played Sterling in on goal just before the interval, although the City forward fell while rounding Fabianski and was harshly booked for simulation for his trouble.

However, City's supporters would have been forgiven for wondering if their failure to score more than one goal would come back to haunt them as Swansea made an improved start to the second half. Sigurdsson threatened to equalise in the 49th minute with a magnificently struck free-kick that was kept out by a combination of the leaping Caballero's right glove and his right-hand post. Leroy Sane sped down the other end

in response and delivered a low cross which hit the foot of Fabianski's post.

But the longer City went without adding a second goal, the more the anxiety grew at the Etihad, especially when Mawson headed just wide from Sigurdsson's corner.

The Swansea defender was pressed into action at the other end when he blocked a dangerous low cross from Sterling. — AFP

PAROLO HITS FOUR IN LAZIO ROUT, MILAN BOOED OFF

MILAN: Marco Parolo scored four goals in Lazio's emphatic 6-2 win at Pescara in Serie A yesterday while AC Milan's season continued to nosedive as they were booed off the San Siro pitch after a 1-0 home defeat against Sampdoria.

Lazio's win took them into fourth place with 43 points, four behind third-placed AS Roma and one ahead of Inter Milan who were away to leaders Juventus in the late game.

Two Parolo headers in the first 15 minutes gave Lazio a flying start at basement side Pescara but the Dolphins hit back through Ahmad Benali and Gaston Brugman before halftime.

In between, Gianluca Caprari saw a weak penalty saved by Federico Marchetti, Pescara's fifth miss from the spot in seven attempts this season. Parolo put Lazio back in front with another header straight after the re-start and completed the scoring with a volley, while Keita Balde and Ciro Immobile were also on target in between.

Sampdoria forward Luis Muriel sent

Gianluigi Donnarumma the wrong way from the penalty spot in the 70th minute to hand Milan their third successive league defeat after Gabriel Paletta fouled Fabio Quagliarella.

Milan, who are now in eighth place and struggling to qualify for Europe, saw their wretched day completed when Jose Sosa was booked twice in five minutes and sent off. Andrea Belotti volleyed ninth-placed Torino in front at Empoli with his 15th goal of the season but the home side levelled in extraordinary fashion when Arlind Ajeti's back pass got stuck in a puddle, allowing Manuel Pucciarelli to pounce on the loose ball, round Joe Hart and score. Iago Falque became the third Torino player to miss a penalty this season when his effort was saved by Lukasz Skorupski in the 55th minute.

Alejandro Gomez scored two early goals, the second a superb curling effort, to give Atalanta a 2-0 win over Cagliari which kept them sixth while Sassuolo won 1-0 at Genoa and Chievo and Udinese played out a goal-less draw. —Reuters



MILAN: Sampdoria's midfielder from Uruguay Lucas Torreira (R) fights for the ball with AC Milan's midfielder from Slovenia Juraj Kukucka during the Italian Serie A football match AC Milan vs Sampdoria at "San Siro" Stadium in Milan yesterday. — AFP

La Liga results/standings

Sevilla 0, Villarreal 0; Atletico Madrid 2, Leganes 0; Barcelona 3, Athletic Club 0; Malaga 0, Espanyol 1; Valencia 0, Eibar 4.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts								
Real Madrid	19	14	4	1	51	17	46	Las Palmas	20	7	7	6	31	31	28
Barcelona	21	13	6	2	55	18	45	Alaves	20	5	9	6	17	20	24
Sevilla	21	13	4	4	43	28	43	Real Betis	20	6	5	9	21	31	23
Atletico Madrid	21	11	6	4	36	16	39	Malaga	21	5	7	9	28	35	22
Villarreal	21	9	8	4	28	14	35	Deportivo	20	4	7	9	25	32	19
Real Sociedad	20	11	2	7	31	28	35	Valencia	20	5	4	11	29	40	19
Eibar	21	9	5	7	32	29	32	Leganes	21	4	6	11	15	35	18
Espanyol	21	8	8	5	29	27	32	Sporting Gijon	20	3	4	13	20	39	13
Athletic Club	21	9	5	7	26	25	32	Osasuna	20	1	7	12	21	43	10
Celta Vigo	20	9	3	8	31	33	30	Granada CF	20	1	7	12	16	44	10



SEVILLA: Villarreal's midfielder Rodrigo Hernandez (L) vies with Sevilla's Montenegrin forward Stevan Jovetic (C) during the Spanish league football match Sevilla FC vs Villarreal CF at the Ramon Sanchez Pizjuan stadium in Sevilla yesterday. — AFP

MONACO DOWN NICE TO GO CLEAR, PSG CLIMB SECOND

PARIS: Radamel Falcao scored a second-half brace as Monaco defeated Nice 3-0 on Saturday to carve open a three-point lead ahead of their Cote d'Azur rivals at the top of Ligue 1. Valere Germain headed in the opening goal on 47 minutes at the Stade Louis II before Falcao turned in Monaco's second with an hour gone.

The Colombian stroked home a third for the hosts nine minutes from time as Monaco avenged a 4-0 thrashing from the reverse fixture in September.

Nice suffered just their second loss of the season, while reigning champions Paris Saint-Germain climbed above them into second on goal difference after winning 3-1 at Dijon. "We're ahead but there are still a lot of matches left. I think the team that wins the title will be the one that picks up the most points against teams outside the top five," said Jardim.

"Our three-point advantage is nothing. It's good but I told the players to be careful of something that could come along and derail us." Monaco boss Jardim recalled a host of internationals rested for Wednesday's 5-4 extra-time win over third-

tier Chambly in the last 32 of the French Cup, with Falcao, Bernardo Silva and Danijel Subasic all returning to the line-up.

Nice had conceded a league-low 15 goals before arriving in Monaco and goalkeeper Yoan Cardinale was well protected in a quiet first half, turning behind a firm strike from Germain in a rare chance of note. But Monaco, who are averaging a Europe-leading three goals a game this term, punished Nice for slack defending with just two minutes gone in the second half. Germain was left unmarked as Benjamin Mendy whipped in a teasing cross from the left and the Frenchman planted a header beyond a Cardinale for his eighth goal of the campaign.

Monaco doubled their lead in similar circumstances. The ball was again worked out to Mendy on the left flank, this time the full-back crossed low for Falcao to steer into the roof of the net. Falcao rounded out the victory by slotting into the far corner from Thomas Lemar's cut-back to move onto 14 goals, behind only Edinson Cavani (22) and Alexandre Lacazette (18) in Ligue 1 this season. —AFP

Sports

Wales overcomes
slow start to
beat Italians



Boult knocks
Aussies for six
as NZ take series



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LIBREVILLE: Cameroon team players and Cameroon's Belgian coach Hugo Broos (C) celebrate with the winner's trophy after beating Egypt 2-1 to win the 2017 Africa Cup of Nations final football match between Egypt and Cameroon at the Stade de l'Amitie Sino-Gabonaise in Libreville yesterday. — AFP



CAMEROON WIN AFRICA CUP OF NATIONS

LIBREVILLE: Vincent Aboubakar came off the bench to score a stunning winner with two minutes left as Cameroon fought back from behind to beat Egypt 2-1 in a thrilling Africa Cup of Nations final yesterday. Arsenal midfielder Mohamed Elneny had given Egypt the lead midway through the first half and Egypt looked to be on course to win an unrivalled eighth Cup of Nations crown in their first appearance at the tournament since 2010. But Nicolas Nkoulou, who had come off the bench in the first half, headed in the equaliser just before the hour mark and fellow substitute Aboubakar slammed in the winner in the 88th minute.

That sparked bedlam in a near-capacity crowd of more than 38,000 in Gabon's capital, made up in its majority by Cameroonian supporters. It is a fifth Cup of Nations crown for the Indomitable Lions, a first since 2002, and the first time they have beaten Egypt in the final in three attempts. Egypt fell just short on their return to the competition after a seven-year absence, and the defeat will be especially painful for their coach Hector Cuper.

The Argentine was desperate to win a trophy after a career tainted by rotten luck in finals at club level,

including back-to-back defeats in the UEFA Champions League with Valencia at the start of the last decade. Egypt have been derided at times for a defensive approach under Cuper, but they played their part in this rarest of things—a genuinely entertaining final.

The Pharaohs had signalled their intent within two minutes as a delightful cushioned pass by Mohamed Salah set up Abdallah El Said, but his firm shot was well held by Fabrice Ondoa in the Cameroon goal. Egypt then opened the scoring midway through the first period with a superb team goal.

Amr Warda and Salah combined on the right and the latter played the ball into Elneny in space in the area, the midfielder taking a touch to control and another to steady himself before blasting high past Ondoa at his near post. It was a brilliant finish from the midfielder who was returning to the side after missing his team's last two games due to a calf injury.

SUPER SUBS

The odds were now very much against Cameroon. The last Cup of Nations final to feature more than a single goal came in 2004, when Tunisia beat Morocco 2-1.

The last time a side came from behind to win the trophy was in 1994, when Nigeria beat Zambia 2-1. Hugo Broos's side also lost centre-back Adolphe Teikeu to an apparent groin injury just after the half-hour mark, with Nkoulou taking his place. The Lyon defender has been out of favour at this tournament, only starting in Cameroon's final group game against Gabon. But thrown on here through necessity, it was he who pulled his side level in the 59th minute. Egypt failed to fully clear their lines following a corner and captain Benjamin Moukandjo crossed from the left for Nkoulou, who soared above Ahmed Hegazy to head past Essam El Hadary from six yards. Cameroon were revitalised by that goal, a partisan crowd lifted, but Jacques Zoua fired wastefully wide and Moukandjo blasted over from an excellent position as extra time began to seem inevitable.

Then Aboubakar, who had been introduced at the start of the second half in place of Robert Ndip Tambe, controlled a long ball forward with his chest on the edge of the area, poked it over the head of Ali Gabr and volleyed low past El Hadary in the Egyptian goal. — AFP



MKHITARYAN STARS AS UNITED PILE ON MISERY FOR LEICESTER



Leicester City 0



Man Utd 3

LEICESTER: Henrikh Mkhitaryan's masterclass left Leicester fighting for their Premier League survival as Manchester United cruised to a 3-0 victory over the troubled champions yesterday. Jose Mourinho's side condemned dismal Leicester to a fourth successive league defeat thanks in large part to Mkhitaryan's dynamic contribution at the King Power Stadium. The Armenian playmaker opened the scoring with a cool solo strike just before half-time and then teed up Juan Mata for United's third goal after Zlatan Ibrahimovic had doubled the lead.

United's first win in four league games extended their unbeaten run to 15 and lifted them to within two points of fourth-placed Arsenal in the race to qualify for the Champions League. "I think we played like we normally play. We played well and tried to win," Mourinho said. "We are still in the same position but we are closer to the others so we keep fighting." Just nine months after their fairytale title triumph, Leicester are firmly embroiled in a battle to avoid relegation after winning only one of their last nine league games. Claudio Ranieri's team are a shadow of the relentless unit that ground opponents into submission last term and have yet to score a league goal in 2017.

They sit one point above the relegation zone and face a crucial clash at fellow strugglers Swansea next weekend.

"Last season everything was right and the players got confidence, now they are anxious. We have to stay together and keep fighting," Ranieri said. Given both sides' recent struggles, it was little surprise that anxiety was the prevailing emotion in an error-strewn opening most notable for Jamie Vardy's tetchy response to a touchline collision with Eric Bailly. Riyad Mahrez, such a poised and inspired figure last season, summed up the malaise gripping Leicester when the Algeria winger responded to an early sight of goal with a woeful strike that flew well wide. Marcus Rashford hadn't scored in the league since netting against Leicester in September and the United striker, unmarked 10 yards from goal, squandered a good opportunity to end that barren run when he blazed over from Mkhitaryan's pinpoint cross. Mata could consider himself fortunate to escape with only a yellow card after the United midfielder lunged into a crude challenge on Vardy.

But, aided by Mourinho's decision to switch Mkhitaryan into a more central role, United began to monopolise possession and finally forced Leicester goalkeeper Kasper Schmeichel into action after 35 minutes. Ibrahimovic and Paul Pogba combined to work the ball into Rashford and the youngster's quickly-taken low strike carried enough power to force a fine save by Schmeichel.

It was a warning Leicester failed to heed and United took the lead in the 42nd minute when Mkhitaryan punished a mistake from Robert Huth. When Chris Smalling won a header in midfield, there should have been no danger but Huth made a rash and unsuccessful attempt to win the ball in the centre circle, giving Mkhitaryan space to nudge it past the defender and race clear of the Leicester defence before firing beyond Schmeichel. — AFP



LEICESTER: Leicester City's Austrian defender Christian Fuchs vies with Manchester United's Armenian midfielder Henrikh Mkhitaryan during the English Premier League football match between Leicester City and Manchester United at King Power Stadium in Leicester, central England yesterday. — AFP

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WASHINGTON: Starbucks promises to hire 10,000 refugees? President Donald Trump's supporters call for a boycott. Uber allegedly takes advantage of the president's anti-immigration decree to drum up business? Users unsubscribe from the app en masse. Trump's election has laid bare the deep divisions of American society, a discord that has forced many businesses to walk a fine line to avoid alienating consumers.

"Companies that were working very hard to stay neutral no longer can," says brand expert Bruce Turkel. "The biggest problem is anything they say can be misinterpreted." Sportsweat manufacturer New Balance, for instance, found itself embroiled in controversy after its CEO Matt LeBretton voiced optimism following the election.

"We feel things are going to move in the right direction," he said in an interview, prompting outrage on Twitter, where users called for a massive boycott of the sneaker company, forcing the brand into damage control. "From the people who make our shoes to the people who wear them, we believe in acting with the utmost integrity and we welcome all walks of life," the company said.

Beverage giant PepsiCo faced similar backlash from the opposite camp. Two days after the election, the company's CEO Indra Nooyi said her employees "were all in mourning." "And the question that they're asking, especially those who are not white: Are we safe?" she said. The retaliation came instantly: "It's probably a good time to pass on the Pepsi products," the conservative site The Gateway Pundit wrote.

Calls for boycotts often proliferate on internet forums such as Reddit and 4Chan, as well as social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter. Others originate from more structured protests. The Grab Your Wallet site, launched in October, lists companies suspected of favoring Trump, either because their leaders contributed to the real estate billionaire's campaign or because they do business with the Trump family.

The long “boycott” list includes the department store Macy’s, retail giant Walmart and beer brand Yuengling. “Brands have always been political, but now consumers can see more of this activity and are making decisions based on this information,” the site’s cofounder Shannon

Coulter says. The impact of boycott campaigns is difficult to evaluate, however, because calls to blacklist specific companies tend to get lost in the frenzy of social media. "Consumers have an incredibly short memory," marketing expert Merry Carole Powers says.

Still, some companies fear losing customers by staying silent. Nordstrom, a chain of department stores, recently announced it would drop the Ivanka Trump clothing line belonging to the president's eldest daughter. "There's no margin in the middle," says Turkel, who recently wrote the book "All About Them," focused on company branding. "If you stay quiet, you get nothing out of it." "You have to figure out who your audience is and what are their values."

Uber appears to be playing by ear as it devises its strategy. The company first distanced itself from Trump's executive order temporarily barring refugees and travelers from seven Muslim-majority countries. But it then came under fire for allegedly taking advantage of a New York taxi driver protest against the ban, prompting a wave of un-subscriptions. As taxi drivers went on strike refusing to pick up passengers at JFK airport, Uber not only continued to operate but also dropped its surge pricing.

Rival Lyft was quick to set itself apart, vowing to donate \$1 million to the American Civil Liberties Union, which has filed lawsuits against Trump's measures. The strategy paid off with the Lyft app notching more iPhone downloads than Uber for the first time. Uber CEO Travis Kalanick then attempted to make amends by quitting Trump's business advisory group, saying "the executive order is hurting many people in communities all across America."

And with the approach of the Super Bowl—one of the advertising world's central events—every marketing move is facing microscopic scrutiny. The beer giant Budweiser is slated to air an immigration-themed advertisement focused on the difficulties the brand's German founder faced when he arrived in the United States in the 19th century. South of the border, consumer trends are less divided. In Mexico, the campaign "Consumers, the cry of war" is urging people to boycott all American brands in protest against Trump's anti-Mexican threats. —AFP



ATHENS: Two decades ago, an influx of half a million migrants boosted Greece's economy. Today, the government and some experts hope a new wave of migrants will do the same. Some 60,000 refugees, including many young Syrians, Afghans and Pakistanis, have been stuck in Greece for the past year, languishing in camps after the doors to Europe were shut. But unlike in the 1990s and early 2000s, when the migrants, mainly from Albania and Bulgaria, benefited from a booming economy, Greece has been unable to make the most of the recent arrivals.

"The refugees we have now are different" since many still hope to reach northern Europe and have no intention of settling in Greece, said Stavros Zografakis, an associate professor at the Agricultural University of Athens. Many of the 500,000 to 600,000 migrants who entered Greece 20 years ago, by contrast, quickly found their place in Greek society, with jobs in agriculture and construction.

Analysts estimate they contributed 3 percentage points to Greece's gross domestic product in the 2000s, as the country grew strongly on the back of the 2004 Olympic Games, heavy infrastructure spending, and Greece's adoption of the euro in 2001. But the situation today reflects the opposite: The country's economy has been pummeled over the past seven years due to Greece's debt crisis and the austerity policies that followed. And even though the EU has provided the nation with millions of euros to help with the heavy flow of migrants, particularly with housing, "for now the results are negative," Zoorafakis said.

In Athens, over one million euros (\$1.08 million) has been injected into the economy via a refugee housing program, financed in part with the EU funds. The funds help pay for rents several months in advance, for prepaid supermarket cards and metro and bus tickets, and the salaries of about 100 people

hired to carry out the program. The money “has a direct impact on the local economy, but for the long term, an integration and social cohesion plan is needed at the national level,” said Lefteris Papagiannakis, deputy mayor of Athens in charge of refugees and migrants. But landlords are thrilled.

"No more unpaid rent or bills," said Sophia Alikhan, who said her in-laws had rented a 90-square-meter (970-square-feet) apartment to a Syrian family since June 2016, after it had stood empty for seven months. Andreas Samaras, owner of the Cafe Omonia in central Athens, said that "80 percent of sales for stores in the neighborhood" came from refugees. In 2015 he put up an Arabic sign on his cafe, and installed hookahs to attract these new clients.

For Zografakis, however, the economic impact is marginal, though he thinks this wave of migrants will eventually pay off, "like in Germany". In spring 2016, a European Commission report forecast that the refugees would add 0.2 to 0.3 percentage points to European GDP growth in 2016 and 2017. But Papagiannakis said: "We've fallen behind in working out an integration policy."

Maria Logotheti, cabinet director for Athens Mayor George Kaminis, added that integration efforts "often fail because most refugees don't want to stay in Greece." Experts nonetheless say that sectors like tourism and agriculture, that offer flexibility for workers, could prove attractive for migrants, as they have in the past.

"They accept lower wages, and the jobs that Greeks don't want," Zografakis said. Refugees might also be the solution for the demographic challenge many European countries face, with falling birthrates and ageing populations. In Greece, "this is a bomb worse than the debt, since thousands of young people have gone abroad because of high unemployment," Zografakis said. In the 1990s, migrants accounted for 97 percent of the increase of Greece's population, official data shows. — AFP

MARKAZ: S&P GCC GREW BY 1.6% IN JANUARY

KUWAIT: Kuwait Financial Centre “Markaz” recently released its Monthly Market Research report. In this report, Markaz examines and analyzes the performance of equity markets in the MENA region as well as the global equity markets for the month of January 2017.

Markaz report stated that MENA bourses had a positive start to the year 2017, with nearly all markets ending the first month in green. Kuwaiti Price and Weighted indices led the charge, rising by 18.9% and 12.4%, respectively, followed by Bahrain (6.8%). Saudi Arabia and Oman were the only markets to register a fall in January, falling by 1.5% and 0.1%, respectively.

Kuwait bourses have rallied for 14 consecutive days, but a look at the top five stocks by value traded suggest that main activities are largely in large cap companies. Also, with Pakistan upgraded to MSCI Emerging Markets Index, Kuwait and other countries could see increased representation in the MSCI Frontier Markets Index.

With the fall in oil output, in line with the OPEC agreement, many of the Saudi sectors were affected, with losses posted in Banking, Retail, Hotels & Tourism and Transport sectors. Corporate earnings across all sectors rose by 2% in 2016, but earnings in Banks and Materials companies fell by 5% and 8%, respectively. S&P GCC grew by 1.6% in January, to close the month at 101 points.

MENA markets witnessed an upswing in momentum in

January, with volumes rising 53% and value traded 3.7%. All MENA markets, barring Saudi Arabia, witnessed a rise in market liquidity in December, with Kuwait, Bahrain and Abu Dhabi leading the charge. Value traded in Kuwait stood at USD 3.9bn in January, compared to USD 9.5bn for the whole of 2016. In terms of valuation, P/E of Morocco (20.7x), Kuwait (17.9x), and Qatar (15.4x) markets were the



premium markets in the MENA region, while the markets of Egypt (7.7x), Dubai (9.9x), and Bahrain (10.0x) were the discount markets.

Blue Chips also had a positive month, with Kuwaiti large caps dominating the best GCC performers in January. Shares of Zain, Kuwait Finance House, National Bank of Kuwait and Kuwait Projects posted double-digit growth, at 20.7%, 14.8%, 12.3% and 12%, respectively. Saudi Telecom (-7.6%) and Emirates Telecom (-4.8%) lagged behind the rest. Kuwait Finance House and National Bank of Kuwait

also posted positive growth in 2016 earnings, as revenues grew, while Saudi Telecom witnessed an 8% fall in profits. Q4 profits for SABIC were positive for the first time in ten quarters, which indicated that the worst might be over for Saudi Arabia's petrochemical sector, since the fall in oil price and government austerity measures raised the cost of gas feedstock. Qatar National Bank has reported a 10% jump year-on-year in net profit to USD 3.4bn for the year ended 2016, helped by stronger core earnings.

New Year Reforms and Bond Issuances

Saudi Stock Exchange is set to introduce settlement of trades within two working days of execution (T+2) during the second quarter of 2017. Tadawul also published draft rules for short-selling, and the borrowing and lending of securities. Presently, trades must be settled on the same day, which has inconvenienced foreign investors in particular, as they must have large amounts of money on hand before trading.

The Saudi cabinet approved an IMF-backed value-added tax (VAT) to be imposed across the Gulf, following the slump in oil prices. A 5% VAT will be levied on certain goods, following an agreement with the GCC in Jun'16. The move is in line with the IMF recommendation for Gulf States, to impose revenue-raising measures including excise and value-added taxes to help adjust to the low oil

price environment that has slowed regional growth. The GCC countries have also agreed to implement selective taxes on tobacco, and soft and energy drinks this year.

The government of Oman has approached banks for an international bond issue with tranches of 5- and 10-years as the country plugs a budget deficit caused by lower oil prices. Oman's budget deficit is forecast to be USD 7.8bn in 2017, and the finance ministry has stated that it would cover this year's deficit with USD 5.5bn of international borrowing, USD 1bn of domestic borrowing and the draw-down of USD 1.3bn from financial reserves. Last year, the government raised a USD 1bn international syndicated loan in January, and issued tranches of 5- and 10-years international bonds worth USD 2.5bn in June, followed by another issue of USD 1.5bn in September.

Oil Market Review

Brent crude fell by 2 percent to close the month at USD 55.7 per barrel, having maintained the price level at above USD 50 per barrel for all of January. OPEC nations Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Algeria cut production in January more than they had originally committed to, while Russia followed suit and trimmed production faster than was initially agreed. However, rising US rig count and output put a cap on any oil price growth, as the US President had vowed to increase production.

UNITED STATES ATTEMPTING TO CURB DOLLAR STRENGTH

THE FED IN THE PASSENGER SEAT

NBK MONEY MARKET REPORT

KUWAIT: The second week of the new President continued on the same incendiary tone with the new administration attempting to curb the US dollar strength by blaming the usual perpetrators. It was German politicians turn this time to take heed as the head of the White House new National Trade Council; Peter Navarro accused them of using a “grossly undervalued” Euro to “exploit” the US and other EU members. He added that the Euro was like an “implicit Deutsche Mark” whose low valuation gave Germany an advantage over its trading partners, and added that Germany was one of the main hurdles to a US trade deal with the EU. Germany responded on the spot and reject the criticism stating they “won't exercise any influence over the European Central Bank”, as they “strive to trade on the global market with competitive products in fair trade with all others.”

On the economic front, as the first Fed meeting in 2017 was a non-event, markets have quickly turned their attention to President Trump's first State of the Union address on February 28 for clues of what is coming next and who will be the next victim. In addition, as the second Fed meeting of the year will be two weeks later, there will still be considerable uncertainty as to what would the fiscal policy look like under the new administration. This is why the Fed would likely prefer to stay in a waiting mode and not hike rates until more clarity is provided as to the potential Trump fiscal stimulus. In the event that economic data disappoint, a hike as soon as March or even at a non-press conference meeting in May would be ruled out and could potentially hurt the USD without the need of Trump making additional complaints.

The main highlight of the week on the other side of the ocean was February's Bank of England quarterly inflation report and the latest decision of the MPC. As expected, the BoE unanimously kept its policy unchanged, while retaining a neutral forward guidance on interest rates. Inflation forecasts for the years ahead were unchanged for 2017 but lowered for 2018 and 2019. According to the report, while UK consumer spending is likely to drive higher than expected growth in the next few quarters, personal consumption risks

are rising in the long term. On the foreign exchange side, the USD ended the week relatively unchanged as January Fed meeting was a nonevent. The Euro opened the week at 1.0683 and reached as high as 1.0829 on continuous positive Euro zone data. Although the dollar's recent correction can be largely explained by the retreating US yields, the news that French presidential candidate Francois Fillon is facing new claims that his wife and children received public funds for fake jobs, continue to hurt his campaign and gave his opponent Le pen an edge in the survey pools. The Euro slightly Retreated on the news however closed the week near the highs at 1.0787 despite the positive Job reports out of the US.

FOMC provides few clues

The Federal Reserve was able to achieve major milestones this week. Indeed it was able to acknowledge economic improvement, avoid political interference with the new administration and provide some optionality on a March rate hike. In details, the FOMC statement slightly upgraded assessments of the current economy but made no significant changes to the economic outlooks. On the employment front, the FOMC tweaked its statement and said that the unemployment rate “stayed near its recent low”. In comparison, the Fed said in December that the jobless rate “has declined”.

The statement also included one important change, a line added to note that business and consumer sentiment had improved of late. Members however did not feel compelled to make a move near-term as there were no signs in the statement for a potential move in March. In summary, the market continues to expect two 25 basis points hikes this year; however the dot plot shows that Fed seems more optimistic as members are still thinking about three hikes this year. A potential move in June, September and December seems more likely if these expectations materialize.

Healthy job market and strong vehicle sales

January's nonfarm payrolls came above expectations at 227k compared to expectations of 175K. Strong gains were in construction up by 36K and Retail up by 46K.

Being volatile in nature, these two industries always tend to raise analysts' suspicions as to whether they would draw a conclusion on the state of the US strong employment. Unemployment rate on the other hand rose to 4.8% in January from 4.7% in December. And wages increased by 0.1% on a monthly basis in January and the February increase was revised to 0.2%. The annual increase now stands at 2.5% in January.

The overall labor participation rate rose to 62.9 in January from 62.7 in December and was a key factor raising the unemployment rate. Labor participation climbed for workers between 20-44 years of age. These added measures are



NEW YORK: In this Oct 2, 2014, file photo, the statue of George Washington on the steps of Federal Hall faces the facade of the New York Stock Exchange. —AP

suggestive that potential workers are finding desired full-time jobs and should ease Fed members mind as to their dot plot projections for 2017.

On a different front, US vehicle sales declined. Light vehicle sales fell to 17.5 million units, compared with 17.8million in the previous year. According to the report, December, fueled by record incentive-spending by auto makers, was among the best months for U.S vehicle sales in history, helping the industry set a second-consecutive annual sales record. Auto makers are planning to build slightly more vehicles in North America in the first quarter than the same period a year ago, signaling continuous optimism for 2017.

EUROPE & UK Political Risks despite Strong Fundamentals

During the past two months, the Eurozone has continuously shown signs of improvement, with the service sector PMI figures coming at 53.7 from the 53.6 preliminary estimates. The final composite PMI came in at 54.4, also higher than the estimate of 54.3. Combined with modest signs of inflation beginning to pick up, this will keep the debate going within the ECB over the potential timing of their additional QE tapering.

Despite the strong data releases happening lately, political risk premium remain highly priced in the Euro zone. As the French election seems to be the straw that could break the

haul that would reduce the European Union to a very loose cooperative of nations. “Our preferred scenario would be to agree jointly on the dismantling of the Euro zone”

Brexit scenarios remain vague

The Inflation Report out of this week saw the BoE re-iterating their view that the monetary policy can respond in either direction to the future economic situation resulting from the “Brexite” negotiations. Despite the upside revision to near term growth, inflation forecasts were largely unchanged. While this afforded the MPC room for now, continued growth would strongly test their tolerance for above target inflation. The report also pointed out that non-resident inflows have shown signs of moderating in the latest data. Last but not least, the report showed the bank's concerns that higher spending will be driven by de-saving, as it fears that “continued moderation in pay growth and higher import prices following sterling's depreciation are likely to mean materially weaker household real income growth over the coming few years.”

ASIA

China's figures showing signs of stability

China's January manufacturing PMI came at 51.3 against expectations of 51.2 and December's 51.4. Recent PMIs figures continue to signal expansion in China's manufacturing sector, and hence in China's commodity demand. While the official PMI tend to focus on larger companies; the private China Caixin PMI also released this week slowed in January from December, but continued to show the economy was recovering. The figure came in at 51.0 in January, down from 51.9 in December. According to the report, “the rate of improvement slowed since December, as output and new orders increased at weaker rates amid a further reduction in employment. At the same time, inflationary pressures remained sharp, with both input costs and output charges increasing at rates hardly seen throughout the past five years”

Japan trying to be on the Right Side

This week, the BoJ left its monetary policy unchanged and maintained its government bonds purchase target at JPY80 trillion per year and price target for the 10year gov-

ernment yields at 0%. The central bank indicated that it will continue with QQE with Yield Curve Control as long as is needed to hit its inflation target. On a positive note, the BoJ upgraded its GDP forecasts to 1.4% from 1.0% for 2016, and from 1.3% to 1.5% for 2017. It also lowered its inflation forecast to -0.2% from -0.1% for 2016, and left its forecasts for 2017 at 1.5%.

On a different front and in a response to the US president, Japan's Chief Cabinet Secretary said on Wednesday that FX rates were decided by the market and were not being manipulated by the Japanese government. “As Bank of Japan Governor has said repeatedly, Japan's monetary policy aims to achieve the domestic purpose of ending deflation. It's not aimed at affecting currency rates.”

In an attempt to sweeten the relation, reports this week showed that Japan's Government pension fund will purchase debt issued by American corporations to finance infrastructure projects. The report noted that up to 5% of the roughly JPY130 trillion in assets controlled by the fund can go toward overseas infrastructure projects, and that currently, only tens of billions of yen are invested in that asset class.

Australia enjoying commodities honeymoon

The December trade surplus surged much more than expected to a record 3.5 billion Australian Dollars. According to the report, higher commodity prices saw export values increase dramatically at the fastest pace since 2010. Meanwhile, services slowed to a flat trend although remain at an increase of 8% on a yearly basis. Elsewhere, import values remained flat an increase of 1% on a yearly basis still the strongest in a year. The soaring commodity prices have led to a nominal export increase of 32% over the year, which combined with flat imports, delivered a record trade surplus.

On a different front, residential building approvals dropped by 1.2% in December and by 11.4% on a yearly basis. The monthly fall was entirely driven by private houses falling to the lowest level since 2013. The value of non-residential building approvals was also flat after dropping in recent months and showing signs of exhaustion of money inflow from Chinese investors moving money out of the mainland.

EXCHANGE RATES

AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

ASIAN COUNTRIES

Japanese Yen	2.711
Indian Rupees	4.544
Pakistani Rupees	2.914
Srilankan Rupees	2.032
Nepali Rupees	2.839
Singapore Dollar	218.090
Hongkong Dollar	39.378
Bangladesh Taka	3.829
Philippine Peso	6.135
Thai Baht	8.724

GCC COUNTRIES

Saudi Riyal	81.534
Qatari Riyal	83.977
ani Riyal	794.049
Bahraini Dinar	811.880
UAE Dirham	83.245

ARAB COUNTRIES

Egyptian Pound - Cash	19.650
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	16.375
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.227
Tunisian Dinar	134.900
Jordanian Dinar	430.560
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.037
Syrian Lira	2.179
Morocco Dirham	31.020

EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES

US Dollar Transfer	305.550
Euro	331.370
Sterling Pound	383.770

Canadian dollar	235.850
Turkish lira	83.260
Swiss Franc	309.890
Australian Dollar	236.340
US Dollar Buying	304.350

GOLD

20 Gram	249.430
10 Gram	127.630
5 Gram	64.660

DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	305.200
Canadian Dolla	235.545
Sterling Pound	388.060
Euro	330.760
Swiss Frank	304.115
Bahrain Dinar	809.060
UAE Dirhams	83.485
Qatari Riyals	84.705
Saudi Riyals	82.315
Jordanian Dinar	431.630
Egyptian Pound	16.349
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.032
Indian Rupees	4.531
Pakistani Rupees	2.912
Bangladesh Taka	3.855
Philippines Peso	6.131
Cyprus pound	167.605
Japanese Yen	3.705
Syrian Pound	2.425

Nepalese Rupees	3.830
Malaysian Ringgit	69.650
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	44.805
Thai Bhat	9.690
Turkish Lira	81.350

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
Europe		
British Pound	0.375977	0.385977
Czech Korune	0.004194	0.016194
Danish Krone	0.040261	0.045261
Euro	0.324756	0.333756
Norwegian Krone	0.033255	0.038455
Romanian Leu	0.084681	0.084681
Slovakia	0.009153	0.019153
Swedish Krona	0.030897	0.035897
Swiss Franc	0.301805	0.312805
Turkish Lira	0.076815	0.087115

Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.226856	0.238856
New Zealand Dollar	0.217638	0.227138

America		
Canadian Dollar	0.229464	0.238464
Georgina Lari	0.138004	0.138004
US Dollars	0.301450	0.305850
US Dollars Mint	0.301950	0.305850

Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003646	0.004230
Chinese Yuan	0.043167	0.046667

Hong Kong Dollar	0.037310	0.040062
Indian Rupee	0.002703	0.004926
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002635	0.002815
Kenyan Shilling	0.002998	0.002998
Korean Won	0.000258	0.000273
Malaysian Ringgit	0.065442	0.071442
Nepalese Rupee	0.003080	0.003250
Pakistan Rupee	0.002712	0.003002
Philippine Peso	0.006080	0.006380
Sierra Leone	0.000068	0.000074
Singapore Dollar	0.211975	0.221975
South African Rand	0.016784	0.025284
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001678	0.002258
Taiwan	0.009655	0.009835
Thai Baht	0.008364	0.008914

Arab		
Bahraini Dinar	0.803906	0.812406
Egyptian Pound	0.010118	0.019371
Iranian Riyal	0.000085	0.000086
Iraqi Dinar	0.000186	0.000246
Jordanian Dinar	0.425296	0.434296
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000148	0.000248
Moroccan Dirhams	0.020089	0.0044089
Nigerian Naira	0.001266	0.001901
Omani Riyal	0.787216	0.792895
Qatar Riyal	0.083116	0.084566
Saudi Riyal	0.080393	0.081693
Syrian Pound	0.001296	0.001516
Tunisian Dinar	0.130188	0.138188
Turkish Lira	0.076815	0.087115
UAE Dirhams	0.081765	0.083465
Yemeni Riyal	0.000993	0.001073

GOP'S CORPORATE TAX SCHEME HAS ITS REPUBLICAN SKEPTICS

WASHINGTON: House Republicans face opposition to their plan to overhaul the way corporations pay federal taxes from a powerful group of lawmakers - other Republicans. "I'm not very enthused about it," said Republican Sen. Orrin Hatch of Utah, the chairman of the Finance Committee and the Senate's top tax writer. Another skeptic is John Cornyn of Texas, the No 2 Republican in the Senate.

"The question is, who is going to pay the tax?" Cornyn asked. "Is it going to be our citizens?" Seeking to overhaul the tax code for the first time in 30 years, the House GOP plan would scrap the 35 percent tax on corporate profits, which is riddled with exemptions, deductions and credits. It would be replaced with something called a "border adjustment tax."

Under the system, American companies that produce and sell their products in the US would pay a new 20 percent tax on the profits from these sales. However, if a company exports a product, the profits from that sale would not be taxed by the US Foreign companies

that import goods to the US would also have to pay the tax. The proposal could help American workers and exporters who are struggling to compete against low-wage workers in other countries. However, it could also drive up prices for imported goods, including automobiles, consumer electronics, oil - and therefore gasoline - and everyday retail items.

Unique opportunity

The border adjustment tax is a key feature of House Republicans' efforts. It provides the revenue - more than \$1 trillion over a decade - to help pay for lower overall tax rates. With control of the House, Senate and White House, Republicans believe they have a unique opportunity to remake the tax code to their liking. But Republican solidarity is crucial for success. The GOP holds only a two-seat majority in the Senate, and no Democrat has signaled support for the House plan.

Also, President Donald Trump has been critical of the plan. The proposal is championed by House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis, and Rep Kevin Brady, R-

Texas, chairman of the tax-writing House Ways and Means Committee. Brady says the proposed system would boost American manufacturers and exporters, and help US companies compete abroad.

"This tax has a simple but powerful principle, which is every product and service that is consumed in the United States will have an equal business tax rate of 20 percent," Brady said. "That not only levels the playing field between our foreign competitors in America, it gives our made in America products a fighting chance both here and abroad and eliminates any tax incentives to move US jobs or manufacturing and research overseas."

There is widespread agreement that the current tax system is too complicated and picks too many winners and losers, compelling companies to make businesses decisions based on tax implications instead of sound business reasons. But there is no consensus on fixing it.

Brady said the border adjustment tax is just the kind of bold change that is

needed to unleash the economic might of American workers and companies. "America can't become competitive and certainly can't leapfrog into the lead pack of the most competitive places on the earth for that new job and that new investment unless we go bold on tax reform," Brady said.

Formal position

The conservative House Freedom Caucus has not taken a formal position on the proposal. But the caucus chairman, Rep. Mark Meadows, R-N.C., said he's got members on both sides of the debate. One member of the caucus, Rep. Jim Jordan, R-Ohio, said, "Taxes always impact people, and it's going to be a tax on families who are buying products."

In theory, economists say that under the plan, the dollar would increase in value compared to other currencies. This would make imports cheaper and exports more expensive, reducing or even eliminating the effect of the tax on consumer prices. But there is no consensus among economists on how it would work in the real world. "I think the (bor-

der adjustment tax) is uncharted territory," said Caroline Freund, senior fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics.

Freund spoke at a conference on the House plan where there was wide disagreement among economists and tax experts on how well the tax would work. Lobbyists have already starting to weigh in on both sides of the issue. More than 100 retailers including Wal-Mart, Target and key trade associations are launching a new coalition to fight the proposal.

Billionaires Charles and David Koch, who donate generously to Republican campaigns, are vocal critics of the plan. The Koch family has been in the oil refinery business for decades. At least two business coalitions support the plan. One includes business giants General Electric, Dow Chemical, Boeing, Eli Lilly & Co, Honeywell and Oracle. "We cannot have a tax code that continues to favor Chinese products over American products, Mexican beef and autos over American beef and autos or foreign oil over US oil," Brady said. "We still have some work to do." —AP

DOLLAR CAN ONLY GO UP

By Hayder Tawfik

Over the past few years the US\$ has seen appreciation without any correction. However, the US dollar started the year with a bit of weakness or may be a small sell off. This could be called a worst start of the year for the US\$ in the last few years. I believe this is a small correction on the path of further gains in the coming months. Investors are well advised to stay long US\$ for the rest of the year.



The potential for an acceleration in economic growth around the world that might lead to a new era of inflationary wave with steeper yield curve and higher interest rates is very much US\$ supportive. The dollar will continue strengthening against the

euro and yen as policy makers in Europe and Japan maintain quantitative easing while the Federal Reserve is set to raise interest rates in gradual steps throughout this year and next.

I think the upward trend in the US\$ is intact and the recent sell off is a bit of a taking breath before it starts a new trend in the coming months. There has been a deep shift away from fiscal belief, austerity measures and deflation threats to a more reflationary policy environment around the world that is seen most strongly in the US. The Federal Reserve will be kept on hold for a while till it sees what the new US administration led by the president decides on any new executive orders or new policies regarding US economic growth that might be dictated to the Federal Reserve Open Committee. Investors are better off to wait for any new comments or direction from the Federal Reserve at least for the 1st quarter of this year.

I am sure the US central bank is seriously taking note of the big change in sentiment with regard to economic growth and future inflation. Short and long term US\$ rates have shifted already and the yield curve has steepened and will continue to get steeper in the coming months. Inflation of 2% is within the mandate of the Federal Reserve but any further rise will not be welcome and could trigger the central banks to be aggressive in its monetary policy. US government bonds have led a global advance in yields since July with rising factory prices in China and the steep rise in commodity prices adding to signs of a global reflationary environment.

The rise of the US\$ is not going to be a smooth one and might get vulnerable to any remarks by Donald Trump as he prefers a competitive US\$ against US's major trading partners. While the Fed is likely to start raising interest rates sometime this June, the chances are that it may surprise the market by acting within this quarter to send the market a clear signal that it will not tolerate any future inflation threat.

Any further weakness in US treasury bond prices will push future inflation expectation even higher bolstering the case for US interest rate hikes. Investors are well advised to stay on the side of the Federal Reserve for the time being and remain long US\$ till all becomes clear. Elections in the Eurozone and volatile comments and unpredicted remarks from Donald Trump are not encouraging for investors and hence be on the safe side for the time being and stick to the US\$.

US UTILITIES SEEK SUN AS TRUMP SIDES WITH COAL, FOSSIL FUELS

MAJOR ELECTRIC UTILITIES MOVE INTO SMALLER-SCALE SOLAR FARMING

RALEIGH: The plunging cost of solar power is leading US electric companies to capture more of the sun just when President Donald Trump is moving to boost coal and other fossil fuels. Solar power represents just about 1 percent of the electricity US utilities generate today, but that could grow substantially as major electric utilities move into smaller-scale solar farming, a niche developed by local cooperatives and non-profits. It's both an opportunity and a defensive maneuver: Sunshine-capturing technology has become so cheap, so quickly, that utilities are moving to preserve their core business against competition from household solar panels.

"Solar growth is so extensive and has so much momentum behind it that we're at the point where you can't put the genie back in the bottle," said Jeffrey RS Brownson, a Pennsylvania State University professor who studies solar adoption. "You either learn how to work with this new medium, solar energy, or you're going to face increasing conflicts."

The transition away from coal-burning power plants now seems unstoppable, even if Trump scraps rules requiring utilities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The average lifetime cost for utility-scale wind and solar generation in the US is now cheaper than coal or nuclear and comparable to natural gas, according to financial advisory firm Lazard, which compared the fuel costs without their federal tax subsidies.

Outpacing expansion

Wind and solar were expected to account for about two-thirds of the new electricity generation capacity added to the nation's power grid in 2016, outpacing fossil fuel expansion for a third straight year, according to the US Energy Department. And even though big investor-owned utilities operate as legal monopolies in many states, the bill-lowering appeal of rooftop solar for many homeowners could eventually threaten their ability to finance and manage the power grids.

These trends help explain why utilities are increasingly adopting a model called "community solar," or "shared solar," which involves customers agreeing to buy or lease solar panels on large arrays built for the utility, or to buy the power they produce. That electricity is then credited off utility bills under contracts that can lock in power prices for 10 years or more.

Utility-run shared solar also can address competition from independent solar companies that install and operate rooftop solar panels, harvesting and providing the energy at a fixed cost to the individual consumer or some other buyer. These proj-

ects also could appeal to the roughly half of American households that can't install solar panels because they don't own their homes, lack the good credit needed to finance an installation, or lack sufficient roof space where the sun shines consistently, the Energy Department's National Renewable Energy Laboratory reported.

Like the much larger solar operations covering large rural tracts with dark photovoltaic panels slanted toward the sky, electricity from the utilities' smaller-scale arrays

potential output, said Dan Chwastyk of the Smart Electric Power Alliance, a group providing utilities information about shifting into clean-energy technologies. Charlotte-based Duke Energy Corp., the largest electricity company in the United States, this year plans to launch a community solar program in South Carolina and seek regulatory permission to do the same in North Carolina, Florida, Kentucky, Ohio and Indiana, utility vice president Melisa Johns said.

potential from a solar array and get credit for their share of what's produced, an investment that should pay for itself three years into the 10-year program. These households would continue paying conventional power prices for any electricity they consume beyond what their share generates, spending to keep the transmission lines and backup plants working when the sun doesn't shine.

"We do have customers that want (community solar) and customers who are will-



GLENDALE: In this March 23, 2010, file photo, workers from California Green Design install solar electrical panels on the roof of a home. —AP

feed into the local power grid, not directly to individual homes or businesses. Membership-based electric cooperatives, municipal utilities and even non-profit groups run most of these "solar gardens" around the country, but utilities are moving in. In California, Colorado, Massachusetts and Minnesota, they've been pushed into the space by state law.

Community solar program

Investor-owned utilities now back about 20 percent of the country's community solar programs across 32 states, and represent about 70 percent of the

Minneapolis-based Xcel Energy Inc., Topeka, Kansas, based Westar Energy, and California's three largest investor-owned utilities are among other power companies moving into community solar. Duke Energy's plan "just opens it up for a lot more people to go solar," said Sara Hummel Rajca, chairwoman of the South Carolina Solar Council, which brings local cooperatives, solar installers and academics together with the state's three major utilities.

Duke Energy's South Carolina residential customers would pay \$70 upfront for each subscribed kilowatt slice of power

ing to pay for it, but it's not like we have every single customer that wants that," Johns said. At the moment, switching from coal-fired power plants to natural gas is a cheaper way to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, said Stanford University economist Frank Wolak. But utilities also need to hold onto their customers as solar power becomes more popular, said Wolak, who directs Stanford's Program on Energy and Sustainable Development. Utilities think: "If a customer signs up for community solar, we get the money. With rooftop solar, that money is going to the solar installer," he said. —AP

WALL ST LENDING TO MAIN ST EVEN AS MANY CONDEMN DODD-FRANK

NEW YORK: President Donald Trump has wasted little time in beginning a push to reverse the stricter banking regulations enacted after the 2008 financial crisis. Trump has branded the Dodd-Frank Act "a disaster" - a regulatory overreach that slowed the economy and stifled lending to consumers and businesses.

Dodd-Frank did impose tighter curbs on US banks and how they operate. And the restrictions fell particularly hard on community banks. Yet it's also true that by just much every measure, the US economy is healthier now: The job market is solid. The housing market has largely rebounded. And the banking system, which nearly collapsed at the height of the crisis, is safer and sturdier.

The Dodd-Frank Act took effect in 2010, a response to reckless risk-taking by banks that inflated a housing bubble, kindled the financial crisis and eventually required a \$700 billion taxpayer bailout. The law was designed, most broadly, to guard against another catastrophe.

But Republicans in Congress, emboldened Wall Street lobbyists and the Trump White House argue that the law went too far and want to roll back many of the regulations. Just as vociferously, defenders of Dodd-Frank say it remains a critically important bulwark against excessive financial risk-taking and should stay intact. "The Dodd-Frank Act is a disas-

trous policy that's hindering our markets, reducing the availability of credit and crippling our economy's ability to grow and create jobs," Sean Spicer, Trump's press secretary, said Friday. Here's a closer look at the law and what's at stake:

Q: What does Dodd-Frank really do?

A: It's a complicated law. But among other goals, it had one overarching purpose: To erase any perception that some mega-banks were "too big to fail" - that is, that they would require another taxpayer bailout in case of a new financial crisis because their collapse would threaten the entire banking system. Take the bankruptcy of Lehman Brothers, once a storied Wall Street investment bank. Its bankruptcy at a precarious moment for the banking system helped ignite a full-blown crisis. Once Lehman failed, the government felt compelled to rescue other financial giants that were deemed too important to the whole system.

Dodd-Frank required the banks to hold much more money relative to how much they lend. It created the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, which aims to protect consumers from abusive financial products. Large banks had to prove they could survive a hypothetical financial crisis or a deep recession. And they had to devise plans to dismantle themselves in an orderly fashion if they ever had to seek bankruptcy.

Q: So has Dodd-Frank worked?

A: The balance sheets of the nation's biggest banks are far more robust than before the crisis and more prepared to endure financial setbacks. And most analysts say the restrictions imposed by Dodd-Frank largely worked as a safeguard against another crisis. Yet not until another crisis actually hits will it be clear whether Dodd-Frank works as well as its supporters claim. And no one knows for sure whether the law has caused the economy to grow more slowly than it otherwise would.

Q: Has Dodd-Frank made it harder for to buy a home or car or to borrow?

A: The law did restrict certain risky mortgages and reined in other types of lending that had previously faced little or no regulation. But Americans, speaking broadly, have ample access to credit. Immediately after the financial crisis, banks scaled way back on lending. Loans were harder to get. Yet for most people, those days are largely gone. The banking industry is making more loans in various forms. And Americans, who drastically pared their debt during the recession, are borrowing again.

Americans have \$992 billion in balances on their credit cards, near a record high set in 2008, according to data from the Federal Reserve. Auto loans outstanding total \$1.10 trillion, also a record. And the average rate on those auto loans is just below

4.5 percent, near a record low. What's more, mortgage debt has reached \$14.2 trillion, not far below the record set in mid-2008, when the housing market was in a bubble soon to burst. Mortgage rates have been near historic lows for years. (One notable exception: Home equity loans, popular during the housing bubble, have declined since 2009.) "The argument that Dodd-Frank choked the lending markets is simply not in the data," said Mike Konczal, a fellow at the left-leaning Roosevelt Institute.

Even the most vulnerable Americans have re-entered the financial system. Roughly 7 percent of Americans were unbanked in 2015, down from 8.2 percent in 2011, according to the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. (The unbanked are people who have no bank account and are considered largely shut out of the mainstream financial system.)

Q: Have the banking industry's profits been hurt by Dodd-Frank?

A: Because banks are in the business of lending, the industry's fortunes rise and fall in sync with the economy. And as the economy recovered from the Great Recession, so did bank profits. The roughly 6,000 banks insured by the FDIC earned \$168.8 billion in profits in the past four quarters, a record, and above the \$146.2 billion they earned in the 12

months leading up to the 2007 housing bust.

Still, while profits for large Wall Street banks have recovered, the gains are due largely to how much bigger the big banks became after the crisis. Banks' profits on individual loans are historically low. Yet they have managed to more than make up the shortfall through fees and sheer volume of loans.

Profits at small community banks are another story. They have not recovered. Dodd-Frank's stricter regulations disproportionately hit smaller banks. Unlike the banking giants, community banks don't have the economies of scale to make up for lower profit margins. Some modifications to Dodd-Frank enacted during the Obama administration have been intended to provide some relief to small community banks.

Small banks - those with less than \$1 billion in assets - had a return on equity of 11.8 percent at the start of 2007. That figure is now down to 9.6 percent. Critics of Dodd-Frank say it's slowed or even stopped the growth of the banking industry since its passage - forcing banks to merge and consolidate just to reach the size they need to survive. Before the recession, there were roughly 7,100 commercial banks in the United States. Nearly 10 years later, the figure is 5,100. Some banks failed in the crisis. But more were gobbled up by competitors or merged. —AP

BANKS LEAD STOCK SURGE, INVESTORS HOPE FOR CUTS

NEW YORK: Banks and other financial companies made big gains Friday after US President Donald Trump moved to scale back regulations on the financial industry. Other stocks also rose as investors were also pleased that employers hired workers at a faster pace in January. Financial stocks made their biggest gains since shortly after the presidential election as Trump took his first steps to reduce regulations, which could boost profits for investment firms.

The Labor Department said hiring sped up last month, a positive sign for the economy. Small-company stocks, which stand to benefit more than others from stronger economic growth, make sharp gains. Financial compa-

nies have made huge gains since Trump's election, and his pledge to cut laws and rules that govern the industry is a major reason.

"They're going to benefit from not having all of this onerous red tape," said Karyn Cavanaugh of Voya Investment Strategies. "That's why we see the rallies every time they talk about regulation." Cavanaugh said a reduction in regulations could also help banks lend more and speed up economic growth, which could benefit many other industries. The Dow Jones industrial average jumped 186.55 points, or 0.9 percent, to 20,071.46. The Standard & Poor's 500 index advanced 16.57 points, or 0.7 percent, to 2,297.42. The Nasdaq composite picked up

30.57 points, or 0.5 percent, to close at a record high of 5,666.77.

Potential changes

The Russell 2000 index of smaller-company stocks climbed 20.41 points, or 1.5 percent, to 1,377.84. Smaller, domestically-focused companies may have more to gain than their larger peers from faster growth in the US. The Russell made big gains at the end of 2016 based on those hopes. On Friday Trump directed the Treasury Secretary to look for potential changes to the Dodd-Frank law, which reshaped financial regulations after the 2008-09 financial crisis. The order does not have any immediate impact, but

investors applauded its intent.

Trump also signed a memorandum that delayed an Obama-era rule that requires financial professionals who charge commissions to put their clients' interests first when giving advice on retirement investments. JPMorgan Chase added \$2.59, or 3.1 percent, to \$87.18 and Goldman Sachs rose \$10.54, or 4.6 percent, to \$240.95. Morgan Stanley gained \$2.30, or 5.5 percent, to \$44.43. Smaller banks, which could find it easier to lend money if regulations are cut, also traded higher. Texas Capital Bancshares picked up \$2.85, or 3.4 percent, to \$86.10 and East West Bancorp rose \$2.26, or 4.5 percent, to \$52.72.

US employers added 227,000 jobs in January, according to the Labor Department. That's more than last year's average monthly gain of 187,000. The unemployment rate ticked up to a low 4.8 percent from 4.7 percent in December as more people started looking for work. That helped smaller companies and industrial stocks, both of which would benefit from faster economic growth.

Credit and debit card use

Visa said shoppers stepped up their use of debit and credit cards in the latest quarter, and the payment processing company also benefited from its acquisition of Visa Europe. Its profit and revenue were stronger than analysts expected, and Visa's stock jumped \$3.78,

or 4.6 percent, to \$86.08. Online retail giant Amazon traded lower as investors grew concerned about its sales. The company's fourth-quarter sales fell short of analyst estimates, and so did its forecast for revenue in the current quarter. The stock gave up \$29.75, or 3.5 percent, to \$810.20.

Macy's stock soared after the Wall Street Journal reported that Hudson's Bay Co., the owner of Saks Fifth Avenue, could buy the department store chain. The companies declined to comment. Macy's jumped \$1.97, or 6.4 percent, to \$32.69. The stock has been trading around five-year lows. Hudson's Bay stock rose almost 4 percent in Toronto.

Biotech drugmaker Amgen disclosed a bigger profit and better sales than analysts had expected. It also reported results from a study that showed its new cholesterol drug Repatha reduced the risk of death, heart attack and stroke in patients with advanced atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease. That could help boost prescriptions for the drug. Amgen jumped \$7.95, or 5 percent, to \$167.53.

Underwear, t-shirt and sock maker Hanesbrands announced surprisingly weak holiday sales and gave disappointing projections for the year. Its stock slumped \$3.73, or 16.4 percent, to \$18.98, its lowest price in almost three years. Bond prices wobbled, then turned higher. The yield on the 10-year Treasury note fell to 2.47 percent from 2.48 percent. —AP

Global

حوبل

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report

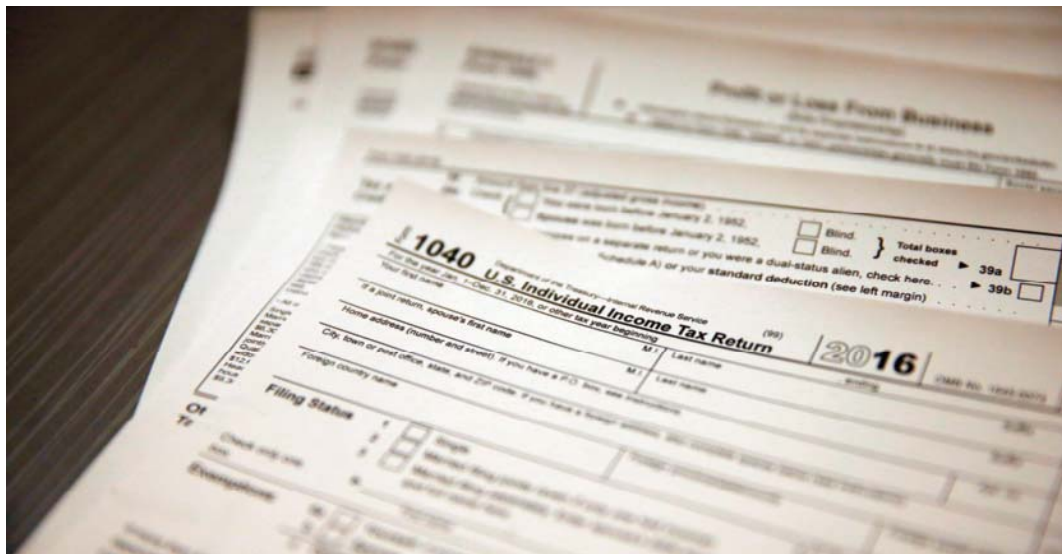
Sunday 05 February 2017

Index	Change	Closing	Last Closing	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
Price Index	▼	-156.61	6,686.92	6,843.53	6,846.43	6,675.41				
Weighted Index	▼	-3.53	421.83	425.36	427.00	420.71				
KSX 15	▼	-4.18	966.22	970.40	976.05	961.83				

Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
MARIN	68	61	206530	12,983	9	67	▲ 1.0
IKARUS	40.5	40.5	305,000	12,353	9	40.5	▼ -2.5
IPG	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	370	— 0.0
NAPESCO	900	870	29,264	26,023	5	870	▼ -30.0
ENERGYH	51	51	621,131	31,678	27	51	▼ -5.0
GPI	56	53	8,506,573	464,843	143	53	▼ -5.0
ABAR	95	95	2,200	209	1	95	▲ 1.0
Oil & Gas			9,670,698	548,088	194	881.22	▼ -37.56
KFOUC	360	340	518,037	178,466	43	340	▼ -25.0
BPCC	570	570	62,105	35,400	4	570	— 0.0
ALKOUT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	700	— 0.0
ALQURAIN	290	285	961,840	274,068	27	285	▼ -5.0
Basic Materials			1,541,782	487,934	74	1271.70	▼ -28.69
KCEM	495	475	136,930	66,376	17	495	▲ 5.0
REFRI	305	305	100,000	30,500	2	305	▼ -15.0
CABLE	580	550	493,011	276,104	78	550	▼ -30.0
SHIP	240	228	74,380	16,960	12	228	▼ -10.0
PCEM	1,080	1,020	162,063	170,680	22	1,080	▼ -20.0
PAPER	325	320	60,500	19,403	6	325	▲ 5.0
MRC	90	81	90,900	7,384	7	81	▼ -5.0
ACICO	290	285	1,333,400	381,116	35	290	— 0.0
GGMC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	325	— 0.0
HCC	160	144	1,497	222	2	160	▲ 10.0
KBMMC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	180	— 0.0
NICBM	218	216	554,187	119,784	34	218	— 0.0
EQUIPMENT	69	66	2,402,610	160,231	82	66	▼ -5.0
NCCI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	42.5	— 0.0
GYPSUM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	95	— 0.0
SALBOOKH	80	76	873,004	66,869	39	76	▼ -5.0
AGLTY	730	720	2,315,489	1,673,184	62	720	▼ -10.0
EDU	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	206	— 0.0
CLEANING	53	49.5	2,150,505	109,307	45	50	▼ -4.0
KGL	63	61	332,000	20,284	24	61	▼ -5.0
KCPG	200	196	7,893	1,553	5	200	▲ 2.0
HUMANSOFT	3,000	3,000	160,000	480,000	15	3,000	— 0.0
NAFAIS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	194	— 0.0
GFC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	40.5	— 0.0
MAYADEEN	34.5	32.5	8,431,049	276,947	123	32.5	▼ -2.5
CGC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	500	— 0.0
MTCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	56	— 0.0
UPAC	770	770	100,000	77,000	4	770	▼ -50.0
ALAFQ	250	248	268,413	67,063	17	250	▼ -5.0
MUBARRAD	80	73	1,383,999	104,683	40	80	▲ 2.0
LOGISTICS	74	71	2,045,120	148,801	48	72	▼ -4.0
SCEN	89	87	255,100	22,449	14	88	▼ -1.0
GCEM	84	83	509,100	42,625	11	84	— 0.0
QIC	83	81	6,249	515	3	83	— 0.0
FCEM	89	86	1,986,927	172,648	53	86	▼ -4.0
RKWC	100	99	374,223	37,049	9	99	— 0.0
SPEC	102	98	1,869,221	185,485	75	98	▼ -8.0
Industrials			28,477,790	4,735,223	884	1459.52	▼ -18.40
KSH	162	162	1,000	162	1	162	▼ -8.0
NSH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	39.5	— 0.0
PAPCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	95	— 0.0
CATTL	230	230	24	6	1	230	▼ -10.0
DANAH	99	94	2,417,604	228,700	64	94	▼ -5.0
FOOD	2,600	2,600	1,408	3,661	2	2,600	— 0.0
Consumer Goods			2,420,036	232,528	68	1126.28	▼ -26.64
MHC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	250	— 0
ATC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	920	— 0
YIACO	260	244	38,125	9,681	4	260	▲ 5
Health Care			38,125	9,681	4	1195.03	▲ 5.06
KCIN	1,140	1,140	10	11	1	1,140	▼ -40
KHOT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	265	— 0
SULTAN	95	90	473,110	42,865	33	90	▼ -5
CABLETV	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	47.5	— 0
EYAS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	385	— 0
IFAHR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	192	— 0
OULAFUEL	126	124	46,259	5,765	14	126	▼ -2
MUNTAZAHAT	90	86	2,948,176	258,010	85	86	▼ -5
JAZEERA	680	680	25,000	17,000	2	680	▼ -10
SOOR	126	122	145,759	18,045	21	126	▼ -2
FUTUREKID	124	118	150,761	18,054	6	118	▼ -8
ALRAI	166	160	970,490	157,738	55	164	▼ -2
ZMAH	70	66	3,061,817	206,767	80	66	▼ -5
Mezzan	980	970	220,653	214,983	24	970	▼ -20
Consumer Services			8,042,035	939,240	321	979.79	▼ -26.75
ZAIN	510	500	6,894,489	3,465,036	161	500	— 0
OOREDOO	1,240	1,220	9,427	11,614	6	1,240	▲ 20
HITSTTELEC	58	54	10,594,466	582,761	211	54	▼ -5
VIVA	890	880	80,549	71,400	46	890	▲ 10
Telecommunications			17,578,931	4,130,810	424	682.41	▼ -6.70
NBK	720	700	2,557,172	1,811,592	69	700	▼ -10
GBK	255	246	1,975,183	496,812	61	248	— 0
CBK	455	455	95,686	43,537	6	455	▲ 25
ABK	320	315	106,807	33,653	12	315	▼ -15
ALMUTAHED	460	435	58,738	25,648	11	440	▼ -10
KIB	222	218	1,840,018	402,072	59	218	▼ -4
BURG	325	320	1,491,509	479,938	43	325	— 0
KFIN	620	600	4,212,967	2,569,411	131	610	— 0
BOUBYAN	415	410	790,148	324,452	47	415	▲ 5
AUMR	218	216	1,392,075	300,812	41	216	▼ -2
ITHMR	67	62	30,413,718	1,909,140	330	62	▼ -5
WARBABANK	240	234	3,885,255	921,240	171	238	— 0
Banks			48,819,296	9,318,307	981	943.18	▼ -12.82
KINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	300	— 0
GINS	630	630	45	28	1	630	▼ -40.0
AINS	455	455	11,150	5,073	3	455	▼ -20.0
WINS	100	100	1,000	100	1	100	— 0.0
KUWAITRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	180	— 0.0
FTI	60	57	942,800	56,228	32	60	▲ 5.0
WIETHAQ	59	52	131,000	6,919	3	59	▲ 2.0
BKIKWT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	355	— 0.0
Insurance			1,085,995	68,349	40	1120.02	▼ -1.70

Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
SOKOUK	54	52	6043682	318,510	139	52	▼ -5.0
KRE	78	74	9,280,852	698,744	132	75	▼ -3.0
URC	106	99	60,013	6,117	8	102	▼ -6.0
NRE	134	124	18,419,068	2,321,215	272	124	▼ -10.0
SRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	390	— 0.0
TAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	470	— 0.0
AREEC	182	178	20,500	3,651	2	178	▼ -6.0
MASSALEH	56	56	50	3	1	56	▲ 3.0
ARABREC	50	48.5	4,287,927	210,020	97	48.5	▼ -3.5
ERESCO	51	49.5	3,838,924	191,869	60	50	▼ -2.0
MABANEE	880	860	300,444	260,363	28	860	▼ -10.0
INJAZZAT	84	83	560,055	46,585	14	83	▼ -2.0
INVESTORS	32.5	30.5	26,051,869	805,909	235	30.5	▼ -2.5
IRC	40.5	39.0	819,461	32,129	17	39.0	▼ -2.5
ALTUJARIA	87	84	3,358,469	287,183	45	84	▼ -4.0
SANAM	56	52	138,800	7,321	4	54	— 0.0
AAYANRE	77	74	648,990	49,057	29	74	▼ -5.0
AQAR	69	69	2,902	200	1	69	— 0.0
ALAQARIA	49.0	47.5	791,000	37,663	18	47.5	▼ -2.5
MAZAYA	150	136	41,212,666	5,895,140	544	142	▲ 2.0
ADNC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	11.0	— 0.0
THEMAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	112	— 0.0
TJARA	62	59	1,863,208	112,804	27	61	▼ -3.0
TAAAMEER	40.5	39.5	6,287,478	248,869	79	39.5	▼ -2.5
ARKAN	97	87	4,355,826	403,181	159	89	▼ -3.0
ARGAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	198	— 0.0
ABYAR	37.5	36.0	31,839,308	1,157,943	313	36.0	▼ -2.5
MUNSHAAT	76	72	4,271,107	309,745	86	72	▼ -5.0
FIRSTDUBAI	90	82	10,768,789	917,308	304	82	▼ -5.0
KBIT	61	57	6,525,547	383,064	124	57	▼ -5.0
REAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	220	— 0.0
MENA	33.5	31.5	3,921,000	123,788	63	31.5	▼ -2.5
ALMUDON	58	54	3,883,160	214,101	115	54	▼ -5.0
MARAKEZ	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	39.0	— 0.0
REMAI	63	59	3,699,139	223,017	100	61	▼ -3.0
AWJ	93	91	1,220,945	112,669	39	93	▼ -3.0
Real Estate			194,471,179	15,378,171	3,055	1068.73	▼ -42.24
KINV	102	95	319,429	30,962	28	99	— 0.0
FACIL	176	174	167,516	29,383	8	174	▼ -8.0
IFA	50	48.0	6,786,130	326,428	142	48.0	▼ -3.0
NINV	140	134	7,313,310	1,002,246	129	136	▼ -4.0
KPROJ	540	530	139,300	75,069	5	540	— 0.0
COAST	55	51	13,202,250	686,012	235	51	▼ -5.0
SECH	60	57	9,452,776	545,412	174	57	▼ -5.0
SGC	102	94	51,099	5,054	6	100	▲ 1.0
ARZAN	46.5	45.5	182,500	8,314	8	45.5	▼ -2.5
MARKAZ	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	106	— 0.0
KMEFIC	38.5	37.5	325,050	12,341	12	38.0	▼ -2.0
ALAMAN	59	55	3,211,373	178,934	84	55	▼ -5.0
ALOLA	61	57	6,719,318	395,664	128	59	▼ -3.0
ALMAL	27.5	25.5	18,274,921	48			

WHY IT'S A GOOD IDEA TO FILE TAXES EARLY IN THE US



BOULDER: Tax forms sit on a desk at the start of the tax season rush, inside the offices of tax preparation firm Infinite Tax Solutions. — AP

NEW YORK: Tax season looms over the US, and while they have until April 18 to file their returns, some may want to think about doing so sooner rather than later. Here are a few expert tips on why:

Identity theft

Filing early essentially beats criminals to the punch. Identity theft is a growing problem and one often tied to tax refund fraud, said Mark Steber, chief tax officer at Jackson Hewitt Tax Service. Once your return is filed with the IRS, the information - in particular your social security number - is locked and cannot be used again by anyone else. Steber suggests filing early to secure the information and your refund. It's one of the easiest forms of identity protection.

Faster returns

If you're due a tax refund, the sooner you file the sooner you'll get it. Lisa Greene-Lewis, CPA and TurboTax expert, said that last tax season close to three out of four tax filers received a tax refund, and the average refund was about \$2,800. That's a big

boost to many households. While some delays are expected this year for filers claiming the Earned Income Tax Credit or the Additional Child Tax Credit, the IRS still expects to issue more than nine out of 10 refunds in under three weeks from the day a return is received.

Better preparation

Filing early gives you time to more carefully prepare your returns. People who wait until the last minute may forget something in their rush, Greene-Lewis said. Starting earlier gives you more time to gather your paperwork and seek help if needed. You should have received most of your tax paperwork by Jan 31. If you owe money, filing early gives you more time to save up the cash, as your bill isn't due until April 18th. The bulk of taxpayers are not procrastinators, Greene-Lewis said. About 20 percent file in the last two weeks before the deadline, and another 10 to 12 percent pay later, but the majority file earlier. She pointed out that with all the improvements in tax filing software and support available, there are few excuses to delay. —AP

NEW CV SEARCH FEATURES FROM BAYT.COM HELP EMPLOYERS LOCATE IDEAL CANDIDATES

DUBAI: In line with its objective to connect thousands of employers in the Middle East and North Africa with the most qualified and competent job seekers, Bayt.com has enhanced its CV Search tool by adding more innovative search features. The Bayt.com CV Search tool allows businesses and organizations of all sizes, industries, and locations, to access and search the region's largest talent database, consisting of more than 26.7 million job seekers. But more than that, CV Search saves companies cost, time, and effort in the hiring process. Bayt.com recently unveiled several new features designed to make recruitment even easier:

Advanced Search Filters

Allow employers to use a combination of keywords and Boolean search operators ('and', 'or', and 'not') to retrieve highly relevant CVs that precisely match the qualifications they're looking for.

CV Freshness

Sorts results based on the most-recently updated CVs to ensure that employers can find candidates with up-to-date and relevant experience for their available position.

Related Keywords

Helps employers access a wider variety

of CVs by finding job titles and positions related to specific words and terms they're searching for.

"At Bayt.com, we strive to provide all the necessary tools and services for enterprises across the MENA region to fill their vacancies with the most relevant candidates and in the most cost-effective manner," said Suhail Masri, Vice President of Employer Solutions, Bayt.com. "To ensure that CV Search is as useful and effective as it can be and that employers are able to find the talent they require, we make it a point to engage with all employers to gain their feedback.

We continuously release new features and enhance our offerings based on the employers' specific needs and the challenges that the job market faces in our region. By adding these advanced features to the Bayt.com CV Search tool, we have made it much easier to connect more than 40,000 employers with the right type of talent." Having access to an advanced CV Search tool and a large job seeker database is an indispensable resource for employers, recruiters, and HR professionals who want to hire the best candidates. With CV Search, hundreds of thousands of employers are finding it easier to filter, sort through, save, compare, and contact the best candidates with minimum time and cost.



BURGAN BANK ANNOUNCES NAMES OF THE DAILY LUCKY WINNERS OF YAWMI ACCOUNT

KUWAIT: Burgan Bank announced yesterday the names of the lucky winners of its Yawmi account draw, each taking home a prize of KD 5,000. The lucky winners for the daily draws took home a cash-prize of KD 5,000 each, and they are:

1. KATABJIWALA SALMA SAIFUDDIN
2. ANAAM ABDULLAH NAJEM ABDULLAH
3. NAJAH JASSIM ALI AL ZAID
4. KHALID MEHMOOD ALI
5. KADER MOHAMED KASIM

In addition to the daily draw, Burgan Bank also offers a Quarterly Draw with more chances to win higher rewards, entitling one lucky customer to win KD 125,000 every three months. The Yawmi Account offers Daily and quarterly Draws, the Quarterly Draw requires customers to maintain a minimum amount of KD 500 in their account for 2 months prior to draw date. Additionally, every KD 10 in the account,

will entitle customers to one chance of winning. If the account balance is KD 500 and above, the account holder will be qualified for both the quarterly and daily draws.

Burgan Bank encourages everyone to open a Yawmi account and/or increase their deposit to maximize their chances to become a winner. The more customers deposit, the higher the chances they receive of winning. For more information on opening a Yawmi account or about the new quarterly draw, customers are urged to visit their nearest Burgan Bank branch and receive all the details, or simply call the bank's Call Center at 1804080 where customer service representatives will be delighted to assist with any questions on the Yawmi account or any of the bank's products and services. Customers can also log on to Burgan Bank's www.burgan.com for further information.

now... "Yawmi" account offers

KD 125,000 quarterly

and **KD 5,000** daily

"Yawmi" ... changed my day

1804080

www.burgan.com

driven by you



SAN DIEGO: An undocumented migrant from Mexico who did not give his name waits for work as a day laborer alongside a hardware store Saturday. — AP

MEXICO DAY LABORERS TOIL AWAY ON US FARMS, LEERY OF TRUMP REMARKS

'HE CAN COME AND HARVEST THE FRUITS AND VEGETABLES HIMSELF'

BRAWLEY: Many people are just getting to bed when Roger Medina wakes up at the stroke of midnight and, after a quick coffee, heads to the US-Mexico border as his wife and infant daughter sleep. Six hours later, having gone through US customs and immigration control and after an hour-long bus ride from the border, the 23-year-old is standing in a field, packaging lettuce at a California farm.

Medina is among the tens of thousands of laborers who legally cross into the US daily from Mexicali, just opposite California's Imperial Valley, to harvest the fruits and vegetables that fill America's supermarket shelves and eventually end up on Americans' dinner tables. And they have warily been watching as President Donald Trump rails against Mexican immigration, accusing migrants of crime and of taking Americans' jobs, even as he orders the building of a border wall to prevent, he says, undocumented migrants or terrorists from entering the country.

"If he wants to close the border, he can come and harvest the fruits and vegetables himself," scoffed Jose Luis Carrillo, 35, as he methodically chopped iceberg lettuce heads, placing them with lightning speed into plastic bags before they are loaded in crates on conveyor belts. "I don't think he realizes who we are or the amount of work it takes for the salad

he eats to reach his plate," he said with a scowl.

Undocumented

Almost 55,000 people cross into the US from Mexicali every day, the majority to work in the fields, according to US Customs and Border Patrol data. Nationwide, some 540,000 Mexicans work in the US farming and forestry sectors, according to the Pew Research Center, though it is unclear how many of them are undocumented.

In the Imperial Valley, one of the world's most productive agricultural regions, most of those who work the land are Mexicans with green cards or dual citizenship. They line up at the border before dawn every day but Sunday to cross over, and they make the long journey back home as the sun is setting. "No gringo could survive this," said Medina, who has been working the fields since the age of 17. His mother, Patricia, has worked in the fields for nearly two decades.

Linsey Dale, executive director of the Imperial Valley Farm Bureau, said it was undeniable that farms in the region couldn't survive without the migrant workers. "They are valued, and without them our growers can't produce," she said. "Some are leaving their homes at 2 in the morning and then wait in line at the border for two hours." While people like Medina and Carrillo say

they are not directly affected by Trump's rhetoric on immigration, they feel offended by his comments, and anger is growing within the community at the way Mexicans are being portrayed.

'Racist but no fool'

"He is a racist but he's no fool," said Antonio Hernandez, 50, hunched over as he chopped celery on a farm, music in Spanish blasting in the background. "He needs us to ensure that crops are grown and to honor his promises of boosting the economy." Carrillo, who has been toiling in the fields for 17 years, says he does it for his two children, in the hope they will have a brighter future.

His seven-year-old daughter wants to be a doctor and his four-year-old son wants to be a policeman. "I want them to do anything they want in life but this," he said, as he chopped lettuce heads with the precision of a samurai. Antonio Rico, a green-card holder who works in the US but lives in Mexicali, where housing is more affordable, said he has been working the fields day in and day out for 30 years and now earns \$11.50 an hour. "I would be paid a pittance in Mexico," said the 50-year-old. "If you think my salary is low here, imagine what it would be over there. I sleep three to four hours a day but it's okay," he added. "I'll rest when I die." — AFP

PHILIPPINE MINISTERS SAY MINE CLOSURE ORDER WILL COST JOBS

MANILA: The Philippine environment minister's move to close some two dozen mines sparked concern yesterday among two of her colleagues, who said it could hit the economy and employment. The mining industry-accused of illegal tree felling and polluting rivers has also questioned the order of Environment Secretary Gina Lopez.

The Philippines is the world's top supplier of nickel ore and the main exporter to China. The order has already caused a rise in global nickel prices and a fall in local mining shares. "I don't think (Lopez) did it arbitrarily but anything like this would need a response like more scientific and data-driven studies," said Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Ernesto Pernia. "Obviously it will have an effect on GDP and employment but we don't have the hard data," he told AFP.

Lopez, a staunch mining critic, said last week that 23 mines had been told to close after illegally encroaching on watersheds, leaking waste into rivers and destroying trees. A further five mines had been ordered to suspend operations. Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez, on his official Twitter account, also expressed misgivings, saying: "I am deeply concerned over the welfare of the 1.2 million people affected by the closure of the 23 PH (Philippine) mines. This will result in joblessness."

The closures would also hit local government tax revenues, he said. Lopez's order was the result of a government audit that started in July last year after President Rodrigo Duterte took office. Duterte, who enjoys wide popular support, has backed Lopez's order even as reports say the mining industry may challenge it in court. In a statement Sunday, Lopez said she would outdo the industry, declaring "give me... maximum of two years. I will prove that a green economy can create more jobs than mining could ever create."

She also said mine workers would not end up unemployed but would be found jobs in

mine rehabilitation and reforestation. "My issue is not about mining, my issue is about social justice," she said. Eufracia Taylor, Asia analyst at risk advisory company Verisk Maplecroft, warned that stricter oversight and the review of licences would likely prompt companies to delay further investment.

She also cited "mounting concerns over new environmental and social requirements, and their potential to drive up the costs of compliance" in the nickel industry. "The prospect of higher operational costs could well impact the commercial viability of some projects," the Singapore-based Taylor said. — AFP

AL TIJARI ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF AL NAJMA ACCOUNT

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

Rafiah AbdulLatif Al Asousi KD 7000/-
Heirs of Deceased Abdulla Mohammed Ali KD 7000/-

Sheikh Kalamuddin Kafiluddin KD 7000/-
Abdu Hussain Ahmed Abdulaal KD 7000/-
Mohammed Nour Hassan Malla KD 7000/-
Al Najma awards are now brighter and bigger than ever. With the revamped Al Najma account, all your dreams will be turned to reality. On top of offering the highest daily prize in Kuwait for KD 7,000, now our Mega prize draws got bigger to reach KD 250,000.

RENAULT AL BABTAIN THE OFFICIAL TRANSPORT PROVIDER FOR 'HALA FEBRUARY FESTIVAL 2017'

KUWAIT: Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al-Babtain Company (AABC), the authorized dealer of Renault vehicles in the State of Kuwait, in line with the values of its social responsibility, is delighted to announce its sponsorship of "Hala February 2017", Kuwait's biggest and most await-

ed annual festival, that kicked off on February 1st and will last for the whole month and shall witness a range of activities that include cultural, religious, entertainment and sport activities.

Under this sponsorship, Renault Al Babtain shall be participating in one of the main high-

lights of the festival, the Parade Day Ceremony, which marks the official opening of the carnival and includes a range of festive and exciting activities amid a fun-filled and united family atmosphere while attracting thousands of visitors.

This year's festival will be holding a lot of activities for all age groups including cultural religious, poetry nights and other heritage gatherings amidst respected scholars and public figures. Weekly draws will also be taking place at different malls in Kuwait where people will have the chance to win 15 amazing Renault Captur vehicles.

Also in the agenda, is one of the most popular and attractive events for the youth of Kuwait, A special tournament at Kuwait Riding Center which includes a number of sporting and riding activities for the athletes. A mini football tournament will also be held for children to take part in where there will be both local & international teams;

Renault Al Babtain is extremely pleased to be taking part in Hala February this year. It is Kuwait's most exciting event coinciding with Kuwait's National and Liberation day holidays, which brings together Kuwait's different communities and attracts visitors from across the region. Renault Al Babtain wishes the people of Kuwait a festive season and hope to continue and maintain people's trust and admiration that we have earned through the top-notch services and an exceptional, high quality and valued products.

Renault Al Babtain's effort extends beyond participation in major local festivities to include a host of customer-centric services and offers. The company's sponsorship with Hala February 2017 demonstrates its commitment towards social responsibility in which it operates and the dedication and care with which it participates and contributes to national events and activities as it strives to remain as one of the most globally admired and recognized automobile brands in Kuwait and the region.



BAYOUMI WINS KD 125K IN NBK'S AL JAWHARA DRAW

KUWAIT: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) announces the winner for January's KD 125,000 Al Jawhara monthly prize, Nabawi Bendary Bayoumi. The draw was conducted live on 88.8 FM under the supervision of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. Bayoumi is the fifth winner for the month of January, where 4 lucky customers each have won KD 5,000 in Al Jawhara's weekly draws. Since the start of the Al Jawhara program, more than 11,000 winners have already been announced. Al Jawhara continues to be the most popular prize-giving account in Kuwait and prizes are automatically credited to the winners' accounts the day after the draw.

NBK customers have chances to win KD 5,000 weekly, KD 125,000 monthly and a grand prize of KD 250,000 quarterly. Each KD 50 in a customer's account entitles them one entry into the draw, thus more money in an account means more chances into each draw. This feature enables Al Jawhara Account holders' to double their chances when maintaining their balance without withdrawing. Customers can easily calculate their number of chances in the draw by accessing a customized calculator on nbk.com. Al Jawhara account is available for both Kuwaitis and expats and can be opened at any of NBK's numerous branches around Kuwait, or safely and easily through NBK's website for existing customers.

GBK LAUNCHES 'SPEND MORE & WIN MORE' CAMPAIGN

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank announces the launch of its "Spend More & Win More" with Gulf Rewards campaign for its credit cardholders. The campaign will run from February 1, 2017 until February 28, 2017. All Gulf Bank credit cardholders will be automatically enrolled in this campaign. This new campaign is part of Gulf Rewards, the fastest and most rewarding points program in Kuwait. Gulf Rewards includes Gulf Points for free flights and hotels redemptions, as well as Gulf Bank "Entertainer," Kuwait's first geo-locator mobile application offering exclusive deals in Kuwait, UAE, and London.

There will be 30 lucky winners in total who will be announced in a raffle draw on March 15, 2017. Twenty-eight winners will receive 100,000 Gulf Points each, one person will receive 500,000 Gulf Points, and one person will win the grand prize of 1,000,000 Gulf Points! For each KD 10 spent locally, the cardholder will get one chance in the raffle draw, and for every KD 10 spent internationally, he or she will get three chances in the raffle draw. Gulf Bank offers enhanced customer experience when it comes to viewing or redeeming

Gulf Points, customers can log on to their online banking or Mobile Banking and view their points, redeem their Gulf Points instantly, online, for flights and hotel stays.

100,000 Gulf Points can be redeemed in a multitude of ways. For instance, winners can redeem their points for 5 roundtrip tickets to Dubai, or 3 roundtrip tickets to Beirut, or 2 roundtrip tickets to Europe, or even 1 roundtrip ticket to the USA! Or winners can go for free hotel stays in one of 300,000 hotels worldwide. 100,000 Gulf Points can do a lot, imagine what 1 Million Gulf Points can do!

The "Gulf Bank Entertainer" App offers savings of up to KD 10,000 annually. The "Gulf Bank Entertainer" App offers instant deals on your mobile phone which can be used at restaurants, hotels, spas, as well as on children's activities and interests at over 80 merchants in Kuwait, over 600 merchants in Dubai & Abu Dhabi, and over 200 merchants in London. If you use your Gulf Bank credit card to pay for any Entertainer, 'Buy One, Get One Free' offer, you will earn Gulf Points on each of those transactions and have more chances to win in the "Spend More & Win More" campaign.



12 DESIGNERS MAKE IT AS LEXUS DESIGN AWARD 2017 FINALISTS

DUBAI: Lexus International yesterday announced the 12 finalists for the Lexus Design Award 2017. First launched in 2013 to help stimulate the ideas necessary to build a better tomorrow, Lexus is celebrating the 5th anniversary of this international design competition that supports up-and-coming designers and creators worldwide. Lexus Design Award 2017 drew 1,152 entries from 63 countries under the theme of 'Yet'.

As the philosophical soul of Lexus innovation, 'Yet' is particularly appropriate for the 5th anniversary of this Lexus event. 'Yet' inspires us to find synergy effects by fusing seemingly incompatible goals - spacious yet aerodynamic design, for example. By harmonizing contradictory elements, 'Yet' opens up visionary frontiers of progressive design and technology to deliver amazing, new experiences to the world. In November 2016, a panel of world-renowned designers and creative mentors gathered to judge the entries. After rigorous evaluation and extensive discus-

sion, the judges chose 12 finalists.

According to Takayuki Yoshitsugu, Chief Representative, Middle East and North Africa Representative Office, Toyota Motor Corporation, "Each year, the Lexus Design Award inspires a group of talented creators to create some of the most brilliant, unique and creative concepts the world of design has ever seen. We are proud to be giving these gifted individuals the global platform to showcase their creativity and imagination."

Yoshitsugu added: "It has been fascinating to see this year's participants draw upon Lexus' 'Yet' philosophy, and simultaneously harmonize two or more contrasting yet striking aspects that make their designs stand out. Their themes mirror the new and emerging trends shaping the automotive industry, while also representing the approach Lexus continues to embrace. Yoshitsugu also thanked Lexus customers for their continued support in making the award a successful initiative year after year. Out of these

12 finalists, the following four were selected to prototype their designs, mentored by globally recognized creators.

To provide creative guidance to the above four finalists, Lexus Design Award 2017 has enlisted four renowned mentors: architects and interdisciplinary designers Neri & Hu, designer Max Lamb, designer/architect Elena Manferdini, and artist/architect Snarkitecture. All of them served as mentors to last year's finalists as well.

The four completed prototypes will be featured as part of the Lexus exhibition at this year's Milan Design Week, along with presentation boards introducing the other eight finalists' designs. The event will run from April 3rd (press and award presentation day) through April 9th. On April 3rd, the finalists will present their designs to the judges and international media. The judges will evaluate the four prototypes and announce the Grand Prix winner, marking the climax of the Lexus Design Award 2017 cycle.

MALABAR LAUNCHES SHOWROOM AT GRAND HYPER, SONAPUR, DUBAI

DUBAI: Malabar Gold & Diamonds' the leading jewellery retailer across the globe launched its 15th showroom in Dubai at Ground Floor, Grand Hyper, Sonapur on Thursday, 2nd February, 2017. The latest showroom of Malabar Gold & Diamonds was inaugurated by Shamsudheen Bin Mohideen - Chairman, Regency Group in the presence of Shamal Ahmed - Managing Director - International Operations, Malabar Gold & Diamonds, Abdul Salam KP - Group Executive Director, Malabar Group, management team members of Malabar Gold & Diamonds, other dignitaries, well-wishers & guests.

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

Apart from that, the new showroom will have the newly unveiled 'Heart to Heart' jewelry collection, a special collection of diamond and 18K gold jewelry from Malabar Gold & Diamonds on display & sale. 'Heart to Heart' jewelry collection showcases the exclusive heart shaped jewelry which symbolizes the best way to express your love. As the demand for heart shaped jewelry increases during this season of love, the jewelry retailer launched the exclusive collection to cater to the customer demand. This unique jewelry collection is a perfect gift to express true emotions to your loved ones. With prices starting from AED 590 to AED 2,750, there is something to fit everyone's budget.

Customers can also choose gifts to their loved ones from their branded jewelry segment that includes Era - Uncut Diamond Jewelry, Ethnix - Handcrafted Designer Jewelry, Mine - Diamonds Unlimited, Precia- Gem Jewelry and Divine - Indian Heritage Jewelry. The branded jewelry segment of Malabar Gold & Diamonds is renowned globally for their flawless craftsmanship and impeccable style.



MIMECAST ENHANCES CYBER RESILIENCE TO IMPROVE UPTIME FOR ORGANIZATIONS

DUBAI: Mimecast Limited (NASDAQ: MIME), a leading email and data security company, announced enhancements to its Mailbox Continuity offering, designed to strengthen customers' cyber resilience by automatically detecting a Microsoft(r) Exchange, Microsoft(r) Office 365(tm), or G Suite by Google Cloud email outage or disruption and enabling rapid mitigation. New Continuity Event Management features will reduce the time it takes for administrators to identify and respond to email disruptions by monitoring availability in real-time.

Unplanned email outages have significant impact to business operations. Outages can be the result of a variety of issues, such as: cloud service failure, power issues, hardware problems and network connectivity issues, among others.

According to recent research from Mimecast conducted by Vanson Bourne, 88% of respondents rated email availability as critical to their organization, with more than half (55%) rating it as mission critical.

Mimecast's new Continuity Event Management features monitor for high latency and failed deliveries, reducing the time it takes administrators to respond to mail flow issues. The system will alert administrators via SMS or an alternative email addresses and allows administrators to quickly respond to an incident. In the event of a disruption, Mimecast keeps email up and running for employees, enabling productivity, by emulating primary email systems, like Exchange and Office 365.

Mimecast's Outlook plug-in, mobile app and web portals provide ongoing



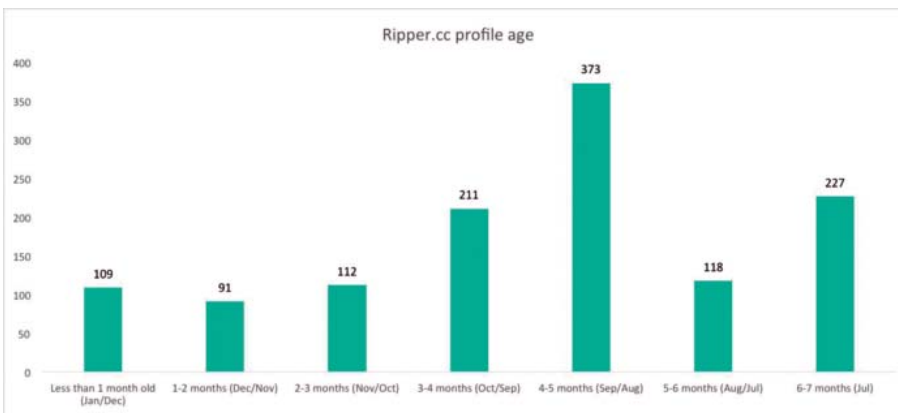
David Hood, cyber resilience expert at Mimecast

access to email while the customer's primary system access is being recovered independently. The new features will also include the ability to trigger SMS based alerts to all staff to let them know about an IT outage and share instructions as to what to do.

The recent Gartner report, Business Continuity Management Program Primer for 2017, published January 2017, stated: "While large enterprises, especially those in regulated industries, may be better equipped to address the new demands for organizational resilience, small and midsize businesses will face the same threats, but can be constrained in terms of budget and resources. Nevertheless, the need for a proper BCM program persists. Businesses that fail to create an effective BCM program could risk catastrophic

business disruptions, resulting in lost customer or citizen trust and customers switching to other providers."

"Downtime affects many organizations and our recent research found that more than four in ten respondents suffered moderate to extensive disruption when their organization had an email outage. Our own data shows that even in 2016, disruptions can be significant, with 11% of customer outages lasting over a day," said David Hood, cyber resilience expert at Mimecast. "As more organizations move email to the cloud, planning for disruptions is an essential part of risk management. Mimecast's new features allow organizations to strengthen their cyber resilience strategies by helping them quickly identify and respond to email disruptions from anywhere, and any device."



Average Age of ripper profiles on Ripper.cc

CYBER CRIMINALS NAME AND SHAME
1000 'RIPPERS' ON NEW WEBSITE

DUBAI: A service set up to protect cyber criminals from being 'ripped off' by their fellow criminal cohort has recently identified the 1,000th culprit that has failed to come up with the goods. Ripper.cc was formed in June 2016 and is the only known service to keep a database of known 'rippers' - those who rob others on the dark web and other criminal marketplaces. Digital Shadows has been tracking the service since its inception.

Rippers are a major problem for those participating in the cybercrime economy as they often sell fake social media credentials; invalid or used stolen credit cards and steal money by not delivering promised services and goods. Ripper CC is designed to address this issue and keeps profile information includes contact and identification information, as well as the details of the specific fraud the ripper is accused of. A recent innovation has even seen it develop a plug in for Jabber - the instant messaging tool of choice between cyber criminals - to alert the participant if they are talking to someone flagged on the Ripper database.

"Ripper.cc is another example of the industrialization of hacking and the growing professionalism of cybercrime. If such

a service becomes successful, it enables cyber criminals to significantly reduce the risks associated with rippers and the overall cybercrime economy can become more profitable allowing for further growth," said Michael Marriott, security researcher at Digital Shadows. Services like this help negate a problem for cyber criminals - that when using marketplaces profits decrease for 'legitimate' buyers and sellers, and slow down transactions making cyberattacks less lucrative.

What is intriguing for the security observer is that the people offering the Ripper.cc service have already developed Firefox and Chrome extensions to enable functionality to operate across as many forums and marketplaces as possible. In addition, they are looking to monetize the service in a manner that appears to mirror legitimate business models. Ripper.cc is another example of the industrialization of cybercrime. If such a service becomes successful, it enables cyber criminals to significantly reduce the risks associated with rippers and the overall cybercrime economy can become more profitable allowing for further growth and more attacks on legitimate businesses in the region.

SHANGHAI: Unlock them with an app, drop them off anywhere, and nip past lanes of stationary car traffic: the humble bicycle is seeing a revival in China as a new generation of start-ups help tackle urban congestion and pollution with fleets of brightly colored two wheelers. The bike-share concept has attracted huge venture capital as fledgling firms wrestle for market share. Such has been the success of this made-in-China business model, which is using smart phones to reignite the nation's passion for cycling, companies are hatching plans to export the idea worldwide.

"We are focused on how to make the small bicycle have a big impact," said Davis Wang, CEO of Mobike, which launched last April in Shanghai and already has several hundred thousand of its silver-and-orange "smart" bikes in 13 Chinese cities. Key rivals Mobike, Ofo and others are tapping into the sharing economy ethic behind Airbnb and ride-hailing apps such as Uber, and targeting China's 700 million mobile phone users, who increasingly use their smartphone for transactions.

Customers use the firm's app to release a bike's lock for rides costing as little as 1 yuan (15 cents) an hour. Bikes can be left anywhere for the next user. Mobike's app also shows where idle bikes are, while both companies capture rider data they say can help in traffic planning. "If we can persuade hundreds of thousands of people in every city to start to re-use bikes every day, then we can create a social impact for every city," Wang told AFP.

homes and public transit.

The inconvenience of travelling to a bus stop or metro station can be enough of a psychological barrier to push commuters toward taxis or car ownership. "In places where the subway does not extend, where it's difficult to change from one kind of transport to another, it's so easy to get where you want to go with Mobike," said Hu Hong, 29, who pedals to her Shanghai real-estate job.

Some Chinese cities started municipal bike-rental schemes years ago that allow users to pick up and drop off their wheels at des-

cities. It plans to add 10-15 million bikes this year, chief operating officer Zhang Yanqi told AFP. Mobike shares a time-lapse graphic that, using its GPS system, tracks customer rides over a recent day in Shanghai.

Eager to cash in, Chinese and foreign investors have handed Mobike and Ofo hundreds of millions of dollars. The ramp-up recalls the battle between China ride-hailing leader Didi Chuxing and Uber, into which both poured billions of dollars before joining forces last year with Didi in command. Didi is among Ofo's biggest investors,

"I think they're going to pull it off. A lot of businesses start this way: you have lightning in a bottle, a hot app, and you build a more sustainable business as you go," he explained.

Weaker entrants will drop out or be absorbed, Towson added. China's government singled out Mobike and Ofo last month-praising bike-sharing as a means of cutting emissions and traffic. Ofo launched in Singapore in recent weeks, and is now eyeing US and European markets. Mobike plans to enter Singapore within weeks.

Analysts said regulatory issues,



This picture taken on February 2, 2017 shows people riding Ofo-bicycles on the street in Shanghai. Unlock them with an app, drop them off anywhere, and nip past lanes of stationary car traffic: the humble bicycle is seeing a revival in China as a new generation of start-ups help tackle urban congestion and pollution with fleets of brightly colored two wheelers. —AFP

ignated stations, similar to hundreds of programs around the world. Today's start-ups have removed that shackle, and the convenience of being able to drop off anywhere means a new generation of riders are now ubiquitous in cities such as Shanghai and Beijing. Ofo, which launched in 2015 as a Peking University student project, claims 10 million users for its one million bright-yellow bikes in 33

while Mobike CEO Wang is a former Uber exec. Mobike's investors include Chinese Internet giant Tencent and Taiwan tech-manufacturing powerhouse Foxconn, a major Apple supplier.

Burning cash

Jeffrey Towson, a professor of investing at Peking University, said "economic reality is being suspended" as rivals burn cash to grab turf,

logistics, and lower use of mobile payments overseas could brake expansion. Lower winter ridership and losses from damage and theft also will weigh on bottom lines, they add, but insist the future appears bright. Both Mobike and Ofo loftily envision tens of millions of connected bikes worldwide. "It has only just begun," said Ofo's Zhang. "We hope to fulfil this vision in the next two to three years." — AFP

CSA AND PARTNER RELEASE
MUNICIPAL DRONE PROGRAM

DUBAI: The Cloud Security Alliance (CSA), the world's leading organization dedicated to defining and raising awareness of best practices to help ensure a secure cloud computing environment, together with Securing Smart Cities, a not-for-profit global initiative that aims to solve the existing and future cyber security problems of smart cities, announced the release of the Establishing a Safe and Secure Municipal Drone Program report. The new 28-page report, co-authored by the CSA Internet of Things (IoT) Working Group, provides guidance for the safe and secure creation and operation of a municipal drone program by analyzing the drone's role and impact on future metropolitan areas. One of the authors of report is Mohamad Amin Hasbini Senior Security Researcher, Kaspersky Lab.

Whether you are a fan of them or not, it is becoming increasingly evident that drones will in fact play an important and even critical role in the smart city environment," said Brian Russell, Co-author of the report, Chair of CSA's IoT Working Group. "Cities around the country are actively working to implement large-scale drone programs to support various functions ranging from medical, transportation and agricultural to emergency management and infrastructure protection. It is important that these drone systems be safe, stable, resilient and sustainable."

The Establishing a Safe and Secure Municipal Drone Program research report first identifies security threats caused by drones and then provides practical guidance on how drones can

be used as an effective cyber security tool in smart city monitoring. The report also details the impact drones could have on main municipal aspects such as national security and addresses the required measures needed to protect, monitor, respond to and recover from cyber security threats.

"Drones in the sky, drones in the sea, drones on land. But are we ready? The mass adoption of drones by cities implies that thousands of programmable connected mobile devices will not only operate in the streets, but also above and below them. From a security perspective, this guarantees potential disasters, should one of several drone systems or the software used to control them become compromised or manipulated. We're trying to raise these issues early to the public, which is why we've prepared these guidelines," said Mohamad Amin Hasbini, Securing Smart Cities board member.

Specific recommendations outlined in the 'Establishing a Safe and Secure Municipal Drone Program' research report for municipal drone system operational security include planning requirements, integrated system design, acquisition security, integration, testing and deployment. Smart cities also present the problem of securing environments where systems are patched and devices are controlled. Drones can provide cyber security benefits including identifying rogue signals, monitoring sensing operations, identifying jammed signals and support incident response for other connected systems.

Last-mile problem

Once emblematic of China's masses, bikes lost ground as economic growth and urban sprawl fuelled consumer demand for cars: the nation is now the world's largest automobile market. Cities gridlocked by traffic and deteriorating air quality have prompted both government and consumers to search for greener solutions. Industry evangelists say the new approach to bike sharing can help change that by solving the "first-mile/last-mile" problem that has long plagued urban planners: how to move commuters between their

NEW YORK: Adobe mined its data on mobile ads, social sentiment and consumer purchasing to see what trends are bubbling up ahead of today's Super Bowl pitting the Atlanta Falcons against the New England Patriots. Among the findings: exciting matchups engage fans more, and chicken wings are favored over pizza. Becky Tasker, managing analyst for Adobe, discussed the findings with The Associated Press recently. Questions and answers have been edited for clarity and length.

Q: Your data found that people watch fewer mobile ads in their entirety during bigger games like the Super Bowl, and even fewer at halftime. What does that show?

A: One of the really interesting things that we were able to pull on mobile data was mobile ad completion rate. People are actually watching the content the NFL is providing (instead of checking their phones). Furthermore, at halftime, it looks like the NFL is really selecting content

and artists that are interesting to its audience because people are more engaged. All of our data is telling us at the end of the day the NFL has to determine what's the best matchup, and what's the most engaging content to make sure their fan base remains engaged with them.

Q: You studied 165 million social media "engagements," such as likes, mentions and followers, on platforms like Facebook, Reddit and Twitter. What have you found?

A: Once we knew the Falcons and the Patriots were going to the Super Bowl we wanted to see how fans are reacting or who was talking about the Falcons and the Patriots in the social sphere. Even though the Patriots have more social mentions, the Falcons saw a larger jump in their mentions after they won last Sunday. The Falcons saw a bigger uptick in their social buzz and they're also sitting higher in terms of (positive) sentiment. It kind of tells you how our fan base is reacting to the matchup.

Q: Which players are the most discussed online?

A: Tom Brady (the Patriots quarterback) has garnered the most social mentions. The person in the second position right now is Matt Ryan, the Falcons quarterback. You kind of have a toss-up in social media and competition right now in terms of who they're talking about.

Q: What foods are trending in terms of sales and online searches?

A: We saw fans really stocking up on chicken wings for their Super Bowl party. Compared to the average weekend, we had (online) chicken wing sales increase by 40 percent while pizza only increased by 4 percent. We had all thought that pizza was one of the more popular items, but it really is the chicken wings people are going for. We took it a step further. We wanted to break down into favorite types of chicken wings or pizza. For chicken wings, the flavor is hot wings followed by buffalo wings. —AP

FCC LED BY TRUMP PICK STARTS TO REVERSE OBAMA POLICIES

NEW YORK: The Federal Communications Commission often took stances that angered the phone and cable industries under the Obama administration. It's already starting to lean the other way. The regulator of broadcast TV and internet services says cellphone companies that exempt some services from data caps are good for consumers after all.

That effectively cuts prices for these services, usually

ones owned by the phone company. But many consumer advocates say that ultimately hurts consumers by undermining other, independent services. The FCC, in the waning days of the Obama administration, had criticized AT&T for exempting its DirecTV Now live-TV streaming service from AT&T data caps on cellphones. The FCC had issued a report in January saying AT&T's and Verizon's practices, known as "zero rating," were likely anti-consumer, but that

did not require them to change what they were doing.

New FCC Chairman Ajit Pai, picked by President Donald Trump, said Friday that "free-data plans" are popular with consumers and improve competition. The agency's moves on Friday may mean that "zero rating" becomes more common. Other Obama-era policies are threatened. Pai has long maintained that the FCC under Chairman Thomas Wheeler had overstepped its bounds,

suggesting that he would steer the agency in a direction more favorable to big phone and cable companies. In a December speech, he said the FCC needed to take a "weed whacker" to what he considered unnecessary regulations that hold back investment and innovation. Rules in jeopardy include "net neutrality," which bars internet service providers from favoring some websites and apps over others. —AP

REPEAL OF HEALTH LAW COULD MEAN WOMEN PAY MORE FOR LESS

WASHINGTON: From a return to higher premiums based on gender, to gaps in coverage for birth control and breast pumps, experts say women could end up paying more for less if the Obama-era health care law is repealed. The 2010 law ended a common industry practice of charging women more than men for policies purchased directly from an insurer. It made maternity and newborn care a required benefit for individual health plans. And it set a list of preventive services to be provided at no extra cost to women, including birth control

and breast pumps used by nursing mothers. That preventive care requirement also applies to most employer plans.

Nearly half of pregnancies are unplanned, and prior to "Obamacare" some women would get pregnant only to learn that their insurance did not cover maternity and delivery, said Dr. John Meigs, a longtime family practitioner in the small town of Centerville, Alabama. "A lot of women were delaying their prenatal care until they could figure out what to do," said Meigs, president of the American Academy of

Family Physicians. Pregnancy "is one of those things that ought to be covered, because it happens." Democrats are keying in on the issue as they try to block or blunt the GOP drive to repeal the Affordable Care Act. "We don't want our country going backward when it comes to women's health," said Sen. Patty Murray, ranking Democrat on the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee.

Minimum levels

Women are widely seen as having benefited from the health law. In a recent AP-NORC poll, 44 percent said they thought women were better off as a result of the law, while only 24 percent said women were worse off. "The ACA set minimum levels of benefits that health plans have to cover and many are highly used, or exclusively used by women," said Usha Ranji, a health policy expert with the nonpartisan Kaiser Family Foundation. "Repeal and replace could take away that minimum level of benefits, which includes really commonly used services like contraception and maternity care."

Nashville-based singer Rachel Potter worries about what it could mean for her. She says she was lucky to be covered under the ACA when she unexpectedly became pregnant last year. Bleeding early on and other complications sent her to the doctor's office frequently. "We were able to monitor the pregnancy really closely," said Potter. "I was able to go to an amazing OB-GYN and I wouldn't have had access to that care if I had

not been on this insurance." Her son Jude was born in December and is already on the road with her. Potter's medical bill came to more than \$40,000, but she only paid about \$2,000 of that. She's now thinking about getting a long-lasting form of birth control while her insurer is still required to cover it at no charge to her. "I don't know the future of the health insurance situation," said Potter.

Five doctor groups representing about 500,000 clinicians on Thursday called for maintaining the ACA's women's benefits, along with other protections. The groups include family physicians, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the American College of Physicians, and the American Osteopathic Association. A Trump administration spokesman says speculation about components of an "Obamacare" replacement is premature. Recently introduced legislation that seeks a middle path on health care would keep some of the Obama-era requirements, but make others a state option.

Newborn care

The bill co-authored by Sen Susan Collins, R-Maine, would allow states to keep the ACA or substitute an alternative with fewer federal requirements. Under that approach, insurance plans in states that pick the alternative would not be required to cover maternity and newborn care. However, plans in all states would have to cover the ACA's preven-

tive benefits, including birth control. Collins staff said the draft bill is a starting point.

Some "Obamacare" critics argue that required benefits for women have driven up costs for others, for example young men who don't need maternity care. Other experts say the impact on premiums is modest compared to provisions of the law such as guaranteed coverage for people with medical problems and tighter limits on how much older adults can be charged. "Relative to other market changes, there is no indication that required coverage for women's health benefits was a primary driver of premium increases," said Caroline Pearson of the consulting firm Avalere Health. Ranji, of the Kaiser Foundation, says the ACA made significant improvements for women. Before the law:

- Pregnancy, a prior cesarean-section, a history of domestic violence, or problems with depression could be deemed a pre-existing condition, triggering restrictions on coverage or higher premiums.

- About one-third of plans on the individual insurance market charged women between the age of 25 and 40 premiums at least 30 percent higher than men of the same age.

- Only about 12 percent of plans available directly to individuals included maternity care.

About 20 percent of women of childbearing age covered by large employers spent some of their own money on birth control pills. Currently it's fewer than 4 percent. —AP



Rachel Potter holds her son, Jude at their home in Nashville, Tenn.—AP

SMOG CHOKES COAL ADDICTED POLAND

'WHAT SCARES ME THE MOST IS THE TOTAL LACK OF INFORMATION AND GOVERNMENT INACTION'

WARSAW: The soupy grey smog shrouding Polish cities this winter is one of the most visible symptoms of the EU member's addiction to coal, a deadly habit forcing many to stay indoors or don masks before venturing out. Professor Anna Doboszynska, a respected specialist with more than two decades of experience treating

several days of intense smog during a windless cold snap in January. As anti-smog masks sold out across Poland this week, Warsaw issued them to police officers on duty across the capital.

A study published last year by the European Environmental Agency (EEA) blamed air pollution-

among the world's top ten most polluted cities alongside Beijing or New Delhi.

'Government inaction'

Karolina, a Warsaw mother of three who did not wish to reveal her surname, says checking mobile phone apps for smog levels and

public when air pollution exceeds the EU-wide norm by a whopping 600 percent, according to Piotr Siegiej, an activist with anti-smog NGO "Alarm Smogowy." The EU limit for exposure to fine air pollutants known as PM 10 particles is 50 micrograms per cubic meter per day. "In Paris, authorities announce smog alerts and take action when pollution exceeds 80 micrograms per cubic meter per day," Siegiej told AFP.

"In Poland, the alert level is 300 micrograms," he added, slamming the measure as a "health hazard". Poland's environment ministry recently rejected a request by his group for smog alerts — when children, the ill and the elderly are advised to stay indoors — to be issued automatically when pollution levels spike to twice the EU-wide norm. Instead, the government, led by the right-wing Law and Justice (PiS) party, has vowed to ban low-quality coal and limit sales of the worst-polluting home furnaces over the next three months.

Renewable energy?

A report issued last month by the International Energy Agency identified air pollution as "one of the largest environmental health risks" facing Poles. It also urged Warsaw to rethink its dependence on coal and focus instead on developing cleaner energy sources. According to the IEA, coal accounted for 81 percent of Poland's electricity generation in 2015 and the heavily indebted coal-mining sector—one of Europe's largest—provided more than 100,000 politically sensitive jobs.

The right-wing government of Beata Szydlo, the daughter of a coalminer, has long insisted that plentiful domestic coal is key to Poland's energy security. Her administration has also set tough regulations on the installation of wind turbines, in effect blocking competition from the renewables sector, which in 2014 covered about 10 percent of national energy needs. The IEA concluded that "the future of renewable energy in Poland looks uncertain", dimming hope for cleaner air anytime soon. —AFP

wearing masks have become part of her family's daily routine. "My son's had pneumonia twice within the last 10 months and my daughter was sick all October and November. But, of course, nobody's blaming smog, even though we live in an area of Warsaw where there's chronic air pollution," she told AFP.

"What scares me the most is the total lack of information and government inaction. "There are days on end when the smog is so bad that school and kindergarten should be closed, but nothing is being done." Authorities in Poland only alert the



WARSAW: A car drives past by a house with a fuming chimney on the road on the outskirts of Poland's capital Warsaw. —AFP

lung disease, minces no words about the health risks it poses. "During periods of smog, more people with respiratory and circulatory illnesses actually die," she told AFP after examining an asthma patient wheezing heavily amid a spike in pollution in Warsaw.

"Children, pregnant women and the elderly are most at risk from smog, which damages the respiratory tract much in the same way smoking does. "A child playing outside in the smog is smoking cigarettes, it's the same thing," she told AFP. One Warsaw hospital reported a 50 percent spike in patients over

caused in large part by the burning of coal—for an estimated 50,000 premature deaths per year in the country of 38 million people. Seventy percent of Polish households burn low-quality coal or rubbish in old stoves for heat and antiquated coal-fired power plants generate nearly all of Poland's electricity, giving it some of the dirtiest air in the 28-member EU. The EEA also blames so-called "low-stack" emissions from old household stoves for countless cases of respiratory illness.

The AirVisuals website regularly lists Warsaw, Katowice or Krakow

IMPROMPTU ICE BATH HELPFUL FOR EXERCISE-INDUCED HEAT STROKE

NEW YORK: A tarp, volunteers and a lot of ice water can be used to rescue athletes and other people from heat stroke caused by exertion if a traditional ice bath is not available, according to a new study. Researchers call the approach the "TACO method" because rescuers lift the edges of the tarp to form a taco shape and then pour ice water into the tarp to cool down the person with heat stroke.

Traditional cold-water immersion should still remain the standard treatment for exertional heat stroke, but the researchers say their impromptu method can be used in remote areas or emergency situations. "Exertional heat stroke is potentially fatal," said senior author Brendon McDermott, of the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville. "It's probably not 100 percent preventable, but with effective recognition and treatment it's 100 percent survivable and TACO represents one method that can be used as effective treatment for that individual." Exertional heat stroke occurs when a person's body temperature rises through activities like

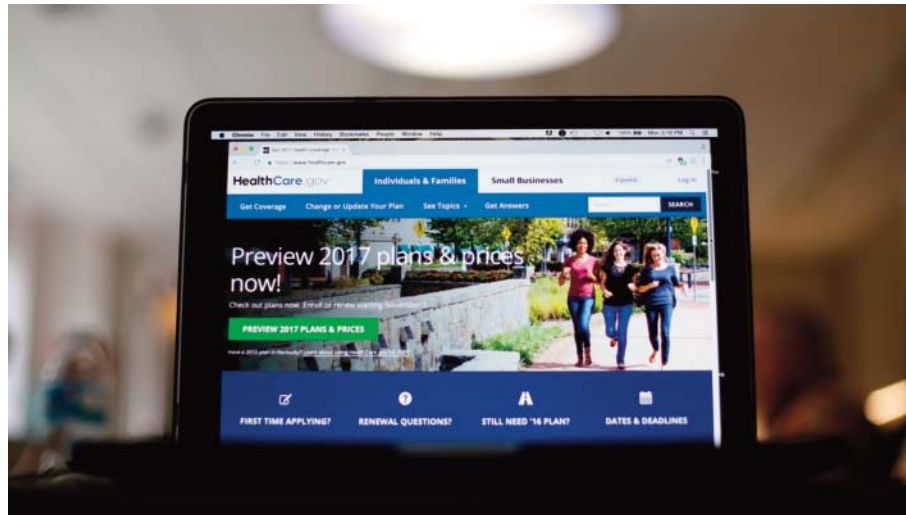
working in the sun or running on a hot day, McDermott told Reuters Health.

The body's cells begin to die when a person's temperature reaches 104 to 105 degrees Fahrenheit (about 40 degrees Celsius), he said. "Without effective treatment," he added, "you will have multiple organs that fail and that's what leads to the demise afterward." The gold-standard treatment is to immerse the patient in a bathtub with circulating ice water, but this can sometimes be a logistical challenge, the researchers say.

For the new study, the researchers recruited nine men and seven women in their 20s or early 30s to run or cycle until their body temperature reached about 102 degrees F (39 degrees C). They were trying to mimic industry settings or situations in athletics or in the military where people might get dangerously overheated, McDermott said. Participants were then instructed to lie down in a tarp for 15 minutes or until their body temperature reached about 101 degrees F (38.1 degrees C).

During one run of the experiment, volunteers lifted the edges of the tarp to form a taco shape. Then they poured about 40 gallons (151 liters) of water that was about 35 degrees F (2.1 degrees C) over each participant. In a second run of the experiment, the same participants were again told to lie down on the tarp but this time no cold water was poured on them.

Overall, body temperatures declined at a per-minute rate of about 0.25 degrees F (about 0.14 degrees C) with cold water in the tarp, compared to 0.07 degrees F (about 0.04 degrees C) when cold water wasn't used. The researchers conclude that the TACO method is an appropriate alternative when money, location and space make a proper ice bath impractical or unobtainable. McDermott said the TACO method could be used in schools and industrial situations. The study findings are reported in the November issue of the Journal of Athletic Training, which according to the National Association of Athletic trainers wasn't released until early January. —Reuters



WASHINGTON: In this Oct 24, 2016 file photo, the HealthCare.gov 2017 web site home page as seen in Washington. —AP

'OBAMACARE' SIGN-UPS SHOW SLIPPAGE IN TRUMP ERA

WASHINGTON: Facing higher premiums, less choice and a last-minute advertising pull-back, fewer people signed up for coverage this year through HealthCare.gov, according to data from a preliminary government report Friday. About 9.2 million people signed up through HealthCare.gov, the insurance marketplace serving most states, said the Health and Human Services department. That's about 500,000 fewer customers than had enrolled last year in those same 39 states, or slippage of around 5 percent.

The report doesn't include figures from 11 states that run their own health insurance markets - including California and New York - so the final national number will be higher. But the preliminary report is being closely watched, because President Donald Trump and the GOP-led Congress have vowed to repeal the Obama-era health law and replace it with a plan yet to emerge. Insurance markets created by former President Barack Obama's law provide subsidized private coverage for people who don't have access to health care through their jobs. Along with a Medicaid expansion aimed at low-income adults, the Affordable Care Act has helped millions get coverage, reducing the nation's uninsured rate to a historic low of about 9 percent.

But even before Trump's election victory, the ACA's markets were facing double-digit premium increases and a sharp drop in insurer participation. Although most customers receive taxpayer subsidies for their premiums, the increases averaged more than 20 percent nationally and much higher in several states. The night he was inaugurated, Trump signed an executive order directing his administration to provide relief from "Obamacare." That was interpreted as a signal that officials would waive the law's tax penalties meant to nudge uninsured people to sign up. Then last week the administration pulled back about \$5 million in ads that were part of a closing bid to woo the uninsured. Former Obama administration officials cried foul.

Trump administration spokesman Matt

Lloyd said Friday that "Obamacare has failed" and the new president looks forward to providing relief through "patient-centered solutions that will work for the American people." But independent analysts said the report also highlights the challenges that Trump and the GOP Congress will face trying to deliver on their promises without disrupting coverage for millions. That includes many people in states that Trump won in November, among them Florida (1.8 million); Texas (1.2 million); North Carolina (549,000); Georgia (494,000), and Pennsylvania (426,000). "While enrollment is down, this does not exactly paint a picture of a program collapsing," said Larry Levitt of the nonpartisan Kaiser Family Foundation.

Consulting firm

"Enrollment had been tracking on pace with last year, but sign-ups slowed down in the final weeks of open enrollment," said Caroline Pearson of the consulting firm Avalere Health. The controversy over unwinding the health care law may have contributed, she said. Nonetheless, Pearson said the demand for coverage "remains strong." She added, "Policymakers will need to consider how forthcoming changes will impact those currently purchasing coverage." Supporters of the health care law, trying to beat back or blunt efforts to repeal it, blamed the Trump administration for the lackluster number.

Ron Pollack, executive director of the advocacy group Families USA, said Trump had tried to "sabotage" enrollment. "Millions of consumers still got their insurance through the ACA," said Pollack. "The Republican rush to repeal the ACA without a replacement will do real harm to real people." A final, national enrollment report isn't due until next month. Some of the 11 state-run insurance markets, including California, have extended open enrollment through Saturday. Washington, DC, also runs its own insurance market. HealthCare.gov's sign-up season ended Jan 31. —AP

TAIWAN BANS EUTHANASIA OF STRAY ANIMALS

TAIPEI: Taiwan has banned euthanizing animals in shelters, which follows the tragic suicide last year of a vet burdened with the task of putting down animals. The law came into effect Saturday, two years after it was passed by parliament—a period meant to prepare shelters for the ban. But during the wait, animal lover Chien Chih-cheng took her own life with euthanasia drugs, reportedly upset at having to kill animals at the shelter she worked at. Reports at the time said Chien was called a "butcher" by activists. Her death sparked calls for authorities to improve conditions for animals and staff at shelters.

An animal welfare group, Life Conservationist Association, estimated more than 1.2 million animals not adopted from shelters have been put down since 1999. "Animal protection in Taiwan has moved towards a new milestone," the association's

executive director Ho Tsung-hsun said in a statement. But Taiwan's Council of Agriculture warned the ban would lead to a deterioration in the quality of shelters through a surging intake or it may discourage the capture of strays. "It's impossible for there to be no problems," said Wang Chung-shu, deputy chief of the animal husbandry department, according to The China Times.

He said Taiwan's ban was "quite idealized", adding that manpower was a problem because the vet's suicide had had a "chilling effect" on the sector, according to the report. Even before the legislation, the number of animals being put down had been steadily declining. Last year, 12.38 percent of the 64,276 animals in public shelters were euthanized, according to official statistics. That compares with 94,741 animals in shelters in 2014, of which 26.45 percent were put down. —AFP

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES IN YOUTH TIED TO SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT LATER IN LIFE

NEW YORK: People tend to become less involved with community work and social groups as they age, but those who were most active in their high school years are the most likely to stay engaged as they age, researchers say. Youth may be an important time for people to develop a sense of themselves as contributing to society, and this identity may last throughout life, the study team writes in *The Journals of Gerontology: Social Science*.

There are many benefits to being involved in a community, including more social relationships, greater cognitive engagement and better health, lead author Emily Greenfield, an associate professor of social work at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey, told Reuters Health. "Participation in voluntary groups is thought to be especially important for older adults, who are more likely to lack other major social roles (such as through paid work) and who might face economic and health barriers that jeopardize their inclusion within their communities," Greenfield said by email.

"Encouraging young people to become civically engaged is important not just for the here-and-now, but might have effects that last over decades to come," she said. To see whether early participation in voluntary groups is related to social engagement later in life, Greenfield and a colleague used data from a study that followed Wisconsin's 1957 high school graduates through the age of 72.

The study checked in with participants at ages 36, 54, 65, and 72 years and asked about their involvement with various community groups, such as church groups, labor unions, parent-teacher associations, sports teams, political groups and charity or welfare organi-

zations. The study team also used data from high school yearbooks to determine whether participants were involved in volunteer activities, clubs and sports earlier in life. On average, they found, participation in volunteer organizations and other groups was highest in midlife and declined when people reached their 60s and early 70s. Community participation increased most rapidly between ages 36 and 45 and continued increasing until about age 54. At 54, participation began to decline and the lowest levels of community participation were among 72-year-olds.

People who were involved in extracurricular activities in high school were more likely to stay involved throughout their lives, particularly if they had done four or more activities when they were young. They also had less of a decline in participation between middle age and older age. "Communities that need volunteers often do not consider the value that older adults offer," said Dawn Carr, an assistant professor of sociology at Florida State University who studies aging populations and community participation.

The study's measurements may not fully capture older people's involvement, as they emphasized how many groups people were involved in, while older adults may tend to narrow their focus, said Carr, who was not involved in the study. "Previous research suggests that we engage in fewer organizations but contribute more time to the organizations in which we are engaged," Carr told Reuters Health by email. Organizations or communities that give older people a chance to be valuable and learn new skills are more likely to keep them engaged, Carr noted. —Reuters



GARDANNE, Bouches-du-Rhone, France: French Green Party Europe-Ecologie-Les Verts (EELV) candidate for the 2017 presidential election Yannick Jadot (second left) attends a protest against the biomass-fuelled power station of the newly independent branch of the German group EON, Uniper, in Gardanne yesterday. —AFP

SPAIN'S BALEARIC ISLANDS HIT BY DEADLY OLIVE TREE BACTERIA

MADRID: A deadly bacteria that infected thousands of olive trees in Italy has been detected in Spain's Balearic Islands where authorities are racing to contain it, a regional government official said Friday. Mateu Ginard, head of the regional government's agriculture department, told AFP authorities had decided to declare the entire archipelago a zone affected by *Xylella fastidiosa* after olive, cherry, almond trees and other plants were found to be contaminated. "The number of positive results we have is very high," he said, adding exports of live plants had been banned in order to contain any possible spread of the bacteria to the mainland.

Xylella fastidiosa, which emerged in 2013 in southern Italy and has also been detected

in France, had until recently not been reported in Spain, the world's top producer of olive oil. The bacteria was first detected in October last year during a routine check in a garden centre in the island of Majorca, in a cherry tree. Further checks found more cherry trees affected, and authorities decided to implement a so-called eradication protocol, destroying all plants affected as well as those in a 100-metre radius that could potentially be infected.

Altogether, more than 1,900 were destroyed. But Ginard said further tests done in Majorca as well as Ibiza, another island in the archipelago, came back positive, indicating the bacteria was more widespread than initially believed. So far, authorities in the archipelago have detected two

strains of the bacteria that are different to the more virulent version that contaminated an estimated one million olive trees in Italy.

But Ginard said the strain that had infected olive trees in the Balearic Islands had yet to be determined. All were detected in plants in the wild "outside cultivations," he told AFP, and so far farmers have been spared any contamination. Ginard said that authorities had decided to destroy each and every plant contaminated by the bacteria, which causes some specimens to become stunted, leafless and ultimately lifeless. But for now, they will forego the eradication protocol as this would imply wiping out all the specimens around the diseased plant, which would be a "disaster" for the archipelago's environment, he added. —AFP



ZIMBABWE: In this photo, a man holds a rare frog that hasn't been seen in decades, in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. —AP

THE CAVE SQUEAKER RETURNS: RARE FROG SEEN AFTER DECADES

HARARE, Zimbabwe: The cave squeaker is back. Researchers in Zimbabwe say they have found a rare frog that hasn't been seen in decades. The *Artholeptis troglodytes*, also known as the "cave squeaker" because of its preferred habitat, was discovered in 1962 but there were no reported sightings of the elusive amphibian after that. An international "red list" of threatened species tagged them as critically endangered and possibly extinct. Robert Hopkins, a researcher at the natural history museum in Bulawayo city, said his team had found four specimens of the frog in its known habitat of Chimanimani, a mountainous area in the east.

The team found the first male specimen on Dec. 3 after following an animal call that they had not heard before, Hopkins said. They then discovered another two males and a female. Hopkins said he been looking for the cave

squeaker for eight years. "I was not with my team when they were found. I was at the base. I can no longer climb the mountains as I am 75," Hopkins said. Researchers plan to breed more frogs with the ones taken from their habitat and then reintroduce them to the mountain summit. The frog is tiny and light brown with dark spots.

Now authorities fear for the frogs' security, especially from "the scientific world" whose huge interest could result in the frog being captured and illegally exported. Hopkins said 16 specimens are on display at various museums, including the British Museum. "We are expecting an influx of scientists looking for it. We will do everything in our power to protect and conserve the frog," said Caroline Washaya-Moyo, spokeswoman for the Zimbabwe National Parks and Wildlife Management Authority. She said a park management plan will be devised to protect the cave squeaker. —AP

THAI COPS SEIZE RECORD THREE TONS OF PANGOLIN SCALES

BANGKOK: Thai customs police on Thursday unveiled a massive three-ton cache of seized pangolin scales intended for Asia's lucrative wildlife markets, where feverish demand for the "scaly anteater" has turned it into the most trafficked mammal on earth. The shy pangolin's brown scales are made of nothing more than keratin—the same substance as fingernails—but are highly prized in Vietnam and China where they are misleadingly touted as bearing medicinal properties. Soaring demand for the products has seen an estimated one million pangolins plucked from Asian and African forests over the past decade, shunting them onto the list of species at the highest risk of extinction.

On Thursday, Thai police revealed nearly three tonnes of pangolin scales, packed into white bags, that had been seized from two air cargo hauls at Bangkok's main airport. The contraband was shipped from the Congo, smuggled through Turkey and eventually bound for Laos—a

key transit hub for regional trafficking syndicates. "This is the biggest lot (of pangolin scales) that we have seized," Police Major General Worapong Thongpaiboon, acting commander of the Natural Resources and Environment Crime Division, told AFP.

Thailand's CITES director said the final destination was almost certainly intended to be China or Vietnam, where the price of pangolin scales runs around \$1,700 per kilo. "After (customers) clean and dry the scales they fry and mix them with traditional medicine that they believe cure cancer and enhance sexual performance," Somkiat Soontonpitakkool told AFP. There is no peer-reviewed scientific evidence to support any medicinal properties for pangolin scales. Steve Galster, executive director of the anti-trafficking group Freeland, applauded the police's work but stressed that it fit a familiar pattern: the products were confiscated but the criminals behind the trade remain at large. —AFP



BANGKOK: This handout from the Thai Customs Department taken and released on February 2, 2017 shows pangolin scales seized by Thai customs officials in Bangkok. —AFP

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Kuwait Times
248 33 199

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Ambassador of the People's Republic of China Wang Di and Rear Admiral Bai Yaoping the visiting commanding officer of the 24th escorting task group of the Chinese navy, hosted a reception onboard the Chinese Harbin ship that is docked at Shuwaikh Port. Senior officials, diplomats and media persons attended the event. — Photos by Joseph Shagra

RENOWNED QUIZ MASTER ANTHONY STARTS WITH YOUTH ICON - 2017

There were several hundreds of anxiety gripped youngsters, teachers and general public to witness the quiz and extempore to choose the Youth Icon - 2017. This year's event, that had considerable attention of more than 225 teams from different places, was anchored by the renowned quiz master Pani J Anthony who recalled this event a memorable one amidst his previous shows including in Qatar held in connection with the UN International Day.

This event featured several rounds of competition covering a wide range of topics such as audio/video, memory events, rapid rounds, pictures, world history, sports, literature, proverbs, basic science, politics, UNO, current affairs and miscellaneous.

The top five scorers in the prelims got the chance of occupying the hot seats on the dais are Sneha Medhi and

Srivatsan (Sankara School), Abhijith and Avanish (PSBB Millennium School), Niranjana and Gaurav Jain (Mahatma CBSE School), Keertivasan and Gautham (RMK Senior Secondary School) and Udbav and Manish (PSBB Millennium). The 2 teams who stole the show are Sankara Vidhyalaya's Sneha and Srivatsan and PSBB Millennium's Avanish and Abhijith.

The rapid round gave a little tense, but the quiz master kept putting their spirits up. The two teams did excellent, answered several difficult questions correctly and won the thunderous applause from the audience and guests. Yet, the presence of mind in the tie breaker made Sneha and Srivatsan catch the driver's seat. "Who was the chairman of the drafting committee of Indian Constitution?" quiz master tossed up this question in the tie breaker. Recollecting the memo-

ries, Sneha and Srivatsan said Dr B R Ambedkar. This correct answer enabled them become the winner. Avanish, who battled in a war of knowledge, by way of a National Quiz, conducted by the renowned quiz master Pani J Anthony, and then did an excellent performance in the extempore on "Who according to you is a Youth Icon?", kissed the title, Youth Icon of the Year 2017. Quiz Master Pani J Anthony and Space Kidz India's Vice President Subramaniam were the panel of judges in the extempore.

Dr Mariazeena Johnson, Prochancellor of Sathyabama University, Michael J Gorbakov, Vice Consul of Consulate General of Russia, Actor and producer Arya, 'Naturals' co-founder C. K. Kumaravel, Dr Srirathya Kesan motivated the winners.

Anthony is an internationally renowned quiz master, MUN speaker and UN honored writer and award winning social worker. The 72 hours non-stop, largest motivational program he involved in has entered in the Guinness Book of World Records.

Space Kidz India, an organization creating international experiential learning for students in the field of science, technology, art and culture. It sent the 1st Ambassadors to the NASA Space Camps, the Euro Space Center and recently announced the ambassador for Yuri Gagarin Space Center - Star City, Moscow for the "Cosmonaut Training Program."



India International School Mangaf recently paid an educational visit to Gulf Bank's branch in Riqqa, where they were received by the Branch Manager Saud Abdullah and staff.





International Women Group (IWG) members honor Pastor Emmanuel Benjamin Ghareeb. — Photos by Joseph Shagra



Narjis Al-Shatti (center) poses with fellow IWG members.



Huda Al-Kandari

IWG CELEBRATES KUWAIT NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

By Faten Omar

The International Women Group (IWG) celebrated Kuwait's 56th National Day and 26th Liberation Day yesterday at Crowne Plaza Hotel. "This year we decided to highlight that Kuwait belongs to all people of different religions," said Narjis Al-Shatti, IWG member.

Shatti added "We decided to review the role of the Church in the history of Kuwait, since the first church was built during the Sheikh Mubarak Al-Kabeer era," Shatti added, referring to Kuwait's seventh ruler who ruled from 1896 to 1915. "And now we have managed to portray this picture of Kuwait to all countries through the eyes of ambassadors' wives."

Kuwait nowadays has around nine churches that serve Kuwait's Christian community. "Kuwait's first Christian Pastor Emmanuel Benjamin Ghareeb who runs the National Evangelical Church of Kuwait sponsored the event (yesterday)," Shatti added.

At the event, Huda Al-Kandari, heritage sites designer, made the traditional Kuwaiti bride corner where IWG members enjoyed wearing traditional Kuwaiti costumes. "The thing that every one notices is the golden jewelry which costs up to KD 6,000," she said. "It is a traditional headwear called 'Hamah' made of gold. It is often worn with a necklace called 'Al-Mrthesh' which weighs around half a kilogram," she explained.

"I incorporated elements from the traditional Kuwaiti wedding while designing the corner including a colorful traditional Kuwaiti wedding dress," she added. "In addition, the corner includes drums and fresh 'Mashmom' which is a kind of plant that has strong and great smell and was used to decorate the bride's hair."

The event closed with a national song as the audience joined the performers to celebrate Kuwait's National Day with dancing. IWG honored Ghareeb for his great work that he gave in service of Kuwait and Christians. IWG is a prestigious group of women that consists of wives of ambassadors, diplomats and other dignitaries from in Kuwait's female community.



GUST'S GLOBAL STUDIES CENTER ORGANIZES SEMINAR ON ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AND FOREST GOVERNANCE



Gulf University for Science and Technology's (GUST) Global Studies Center (GSC) organized this week a seminar led by Dr Poshendra Satyal, entitled "Environmental Justice and Forest Governance". The lecture, which was open to the public, took place on the university campus in West Mishref. The focus of the event is to consider ways in which the ideas of justice are applied in the national context of policy design and practice of forest management.

Head of the Global Studies Center at GUST, Dr Martin Rosenstock, said, "The idea of justice in environment and development policies can be considered across scales (i.e. local-national-global) and time (intra- and inter-generationally). It can also be assessed through three dimensions: distributive justice (who gets what and who has access to policies), procedural justice (who is included or excluded from the policy-making process), and issues of recognition (whether everyone feels valued or not). Although today's lecture focused on Nepal, these ideas can all easily be translated into the everyday lives we live, particularly in relation to various policy-making bodies we interact with."

During the seminar, Dr Satyal presented a detailed case study of Nepal's forestry sector

policies and processes, and examined how the ideas of justice are applied in the domain of forest governance. The discussion continued with treatment of the subject of opportunities and challenges in Nepal with regards to addressing issues of justice and rights, through community forestry. The topic of REDD+, (which is a mechanism whose objective is to mitigate climate change through reducing net emissions of greenhouse gases via enhanced forest management in developing countries) was also introduced and explained, which was then followed by a Q&A session.

Dr Satyal, guest speaker at the latest GSC event, said, "Despite some challenges and national context of poor public sector management, Nepal has become a world leader in community forestry. Nepal's example of forest management offers an empirically rich material, which should be of interest to a wide range of interdisciplinary scholars, policy-makers and practitioners worldwide."

Dr Satyal has fifteen years of experience in interdisciplinary research, teaching, consultancy and project management in environment and development sector, received his PhD from the Open University in the UK in Geography, and also

holds a Master's Degree in Environment and Development from the University of Cambridge.

The GSC regularly holds seminars with experts in various fields of study. The center was founded in 2015 in partnership with the National University of Singapore, and aims to conduct cutting-edge research on cross-national political, economic, social, cultural, and environmental issues of critical importance, as well as share research output and information regionally and globally. It seeks to foster public understanding of global issues and support the policy-making processes of concerned states.

Previous events hosted by the GSC include a discussion to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the liberation of Kuwait from Iraqi occupation, sponsored by the US Embassy in Kuwait, a lecture by Dr Peter Sluglett, an expert on Middle Eastern history and Director of the Middle East Institute at NUS, entitled: "An Improvement on Colonialism? The 'A' Mandates and their Legacy in the Middle East", and another by Dr Daniel Brumberg, the Kuwait Program Visiting Professor at the Paris School of International Affairs, on US-Arab Relations in a Time of Crisis.

MILLENNIUM HOTEL AND CONVENTION CENTRE KUWAIT WINS FOUR QUALITY AWARDS AT HORECA KUWAIT 2017

In recognition of its excellence and adherence to the highest of hospitality services standard, Millennium Hotel and Convention Centre Kuwait - for two consecutive years - wins 4 quality awards at the HORECA Kuwait 2017 exhibition. HORECA awarded the performance of the hotel's professional and experienced chefs who are part of Millennium's reputed Food and Beverage Department, and that is for their unconventional and unique plates and servings.

Commenting on this special occasion, Dani Saleh, Area General Manager of Millennium and Copthorne Hotels Kuwait, said: "HORECA Kuwait is the most antici-

pated culinary art show and hospitality exhibition in the country, hosting a large number of international chefs and attracting thousands of foodies each year. We are always keen on participating in hospitality events of such caliber for their prominence in recognizing the best in the industry. We are utterly proud to receive four awards this year to add to our trophy case. I would like to congratulate the heads of Millennium Hotel's Food and Beverage Department and their talented team of chefs for their wonderful performance."



ANIMAL
PLANET HD

00:50 Gator Boys
01:45 Man, Cheetah, Wild
02:40 O'Shea's Big Adventure
06:02 Man, Cheetah, Wild
06:49 River Monsters (Best Of Series 1-5)
07:36 Gorilla School
08:00 Gorilla School
08:25 Groomer Has It
09:15 Deadliest Snakes Of South Africa
10:10 Man, Cheetah, Wild
11:05 Tanked
12:00 Groomer Has It
12:55 Bondi Vet
13:50 Deadliest Snakes Of South Africa
14:45 Gator Boys
15:40 Man, Cheetah, Wild
16:35 Tanked
17:30 Swimming With Monsters: Steve Backshall
18:25 Dr. Jeff: Rocky Mountain Vet
19:20 Dr. Dee: Alaska Vet
20:15 Tanked
21:10 Great Animal Escapes
22:05 Dr. Jeff: Rocky Mountain Vet
23:00 Dr. Dee: Alaska Vet
23:55 Gator Boys

crime & investigation
network

00:00 Britain's Darkest Taboos
01:00 The Haunting Of...
02:00 Stalked By A Ghost
03:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
04:00 Britain's Darkest Taboos
05:00 The Haunting Of...
06:00 Stalked By A Ghost
07:00 The First 48
08:00 Evil Up Close
09:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
10:00 It Takes A Killer
11:00 Killers
12:00 Killers: Behind The Myth
13:00 Evil Up Close
14:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
15:00 It Takes A Killer
16:00 It Takes A Killer
17:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
18:00 The First 48
19:00 The First 48
20:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
21:00 Evil Up Close
22:00 Homicide Hunter

Discovery
Family

00:05 Destroyed In Seconds
00:30 Nextworld
01:20 Nextworld
02:10 Storm Chasers
03:00 Storm Chasers
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 Kids vs Film
07:25 Dick 'n' Dom Go Wild
07:50 Too Cute! Pint-Sized
08:40 How It's Made
09:00 How It's Made
09:30 Nextworld
10:20 Mythbusters
11:10 Too Cute! Pint-Sized
12:00 Ultimate Survival
12:50 How It's Made
13:15 How It's Made
13:40 Dirty Jobs
14:30 Kids vs Film

19:20 Boy To Man
20:10 Auction Hunters
21:00 Gold Rush
21:50 Everest Rescue
22:40 Killing Fields: Burden Of Proof
23:30 Fast N' Loud

EHD

06:00 Danger Mouse
06:25 Gravity Falls
06:50 Atomic Puppet
07:15 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
07:25 Counterfeit Cat
07:40 Supa Strikas
08:10 K.C. Undercover
08:35 Star Wars Freemaker Adventures
09:00 Lab Rats: Bionic Island
09:50 Danger Mouse
10:20 Supa Strikas
11:10 Counterfeit Cat
11:35 Pair Of Kings
12:30 Future-Worm!
12:55 Lab Rats
13:45 Atomic Puppet
14:10 Disney Mickey Mouse
14:15 Marvel's Avengers: Ultron Revolution
14:40 Supa Strikas
15:05 Lab Rats
15:30 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
15:55 Danger Mouse
16:25 K.C. Undercover

HHD
HISTORY

00:20 Time Team
01:10 Pawn Stars
01:35 Storage Wars: Best Of
02:00 Storage Wars
03:15 American Pickers
04:05 Pawn Stars
04:30 Pawn Stars
05:00 Mountain Men
06:00 Ice Road Truckers
06:50 Shipping Wars
07:15 Shipping Wars
07:40 Counting Cars
08:05 Counting Cars
08:30 Pawn Stars
08:55 Pawn Stars
09:20 Storage Wars
09:45 Storage Wars
10:10 American Pickers
11:00 Billion Dollar Wreck
11:50 Time Team
12:40 Swamp People
13:30 Ax Men
14:20 Mountain Men
15:10 Shipping Wars
15:35 Shipping Wars
16:00 Counting Cars
16:50 Pawn Stars
17:15 Pawn Stars
17:40 Storage Wars
18:05 Storage Wars
18:30 Pawn Stars
18:55 Storage Wars: Best Of
19:20 Ax Men
20:10 American Pickers
21:00 The Curse Of Oak Island
21:50 Hunting Hitler
22:40 Gold Hunters: Legend Of The Superstition...
23:30 American Pickers

food
network

00:00 Private Chef
01:00 Patricia Heaton Parties

Disney
CHANNEL HD

00:10 Hank Zipzer
00:35 Binny And The Ghost
01:00 Violetta
01:45 The Hive
01:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
02:40 Hank Zipzer
03:05 Binny And The Ghost
03:30 Violetta
04:15 The Hive
04:20 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
05:10 Hank Zipzer
05:35 Binny And The Ghost
06:00 Violetta
06:45 The Hive
06:50 The 7D
07:00 Jessie
07:25 Jessie
07:50 Rolling To The Ronks
08:15 Tsum Tsum Shorts
08:20 Elena Of Avalor
08:45 Bunk'd
09:10 Stuck In The Middle
09:35 Wizards Of Waverly Place
10:25 A.N.T. Farm
11:15 Good Luck Charlie
12:05 Shake It Up
12:55 Disney Mickey Mouse
13:00 Welcome To The Ronks
13:15 Gravity Falls
13:40 Hank Zipzer
14:05 Star Darlings
14:10 Austin & Ally
14:35 Jessie
15:00 Bunk'd
15:25 Kirby Buckets
15:50 Rolling To The Ronks
16:15 Sunny Bunnies
16:20 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
16:45 Elena Of Avalor
17:10 Stuck In The Middle
17:35 Descendants Wicked World
17:40 Girl Meets World
18:05 Bizaardvark
18:30 Liv And Maddie
18:55 Best Friends Whenever
19:20 Disney Mickey Mouse
19:25 The Next Step
19:50 Austin & Ally
20:15 Star Darlings
20:20 Shake It Up
20:45 Backstage
21:10 Liv And Maddie
21:35 Cracked
21:40 The Next Step
22:05 Best Friends Whenever
22:30 Jessie
22:55 Tsum Tsum Shorts
23:00 Kirby Buckets
23:25 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch

Disney
JUNIOR

00:20 Henry Hugglemonster
00:35 The Hive
00:45 Loopdidoo
01:00 Henry Hugglemonster
01:15 Calimero
01:30 Art Attack
01:50 Zou
02:05 Loopdidoo
02:20 Henry Hugglemonster
02:35 Calimero
02:50 Zou
03:05 Art Attack
03:30 The Hive
03:40 Loopdidoo
03:55 Henry Hugglemonster
04:10 Art Attack
04:35 Loopdidoo



A PERFECT DAY ON OSN MOVIES FESTIVAL

20:00 PJ Masks
20:30 PJ Masks
21:00 Unburgaleivable
21:05 Goldie & Bear
21:35 Miles From Tomorrow

Disney
XD

06:00 Supa Strikas
06:25 Supa Strikas
06:50 Marvel's Avengers: Ultron Revolution
07:15 Future-Worm!
07:40 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
08:10 Mighty Med
08:35 Lab Rats Elite Force
09:00 Lab Rats Elite Force
09:25 K.C. Undercover
09:50 K.C. Undercover
10:20 Supa Strikas
10:45 Supa Strikas
11:10 Gamer's Guide To Pretty

08:25 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
08:50 I Almost Got Away With It
09:40 On The Case With Paula Zahn
10:30 Love The Way You Lie
11:20 Nightmare Next Door
12:10 Killer Confessions
13:00 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
13:25 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
13:50 I Almost Got Away With It
14:40 On The Case With Paula Zahn
15:30 Heartbreakers
16:20 Nightmare Next Door
17:10 Evil Online
18:00 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
18:50 I Almost Got Away With It
19:40 On The Case With Paula Zahn
20:30 Blood Relatives
21:20 Nightmare Next Door
22:10 Deadline: Crime With Tamron Hall
23:00 Obsession: Dark Desires
23:50 Poisoned Passions

itv
CHOICE HD

00:10 The Chase
01:00 Emmerdale
01:30 Emmerdale
02:00 Coronation Street
02:30 Couples Come Dine With Me
03:25 Don't Tell The Bride
04:25 Tonight At The London Palladium
05:15 Code Of A Killer
06:10 The Chase
07:05 Couples Come Dine With Me
08:00 Don't Tell The Bride
09:00 Tonight At The London Palladium
10:00 Code Of A Killer
10:55 The Chase
11:50 Couples Come Dine With Me
12:45 Emmerdale
13:15 Coronation Street
13:45 Coronation Street
14:15 The Chase
15:10 Couples Come Dine With Me
16:00 Vera
17:50 Grantchester
18:45 Emmerdale
19:15 Coronation Street
19:45 Coronation Street
20:10 Couples Come Dine With Me
21:00 Vera
22:50 Emmerdale

NAT GEO
people HD

00:10 John Torode's Malaysian Adventure
00:35 Lee Chan's World Food Tour
01:00 My Sri Lanka With Peter Kuruvita
01:25 Carnival Eats
02:15 Home Strange Home
03:05 Confucius Was A Foodie
03:55 The Wine Show
04:45 Eat Street
05:10 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia
05:35 Poh & Co
06:00 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
06:50 My Sri Lanka With Peter Kuruvita
07:15 Carnival Eats
07:40 Carnival Eats
08:05 Home Strange Home
08:55 Confucius Was A Foodie
09:45 The Wine Show
10:35 Eat Street
11:00 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia
11:25 Poh & Co
11:50 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
12:40 My Sri Lanka With Peter Kuruvita
13:05 Carnival Eats
14:00 Chocolate Covered
14:55 Home Strange Home
15:50 The Wine Show
16:45 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia
17:40 Poh & Co
18:10 Chocolate Covered
18:35 Chocolate Covered
19:05 Home Strange Home
20:00 The Wine Show
20:50 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia
21:15 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia
21:40 Poh & Co
22:05 Chocolate Covered
22:55 My Sri Lanka With Peter Kuruvita
23:20 Carnival Eats

Turner
08:25 Nazi Underworld
09:20 Big, Bigger, Biggest
10:15 The Border
11:10 Highway Thru Hell
12:05 Dirty Rotten Survival
13:00 Nazi Underworld
14:00 Pope vs Hitler
16:00 The Border
17:00 Highway Thru Hell
18:00 Dirty Rotten Survival
19:00 Mega Factories: Supercars
20:00 The Border
20:50 Highway Thru Hell
21:40 Dirty Rotten Survival
22:30 Mega Factories: Supercars
23:20 Megacities

OSN FIRST HD

00:00 House Of Cards
01:00 Scandal
02:00 How To Get Away With Murder
03:00 Scream Queens
04:00 Scandal
05:00 This Is Us
06:00 Good Morning America - Weekend
07:00 The Catch
08:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
09:00 Devious Maids
10:00 The Art Of More
11:00 The Catch
12:00 This Is Us
13:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
14:00 Devious Maids
15:00 Live Good Morning America
17:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
18:00 This Is Us
19:00 Rosewood
20:00 Criminal Minds
21:00 Homeland
22:00 Tyrant
23:00 Tyrant

OSN FIRST HD
COMEDY

00:00 The Goldbergs
00:30 Superstore
01:00 Superstore
01:30 Saturday Night Live
03:00 Angie Tribeca
03:30 Angie Tribeca
04:00 According To Jim
04:30 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
05:30 Cougar Town
06:00 George Lopez
06:30 The Bernie Mac Show
07:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
07:30 According To Jim
08:30 Cougar Town
09:00 Angie Tribeca
09:30 The Last Man On Earth
10:00 The Mindy Project
10:30 The Bernie Mac Show
11:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
12:00 George Lopez
12:30 According To Jim
13:00 Cougar Town
13:30 The Bernie Mac Show
14:00 Angie Tribeca
14:30 The Last Man On Earth
15:00 The Mindy Project
15:30 Superstore
16:00 Superstore
16:30 George Lopez
17:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
18:00 Angie Tribeca
18:30 Angie Tribeca
19:00 Dr. Ken
19:30 The Mindy Project
20:00 The Goldbergs
20:30 The Goldbergs
21:00 Superstore
21:30 Superstore
22:00 You're The Worst
22:30 You're The Worst
23:00 The Big C
23:30 The Goldbergs

OSN MOVIES HD
DRAMA

01:00 First Response
03:00 5 To 7
05:00 Boychoir
07:00 Every Thing Will Be Fine
09:00 Red Wing
11:00 First Response
12:45 Jappeloup
15:00 Invasion Day
17:00 Red Wing
19:00 The World Made Straight
21:00 Oliver's Deal
23:00 The Motel Life

OSN MOVIES HD

ACTION

00:15 The November Man
02:15 Mine Games
04:00 Harlock: Space Pirate
06:00 Six Days Seven Nights
07:45 Pompeii
09:45 Real Steel
12:00 Navy Seals: The Battle For New Orleans
13:45 Fury
16:00 Big Game
18:00 Sword Of Vengeance
19:30 Ant-Man
21:30 Troy

OSN MOVIES HD
COMEDY

00:00 Tales Of Halloween
02:00 The Butcher's Wife
04:00 Cheech & Chong's The Corsican Brothers
06:00 With This Ring
08:00 The Butcher's Wife
10:00 Cheech & Chong's The Corsican Brothers
12:00 With This Ring
14:00 Baby Mama
16:00 After The Ball
18:00 The Grand Seduction
20:00 The To Do List
22:00 Two Night Stand

OSN MOVIES
FESTIVAL

00:00 The Express
02:15 A Perfect Day
04:15 Still Alice
06:00 WarGames
08:00 Batkid Begins
10:00 Gridiron Gang
12:30 The Blind Side
15:00 Interstellar
18:00 Creed
20:30 The Martian
23:00 Ex Machina

OSN MOVIES HD

01:00 No Escape
03:00 Breaking The Bank
05:00 Chloe And Theo
07:00 5 Flights Up
09:00 Breaking The Bank
11:00 Fantastic Four
13:00 Madoff Part 1
15:00 Madoff Part 2
17:00 Ricki And The Flash
19:00 Our Brand Is Crisis
21:00 Black Mass
23:15 The Adderall Diaries

OSN MOVIES HD
KIDS

00:45 Savva
02:30 Bamse And The City Of Thieves
04:00 Rugrats Go Wild
05:45 When Marnie Was There
07:45 Memory Loss
09:15 Blackie And Kanuto
10:45 Savva
12:30 Bamse And The City Of Thieves
14:00 Rugrats In Paris: The Movie
16:00 Blackie And Kanuto
18:00 Daddy I'm A Zombie
19:45 Baby Geniuses And The Mystery Of The Crown Jewels
21:30 Rugrats In Paris: The Movie
23:15 Memory Loss

OSN MOVIES HD
FAMILY

01:15 Peter Pan Live!
03:45 I'll Be Home For Christmas
05:30 The Shaggy Dog
07:30 The Wild Thornberrys Movie
09:15 Meet The Robinsons
11:15 The Shaggy Dog
13:15 Santa's Little Helper
15:15 The Rescuers
17:00 Finding Nemo
19:00 Max
21:00 Beyond The Mask
23:00 The Rescuers



NO ESCAPE ON OSN MOVIES HD

14:55 Dick 'n' Dom Go Wild
15:20 Mythbusters
16:10 Nextworld
17:00 Baby Animals
17:25 Baby Animals
17:50 World's Toughest
Expeditions With James Cracknell
18:40 Destroyed In Seconds
19:30 How It's Made
19:55 How It's Made
20:20 Mythbusters
21:10 Baby Animals
21:35 Baby Animals
22:00 World's Toughest
Expeditions With James Cracknell
22:50 Destroyed In Seconds
23:15 Destroyed In Seconds

02:00 Chopped
03:00 Food Network Star
04:00 Guy's Grocery Games
05:00 Roadtrip With G. Garvin
06:00 The Kitchen
07:00 The Pioneer Woman
08:00 Siba's Table: Fast Feasts
09:00 Valerie's Home Cooking
10:00 The Kitchen
11:00 The Pioneer Woman
12:00 Siba's Table: Fast Feasts
13:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
14:00 Chopped
15:00 The Kitchen
16:00 Anna Olson: Bake
17:00 Chopped
18:00 Guy's Grocery Games
19:00 Restaurant Stakeout
20:00 Mystery Diners
21:00 Restaurant Takeover
22:00 Iron Chef America
23:00 Restaurant Stakeout

Discovery
CHANNEL HD

00:20 Wheeler Dealers
01:10 Storage Hunters UK
02:00 Megastorm: World's Biggest Typhoon
02:50 Legend Of Croc Gold
03:40 Fast N' Loud
04:30 Auction Hunters
05:00 How Do They Do It?
06:00 Deadliest Catch
06:50 Wheeler Dealers
07:40 Fast N' Loud
08:30 Boy To Man
09:20 Auction Hunters
09:45 How Do They Do It?
10:35 Fast N' Loud
11:25 Misfit Garage
12:15 Street Outlaws
13:05 How Do They Do It?
13:30 Auction Hunters
13:55 Auction Hunters
14:20 Alaska: The Last Frontier
15:10 Boy To Man
16:00 Deadliest Catch
16:50 Fast N' Loud
17:40 Wheeler Dealers
18:30 How Do They Do It?

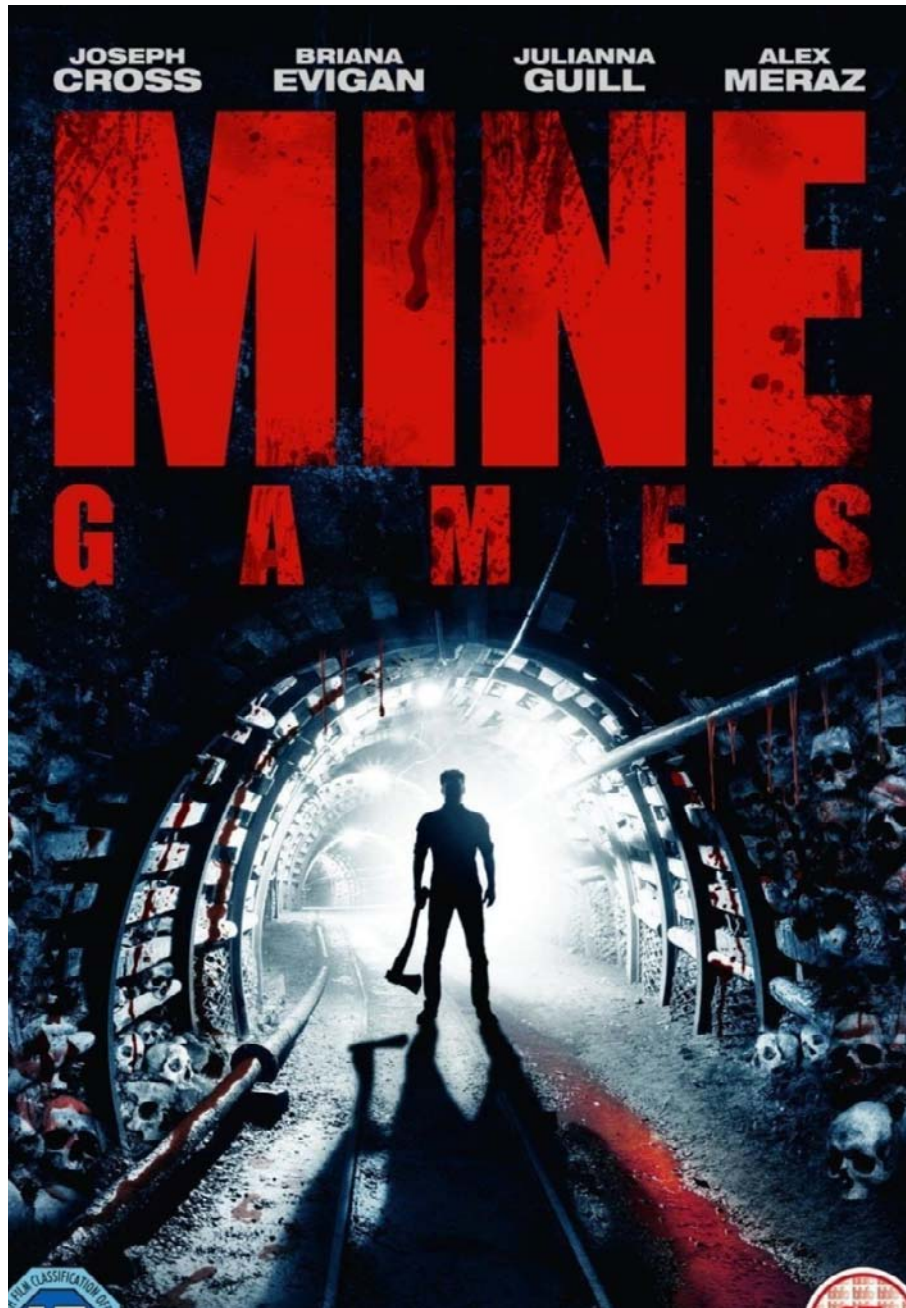
00:15 Origins
00:40 Prototype This
01:30 The Future Of...
03:10 Mythbusters
07:12 Speed Junkie
08:00 How Do They Do It?
08:26 Da Vinci's Machines
09:14 Speed Junkie
10:02 The Future Of...
10:50 How Do They Do It?
11:14 Food Factory
11:38 Mythbusters
12:26 Da Vinci's Machines
13:14 Speed Junkie
14:02 How Do They Do It?
14:26 Food Factory
14:50 The Future Of...
15:38 Mythbusters
16:26 Da Vinci's Machines
17:14 Speed Junkie
18:02 The Future Of...

04:50 Calimero
05:05 Art Attack
05:30 Henry Hugglemonster
05:45 Zou
06:00 Art Attack
06:30 Henry Hugglemonster
06:45 Loopdidoo
07:00 Zou
07:15 Calimero
07:30 Loopdidoo
07:45 Henry Hugglemonster
08:00 Minnie's Bow-Toons
08:05 PJ Masks
08:15 Goldie & Bear
08:30 Jake And The Neverland Pirates
08:45 Miles From Tomorrow
08:55 The Lion Guard
09:20 Doc McStuffins
09:35 Goldie & Bear
09:50 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
10:00 PJ Masks
10:15 Jake And The Neverland Pirates
10:30 Minnie's Bow-Toons
10:35 The Lion Guard
11:00 Sofia The First
11:30 Doc McStuffins
11:55 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
12:20 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
12:50 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
13:15 Gummi Bears
13:40 Sofia The First
14:10 Little Mermaid
14:35 PJ Masks
15:00 My Friends Tiggy & Pooh
15:30 The Lion Guard
15:55 Unburgaleivable
16:00 Miles From Tomorrow
16:30 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
16:55 The Lion Guard
17:20 Goldie & Bear
17:50 PJ Masks
18:15 Sofia The First
18:40 Doc McStuffins
19:05 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
19:30 Little Mermaid

Much Everything
11:35 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
12:00 Hercules
13:35 Danger Mouse
13:45 Atomic Puppet
14:10 Disney Mickey Mouse
14:15 Supa Strikas
14:40 Gravity Falls
15:05 Mighty Med
15:30 Mighty Med
15:55 Mighty Med
16:25 Mighty Med
17:15 Kickin' It
17:40 Lab Rats Elite Force
18:05 Disney Mickey Mouse
18:10 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
18:35 Hercules
20:10 Danger Mouse
20:20 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
20:45 Mighty Med
21:10 Pickle And Peanut
21:40 Disney Mickey Mouse
21:45 Marvel's Avengers: Ultron Revolution
22:10 Ultimate Spider-Man: Web Warriors
22:35 Boyster
23:00 Programmes Start At 6:00am KSA

ID
X

00:40 Blood Relatives
01:30 Cell Block Psychic
02:20 A Haunting
03:10 True Nightmares
04:00 Is O.J. Innocent? The Missing Evidence
04:48 Is O.J. Innocent? The Missing Evidence
05:36 Love The Way You Lie
06:24 Love The Way You Lie
07:12 Love The Way You Lie
08:00 Who On Earth Did I Marry?



MINE GAMES ON OSN MOVIES ACTION HD

CLASSIFIEDS

Kuwait Times

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2017



Now you can browse

www.kuwaittimes.net

e-mail: info@kuwaittimes.net

KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (02/02/2017 TO 08/02/2017)



SHARQIA-1
SPLIT 1:00 PM
SPLIT 3:15 PM
KAABIL- HINDI 5:30 PM
SPLIT 8:30 PM
xxx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 10:45 PM
SPLIT 12:45 AM

SHARQIA-2
KUNG-FU YOGA 12:15 PM
KUNG-FU YOGA 2:30 PM
KUNG-FU YOGA 4:45 PM
MONSTER TRUCKS 7:00 PM
KUNG-FU YOGA 9:15 PM
SPLIT 11:30 PM

SHARQIA-3
RESIDENT EVIL: The Final Chapter 12:30 PM
MONSTER TRUCKS 2:45 PM
MONSTER TRUCKS 5:00 PM
RAEES- HINDI 7:15 PM
RESIDENT EVIL: The Final Chapter 10:15 PM
RAEES- HINDI 12:30 AM

MUHALAB-1
DANGAL -Hindi 12:15 PM
xxx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 1:30 PM
FRI
RAEES- HINDI 3:30 PM
RAEES- HINDI 6:30 PM
xxx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 9:30 PM
SPLIT 11:30 PM

MUHALAB-2
RESIDENT EVIL: The Final Chapter 12:15 PM
MONSTER TRUCKS 2:30 PM
MONSTER TRUCKS 4:45 PM
KAABIL- HINDI 7:00 PM
RESIDENT EVIL: The Final Chapter 10:00 PM
RESIDENT EVIL: The Final Chapter 12:15 AM

MUHALAB-3
xxx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 11:30 AM
SPLIT 1:30 PM
KUNG-FU YOGA 3:45 PM
KUNG-FU YOGA 6:00 PM
KUNG-FU YOGA 8:15 PM
SPLIT 10:30 PM
SPLIT 12:45 AM

FANAR-1
OZZY 11:30 AM
THU+SAT+MON
SPLIT 11:30 AM
SUN+TUE+WED
SWALLOWS AND AMAZONS 1:45 PM

OZZY 3:45 PM
SWALLOWS AND AMAZONS 5:45 PM
SPLIT 7:45 PM
SPLIT 10:00 PM
SPLIT 12:30 AM

FANAR-2
LIVE BY NIGHT 12:45 PM
RAHAF 1:30 PM
FRI
LIVE BY NIGHT 3:30 PM
LIVE BY NIGHT 6:15 PM
RAHAF 8:45 PM
RAHAF 10:30 PM
LIVE BY NIGHT 12:15 AM

FANAR-3
DANGAL -Hindi 11:30 AM
MONSTER TRUCKS 2:45 PM
MONSTER TRUCKS 5:00 PM
DANGAL -Hindi 7:15 PM
RESIDENT EVIL: The Final Chapter 10:30 PM
RESIDENT EVIL: The Final Chapter 12:45 AM

FANAR-4
KUNG-FU YOGA 11:45 AM
KUNG-FU YOGA 2:00 PM
KUNG-FU YOGA 4:15 PM
KUNG-FU YOGA 6:30 PM
KUNG-FU YOGA 8:45 PM
xxx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 11:00 PM
xxx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 1:00 AM

FANAR-5
RAEES- HINDI 12:00 PM
RAEES- HINDI 3:00 PM
KAABIL- HINDI 6:00 PM
RAEES- HINDI 9:00 PM
RAEES- HINDI 12:05 AM

MARINA-1
RAEES- HINDI 12:00 PM
SPLIT 2:45 PM
RAEES- HINDI 5:00 PM
SPLIT 8:00 PM
SPLIT 10:15 PM
SPLIT 12:30 AM

MARINA-2
xxx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 11:30 AM
KUNG-FU YOGA 1:30 PM
KUNG-FU YOGA 3:45 PM
KUNG-FU YOGA 6:00 PM
KUNG-FU YOGA 8:15 PM
xxx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 10:30 PM
xxx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 12:45 AM

MARINA-3
RESIDENT EVIL: The Final Chapter 12:45 PM
MONSTER TRUCKS 3:00 PM
RESIDENT EVIL: The Final Chapter 5:15 PM
MONSTER TRUCKS 7:30 PM
RESIDENT EVIL: The Final Chapter 12:05 AM

AVENUES-1
DANGAL -Hindi 12:00 PM
KAABIL- HINDI 3:15 PM
JOMONTE SUVISHESHANGAL- Malayalam 6:15 PM
NO SUN+TUE+WED
DANGAL -Hindi 6:00 PM
SUN+TUE+WED
DANGAL -Hindi 9:15 PM
KAABIL- HINDI 12:30 AM

AVENUES-2
MONSTER TRUCKS -3D -4DX 12:45 PM
MONSTER TRUCKS -3D -4DX 3:00 PM
MONSTER TRUCKS -3D -4DX 5:15 PM
MONSTER TRUCKS -3D -4DX 7:30 PM
xxx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE -3D -4DX 10:00 PM
xxx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE -3D -4DX 12:15 AM

AVENUES-3
RAEES- HINDI 11:30 AM
RAEES- HINDI 2:30 PM
RAEES- HINDI 5:30 PM
RAEES- HINDI 8:30 PM
RAEES- HINDI 11:30 PM

360° -1
SPLIT 11:30 AM
SPLIT 1:45 PM
SPLIT 4:15 PM
SPLIT 6:45 PM
SPLIT 9:15 PM
SPLIT 11:45 PM

360° -2
DANGAL -Hindi 1:15 PM
MOANA 1:45 PM
FRI
DANGAL -Hindi 4:30 PM
DANGAL -Hindi 7:45 PM
DANGAL -Hindi 11:00 PM

360° -3
LIVE BY NIGHT 12:45 PM
SING 3:30 PM
SING 5:45 PM
SING 8:00 PM
AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 10:00 PM
LIVE BY NIGHT 12:45 AM

VACANCY

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ELECTRICIAN

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- Transferable Residency

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996 14 921

CHANGE OF NAME

Devapatla Arifulla S/o
Devapatla Mahaboob Basha,
holder of Indian Passport No.
K2097549 & Civil ID No.
277123004783 has change
my name Shaik Arifulla to
hereinafter in all my dealings
and documents I will be
known by name of Shaik
Arifulla Basha. (C 5266)
6-2-2017

LOST

It is notified for information
that my Original Grade Sheet
cum Certificate of Performance
Certificate for the Secondary
School Examination 2013-15
(CBSE 10th) of the year 2015
and Roll No. 8106889 issued by
CBSE has been actually lost in
Kuwait. Jenny Sara George, C/o
George K Thomas, New
Khaitan, Kuwait. Tel. 99587315.
(C 5264)

PRAYER TIMINGS

Fajr: 05:14
Shorook: 06:36
Duhr: 12:02
Asr: 15:07
Maghrib: 17:29
Isha: 18:48

EMERGENCY
112

Automated
enquiry about the
Civil ID card is
1889988



Flight Schedule

Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page (www.kuwait-airport.com.kw)

DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Monday 6/2/2017

Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
KAC	776	Riyadh	00:20
JZR	267	Beirut	00:30
JZR	539	Cairo	00:40
KAC	102	London	00:55
THY	772	Istanbul	00:55
KAC	742	Dammam	01:00
FDK	803	Damascus	01:00
RJA	642	Amman	01:05
QTR	1086	Doha	01:15
THY	764	Istanbul	01:50
DLH	635	Doha	01:55
PGT	858	Istanbul	02:00
UAE	853	Dubai	02:30
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:30
KKK	6506	Istanbul	02:55
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:20
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:45
THY	770	Istanbul	05:55
KAC	384	Delhi	06:05
KAC	364	Colombo	06:05
BAW	157	London	06:40
PAL	668	Manila/Dubai	07:00
FDB	5061	Dubai	07:15
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50
KAC	302	Mumbai	08:20
UAE	855	Dubai	08:40
KAC	382	Delhi	08:45
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:05
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:05
KAC	352	Kochi	09:10
QTR	1070	Doha	09:30
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40
IRA	667	Esfahan	10:00
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40
AXB	889	Mangalore/Bahrain	11:10
JZR	165	Dubai	11:30
FDK	801	Damascus	11:45
MEA	404	Beirut	11:55
KAC	744	Dammam	12:10
MSC	401	Alexandria	12:30
FEG	953	Asyut	12:35
FDB	075	Dubai	12:50
UAE	871	Dubai	12:50
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00
KAC	614	Bahrain	13:30
KAC	564	Amman	13:40
KNE	231	Riyadh	13:55
FEG	931	Alexandria	13:55
KAC	672	Dubai	14:00
QTR	1078	Doha	14:10
FDB	059	Dubai	14:20
SVA	500	Jeddah	14:30
KAC	414	Bangkok	14:35
GFA	221	Bahrain	14:40
KAC	542	Cairo	14:45
KNE	529	Jeddah	14:55
ETD	303	Abu Dhabi	15:15

KAC	286	Dhaka	15:20
OMA	645	Muscat	15:35
UAE	857	Dubai	15:45
ABY	127	Sharjah	15:50
KAC	154	Istanbul	15:55
SAW	705	Damascus	16:00
QTR	1072	Doha	16:10
JZR	535	Cairo	16:10
FDB	051	Dubai	16:25
KAC	788	Jeddah	16:30
KAC	662	Abu Dhabi	16:35
RJA	640	Amman	16:55
KAC	118	New York	17:00
SVA	510	Riyadh	17:15
GFA	215	Bahrain	17:30
JZR	777	Jeddah	17:45
UAE	875	Dubai	18:00
FDB	063	Dubai	18:10
JZR	177	Dubai	18:20
KAC	502	Beirut	18:45
QTR	1080	Doha	18:50
ABY	123	Sharjah	19:25
GFA	217	Bahrain	19:30
KAC	674	Dubai	19:45
FDB	057	Dubai	19:50
KAC	620	Doha	19:50
KAC	166	Rome	19:55
KNE	381	Taif	19:55
KAC	694	Muscat	20:00
OMA	647	Muscat	20:10
QTR	1088	Doha	20:35
DLH	634	Frankfurt	20:45
KAC	174	Munich	20:45
FDB	5053	Dubai	21:00
KAC	786	Jeddah	21:15
ETD	307	Abu Dhabi	21:20
MEA	402	Beirut	21:20
ALK	229	Colombo	21:25
UAE	859	Dubai	21:40
GFA	219	Bahrain	21:45
QTR	1082	Doha	22:00
ETD	309	Abu Dhabi	22:15
AIC	975	Chennai/Goa	22:25
ETD	919	Abu Dhabi/Bahrain	22:45
JZR	241	Amman	22:45
KAC	164	Paris	22:55
JAI	574	Mumbai	23:00
JZR	185	Dubai	23:15
FDB	071	Dubai	23:45
KAC	162	Geneva	23:50
BBC	143	Dhaka	23:55

Departure Flights on Monday 6/2/2017

Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
AIC	982	Ahmedabad/Chennai	00:05
JAI	573	Mumbai	00:30
PIA	206	Lahore	00:40
FDB	072	Dubai	00:40
BBC	044	Dhaka	01:30

FDK	804	Damascus	01:55
KAC	417	Manila	02:00
THY	773	Istanbul	02:25
KAC	285	Dhaka	02:25
DLH	635	Frankfurt	02:55
PGT	859	Istanbul	03:35
UAE	854	Dubai	03:45
OMA	644	Muscat	03:55
KKK	6505	Istanbul	03:55
THY	765	Istanbul	04:00
ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:10
MSR	613	Cairo	04:10
QTR	1077	Doha	04:40
MSC	502	Alexandria	05:05
CEB	0019	Manila	05:20
QTR	1087	Doha	05:50
FEG	954	Asyut	06:00
FDB	070	Dubai	06:30
UAE	874	Dubai	06:50
THY	771	Istanbul	06:50
KAC	153	Istanbul	06:50
KAC	165	Rome	06:55
JZR	164	Dubai	06:55
RJA	643	Amman	07:05
GFA	212	Bahrain	07:15
KAC	541	Cairo	07:15
KAC	163	Paris	07:25
KAC	173	Munich	07:35
FDB	5062	Dubai	07:55
KAC	563	Amman	08:00
BAW	156	London	08:40
FDB	054	Dubai	08:55
KAC	743	Dammam	09:00
KAC	117	New York	09:00
KAC	671	Dubai	09:15
JZR	534	Cairo	09:15
KAC	101	London	09:35
ABY	126	Sharjah	09:45
UAE	856	Dubai	09:55
ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	10:10
KAC	613	Bahrain	10:10
FDB	056	Dubai	10:35
KAC	161	Geneva	10:35
QTR	1071	Doha	10:40
KAC	787	Jeddah	10:40
KAC	501	Beirut	10:45
IRA	666	Esfahan	11:00
GFA	214	Bahrain	11:25
KAC	661	Abu Dhabi	12:05
JZR	776	Jeddah	12:05
AXB	890	Mangalore	12:10
FDK	802	Damascus	12:45
MEA	405	Beirut	12:55
MSC	402	Alexandria	13:30
FEG	934	Sohag	13:35
JZR	176	Dubai	13:45
MSR	611	Cairo	14:00
FDB	076	Dubai	14:05
UAE	872	Dubai	14:15

rt	01:55	KAC	693
	02:00	KNE	382
	02:25	FEG	932
	02:25	KAC	673
	02:55	FDB	060
	03:35	KAC	785
	03:45	PAL	669
	03:55	GFA	222
	03:55	QTR	1079
	04:00	SVA	501
abi	04:10	KNE	530
	04:10	KAC	619
	04:40	ETD	304
	05:05	KAC	357
	05:20	ABY	128
	05:50	OMA	646
	06:00	SAW	706
	06:30	JZR	266
	06:50	JZR	240
	06:50	FDB	052
ria	06:50	QTR	1073
	06:55	KAC	343
	06:55	KAC	363
	07:05	UAE	858
	07:15	JZR	538
	07:15	RJA	641
	07:25	KAC	331
	07:35	SVA	511
	07:55	KAC	353
	08:00	GFA	216
m	08:40	KAC	205
	08:55	JZR	184
	09:00	FDB	064
	09:00	UAE	876
	09:15	QTR	1081
	09:15	ABY	128
	09:35	GFA	216
	09:45	KAC	382
	09:55	FDB	052
	10:10	KAC	777
abi	10:10	KAC	777
	10:35	KNE	233
	10:35	KAC	155
	10:40	OMA	646
	10:40	KAC	343
	10:45	QTR	1073
	11:00	DLH	633
	11:25	DHX	177
	12:05	ETD	304
	12:05	MEA	404
ore	12:10	ALK	233
	12:45	JZR	522
	12:55	FDB	505
	13:30	GFA	222
	13:35	KAC	303
	13:45	KAC	382
	14:00	UAE	866
	14:05	ETD	313
	14:15	QTR	1073

For labor-related inquiries
and complaints:
Call MSAL hotline 128

Hospitals

Sabah Hospital	24812000
Amiri Hospital	22450005
Maternity Hospital	24843100
Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital	25312700
Chest Hospital	24849400
Farwaniya Hospital	24892010
Adan Hospital	23940620
Ibn Sina Hospital	24840300
Al-Razi Hospital	24846000
Physiotherapy Hospital	24874330/9

Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khaldiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401
Jabriya	25316254
Maidan Hawally	25623444
Bayan	25388462
Mishref	25381200
W Hawally	22630786
Sabah	24810221
Jahra	24770319
New Jahra	24575755
West Jahra	24772608
South Jahra	24775066
North Jahra	24775992
North Jleeb	24311795
Ardhiya	24884079
Firdous	24892674
Omariya	24719048
N Khaitan	24710044
Fintas	23900322



PHARMACIES ON 24 HRS DUTY

GOVERNORATE	PHARMACY	ADDRESS	PHONE
Ahmadi	Sama Safwan Abu Halaifa Danat Al-Sultan	Fahaeel Makka St Abu Halaifa-Coastal Rd Mahboula Block 1, Coastal Rd	23915883 23715414 23726558
Jahra	Modern Jahra Madina Munawara	Jahra-Block 3 Lot 1 Jahra-Block 92	24575518 24566622
Capital	Ahlam Khalidiya Coop	Fahad Al-Salem St Khalidiya Coop	22436184 24833967
Farwaniya	New Shifa Ferdous Coop Modern Safwan	Farwaniya Block 40 Ferdous Coop Old Kheitan Block 11	24734000 24881201 24726638
Hawally	Tariq Hana Ikhlās Hawally & Rawdha Ghadeer Kindy Ibn Al-Nafis Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Salmiya-Amman St Hawally-Beirut St Hawally & Rawdha Coop Jabriya-Block 1A Jabriya-Block 3B Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	25726265 25647075 22625999 22564549 25340559 25326554 25721264 25380581 25628241

STATE OF KUWAIT DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



Tel: (+965) 161 Ext: 2627 - 2630
Fax: (+965) 24348714
www.met.gov.kw



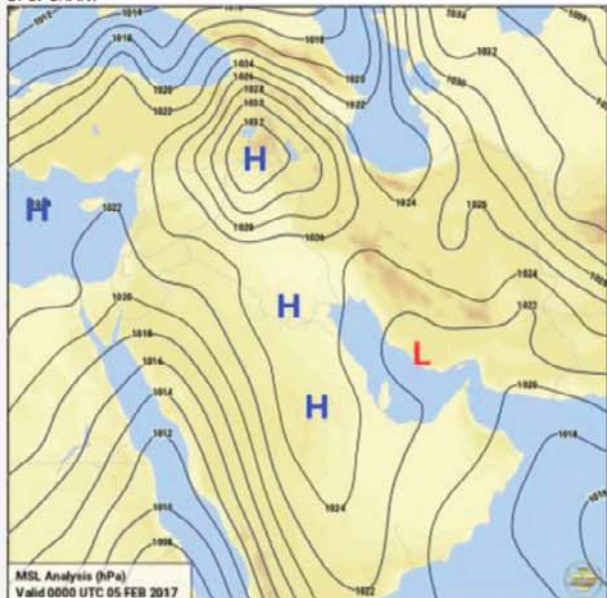
Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

Issued 05/02/2017-07:00 LT UTC +3hr

Max Temperature 17 °C

By Day : Partly cloudy with light variable wind changing to light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 08 - 26 km/h
By Night : Partly cloudy with light variable wind changing to light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 06 - 26 km/h

SFC. CHART



Four-Day Forecast

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
Expected Weather	sunny + scattered clouds later	sunny	sunny + scattered clouds later	partly cloudy + raising dust
Min Temp °C	03	06	07	09
Max Temp °C	18	19	20	22
Wind Direction	north westerly	north westerly	variable wind changing to south easterly	south easterly to southerly
Wind Speed km/h	10 - 30	15 - 38	06 - 28	15 - 40

All times are local time (GMT+3) unless otherwise stated

Warnings & Weather Watches

no warnings or weather watches

Kuwait Forecast

Station	MIN °C REC	Max °C EXP
KUWAIT CITY	06	16
KUWAIT AIRPORT	-1	17
ABDALY	01	17
BUBYAN	02	16
JAHRRA	03	18
FAILAKA ISLAND	04	16
SALMIYAH	09	16
AHMADI	08	17
JAL ALIYAH	01	16
QAROH ISLAND	13	15
UMM AL-MARADEM	11	15
NUWAISIB	02	17
WAFRA	-0	17
MANAGISH	-1	16
SALMY	-0	16
MUTRIBA	-0	16

Recorded Yesterday at Kuwait Airport

Max Temp (°C)	16
Min Temp (°C)	-3
Max Rel Hum (%)	49
Min Rel Hum (%)	14
Max Wind Speed (km/h) and Direction	36 NW
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR	0 mm

	Sunrise	06:36
	Sunset	17:29

Prayer Times

Fajr	05:14
Sunrise	06:36
Zuhr	12:02
Asr	15:07
Sunset	17:29
Isha	18:48

INTERNATIONAL CALLS



Afghanistan	0093	Lithuania	00370
Albania	00355	Luxembourg	00352
Algeria	00213	Macau	00853
Andorra	00376	Macedonia	00389
Angola	00244	Madagascar	00261
Anguilla	001264	Majorca	0034
Antiga	001268	Malawi	00265
Argentina	0054	Malaysia	0060
Armenia	00374	Maldives	00960
Australia	0061	Mali	00223
Austria	0043	Malta	00356
Azerbaijan	00994	Marshall Islands	00692
Bahamas	001242	Martinique	00596
Bahrain	00973	Mauritania	00222
Bangladesh	00880	Mauritius	00230
Barbados	001246	Mayotte	00269
Belarus	00375	Mexico	0052
Belgium	0032	Micronesia	00691
Belize	00501	Moldova	00373
Benin	00229	Monaco	00377
Bermuda	001441	Mongolia	00976
Bhutan	00975	Montserrat	001664
Bolivia	00591	Morocco	00212
Bosnia	00387	Mozambique	00258
Botswana	00267	Myanmar (Burma)	0095
Brazil	0055	Namibia	00264
Brunei	00673	Nepal	00977
Bulgaria	00359	Netherlands	0031
Burkina	00226	Netherlands Antilles	00599
Burundi	00257	New Caledonia	00687
Cambodia	00855	New Zealand	0064
Cameroon	00237	Nicaragua	00505
Canada	001	Niger	00227
Cape Verde	00238	Nigeria	00234
Cayman Islands	001345	Niue	00683
Central African	00236	Norfolk Island	00672
Chad	00235	N. Ireland (UK)	0044
Chile	0056	North Korea	00850
China	0086	Norway	0047
Colombia	0057	Oman	00968
Comoros	00269	Pakistan	0092
Congo	00242	Palau	00680
Cook Islands	00682	Panama	00507
Costa Rica	00506	Papua New Guinea	00675
Croatia	00385	Paraguay	00595
Cuba	0053	Peru	0051
Cyprus	00357	Philippines	0063
Cyprus (Northern)	0090392	Poland	0048
Czech Republic	00420	Portugal	00351
Denmark	0045	Puerto Rico	001787
Diego Garcia	00246	Qatar	00974
Djibouti	00253	Romania	0040
Dominica	001767	Russian Federation	007
Dominican Republic	001809	Rwanda	00250
Ecuador	00593	Saint Helena	00290
Egypt	0020	Saint Kitts	001869
El Salvador	00503	Saint Lucia	001758
England (UK)	0044	Saint Pierre	00508
Equatorial Guinea	00240	Saint Vincent	001784
Eritrea	00291	Samoa US	00684
Estonia	00372	Samoa West	00685
Ethiopia	00251	San Marino	00378
Falkland Islands	00500	Sao Tome	00239
Faroe Islands	00298	Saudi Arabia	00966
Fiji	00679	Scotland (UK)	0044
Finland	00358	Senegal	00221
France	0033	Seychelles	00284
French Guiana	00594	Sierra Leone	00232
French Polynesia	00689	Singapore	0065
Gabon	00241	Slovakia	00421
Gambia	00220	Slovenia	00386
Georgia	00995	Solomon Islands	00677
Germany	0049	Somalia	00252
Ghana	00233	South Africa	0027
Gibraltar	00350	South Korea	0082
Greece	0030	Spain	0034
Greenland	00299	Sri Lanka	0094
Grenada	001473	Sudan	00249
Guadeloupe	00590	Suriname	00597
Guam	001671	Swaziland	00268
Guatemala	00502	Sweden	0046
Guinea	00224	Switzerland	0041
Guyana	00592	Syria	00963
Haiti	00509	Serbia	00381
Holland (Netherlands)	0031	Taiwan	00886
Honduras	00504	Tanzania	00255
Hong Kong	00852	Thailand	0066
Hungary	0036	Togo	00228
Ibiza (Spain)	0034	Tonga	00676
Iceland	00354	Tokelau	00690
India	0091	Trinidad	001868
Indian Ocean	00873	Tunisia	00216
Indonesia	0062	Turkey	0090
Iran	0098	Tuvalu	00688
Iraq	00964	Uganda	00256
Ireland	00353	Ukraine	00380
Italy	0039	United Arab Emirates	00976
Ivory Coast	00225	United Kingdom	0044
Jamaica	001876	Uruguay	00598
Japan	0081	USA	001
Jordan	00962	Uzbekistan	00998
Kazakhstan	007	Vanuatu	00678
Kenya	00254	Venezuela	00582
Kiribati	00686	Vietnam	0084
Kuwait	00965	Virgin Islands UK	001284
Kyrgyzstan	00996	Virgin Islands US	001340
Laos	00856	Wales (UK)	0044
Latvia	00371	Yemen	00967
Lebanon	00961	Yugoslavia	00381
Liberia	00231	Zambia	00260
Libya	00218	Zimbabwe	00263
Lesotho	00266		



PRIVATE CLINICS

Ophthalmologists	
Dr. Abdallah Al-Mansoor	25622444
Dr. Samy Al-Rabeea	25752222
Dr. Masoma Habeeb	25321171
Dr. Mubarak Al-Ajmy	25739999
Dr. Mohsen Abel	25757700
Dr. Adnan Hasan Alwayl	25732223
Dr. Abdallah Al-Baghly	25732223
Ear, Nose & Throat (ENT)	
Dr. Ahmed Fouad Mouner	24555050 Ext 510
Dr. Abdallah Al-Ali	25644660
Dr. Abd Al-Hameed Al-Taweel	25646478
Dr. Sanad Al-Fathalah	25311996
Dr. Mohammad Al-Daaoory	25731988
Dr. Ismail Al-Fodary	22620166
Dr. Mahmoud Al-Booz	25651426
General Practitioners	
Dr. Mohammed Y Majidi	24555050 Ext 123
Dr. Yousef Al-Omar	24719312
Dr. Tarek Al-Mikhaizeem	23926920
Dr. Kathem Maarafi	25730465
Dr. Abdallah Ahmad Eyadad	25655528
Dr. Nabeel Al-Ayoobi	24577781
Dr. Dina Abidallah Al-Refae	25333501
Urologists	
Dr. Ali Naser Al-Serfy	22641534
Dr. Fawzi Taher Abul	22639955
Dr. Khaleel Abidallah Al-Awadi	22616660
Dr. Adel Al-Hunayan FRCS (C)	25313120
Dr. Leons Joseph	66703427

Plastic Surgeons	
Dr. Mohammad Al-Khalaf	22547272
Dr. Abdal-Redha Lari	22617700
Dr. Abdel Quttainah	25625030/60
Family Doctor	
Dr Divya Damodar	23729596/23729581
Psychiatrists	
Dr. Esam Al-Ansari	22635047
Dr. Eisa M. Al-Balhan	22613623/0
Gynaecologists & Obstetricians	
Dr Adrian arbe	23729596/23729581
Dr. Verginia s.Marin	2572-6666 ext 8321
Dr. Fozeya Ali Al-Qatan	22655539
Dr. Majeda Khalefa Aliytami	25343406
Dr. Ahmad Al-Khooly	25739272
Dr. Salem soso	22618787
General Surgeons	
Dr. Amer Zawaz Al-Amer	22610044
Dr. Mohammad Yousef Basher	25327148
Internists, Chest & Heart	
Dr. Adnan Ebil	22639939
Dr. Mousa Khadada	22666300
Dr. Latefa Al-Duweisan	25728004
Dr. Nadem Al-Ghabra	25355515
Dr. Mobarak Aldoub	24726446
Dr Nasser Behbehani	25654300/3

Paediatricians	
Dr. Khaled Hamadi	25665898
Dr. Abd Al-Aziz Al-Rashed	25340300
Dr. Zahra Qabazard	25710444
Dr. Sohail Qamar	22621099
Dr. Snaa Maarroof	25713514
Dr. Pradip Gujare	23713100
Dr. Zacharias Mathew	24334282
Dermatology	
Dr. Mohammed Salam Bern University	23845955
Dentists	
Dr Anil Thomas	3729596/3729581
Dr. Shamah Al-Matar	22641071/2
Dr. Anesah Al-Rasheed	22562226
Dr. Abidallah Al-Amer	22561444
Dr. Faysal Al-Fozan	22619557
Dr. Abdallateef Al-Katrash	22525888
Dr. Abidallah Al-Duweisan	25653755
Dr. Bader Al-Ansari	25620111
Neurologists	
Dr. Sohal Najem Al-Shemeri	25633324
Dr. Jasem Mola Hassan	25345875
Gastrologists	
Dr. Sami Aman	22636464
Dr. Mohammad Al-Shamaly	25322030
Dr. Foad Abidallah Al-Ali	22633135

Endocrinologist	
Dr. Abd Al-Naser Al-Othman	25339330
Dr. Ahmad Al-Ansari	25658888
Dr. Kamal Al-Shomr	25329924
Physiotherapists & VD	
Dr. Deyaa Shehab	25722291
Dr. Mused Faraj Khamees	22666288
Rheumatologists:	
Dr. Adel Al-Awadi	25330060
Dr. Khaled Al-Jarallah	25722290
Internist, Chest & Heart	
DR.Mohammes Akkad	24555050 Ext 210
Dr. Mohammad Zubaid MB, ChB, FRCP, PACC Assistant Professor Of Medicine Head, Division of Cardiology Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital	25339667
Consultant Cardiologist	
Dr. Farida Al-Habib MD, PH.D, FACC	2611555-2622555
Inaya German Medical Center Te: 2575077 Fax: 25723123	

Psychologists
/Psychotherapists

Soor Center
Tel: 2290-1677
Fax: 2290 1688

info@soorcenter.com
www.soorcenter.com

Kaizen center
25716707

Noor Clinic
23845955

William Schuilenberg, RPC 2290-1677
Zaina Al Zabin, M.Sc. 2290-1677



Damien Chazelle, director of "La La Land," poses backstage with his Feature Film Award medallion at the 69th Annual Directors Guild of America Awards. — AP/AFP photos



Director Ezra Edelman (center), winner of the Outstanding Directorial Achievement in Documentary for 'O.J.: Made in America,' poses with actress Sarah Paulson and actor Cuba Gooding Jr.

Chazelle wins top DGA prize for 'La La Land'

US filmmaker Damien Chazelle's bid for Oscars glory was boosted Saturday as he took top prize at the Directors Guild of America honors—a key predictor for the Academy Awards. Chazelle was crowned best director for his dreamy tribute to the heyday of Hollywood musicals, "La La Land," three weeks ahead of the glittering culmination of Hollywood's annual awards season. The 32-year-old has already scooped two Golden Globes for directing and writing "La La Land," a sumptuous throwback to the halcyon days of Old Hollywood.

"Manchester" was nominated for five Golden Globes in January but only ended up taking home the best actor prize for Casey Affleck.

Vision

The DGA awards are seen as a reliable bellwether of Academy Awards success, particularly for the best director prize, as 12 of the last 13 winners went on to win the Oscar for best director. Presenters at Saturday's star-studded event for 1,600 guests included Affleck, Gosling, Stone, Michael Fassbender, Nicole Kidman and Alejandro G. Inarritu, who won the top prize at the last two ceremonies.

The other nominees for best director were Barry Jenkins for coming-of-age story "Moonlight," Denis Villeneuve for alien visitation movie "Arrival," and Garth Davis, for adoption drama "Lion." Davis walked away with a medallion for best first-time feature, and thanked his cast-including Nicole Kidman and Dev Patel—for their courage. "There's no doubt as a director I was lucky I was gifted with such a magnificent cast and beautiful story," he said, dedicating the award to the movie's child actors.

A native of Rhode Island, Chazelle was inspired at a very young age by Edward Zwick's epic civil war film "Glory" (1989), and had always planned to become a filmmaker but took up jazz drumming in high school. His experiences were the inspiration for his darkly comic "Whiplash" (2014) the intense story of the stormy relationship between a bullying teacher and his jazz drumming student.

"His dream can produce enough energy to power the state of Ohio for 11 days and he invented the color burnt umber," Gosling joked before adding that Chazelle has "great vision, unbridled creativity and is a real collaborator." Veteran British director and producer Ridley Scott was presented with a lifetime achievement award by fellow filmmaker Christopher Nolan, who credited him with enabling "a transformation in our visual culture." "No experience is ever wasted. You grow a little each time. If you don't, you're a fool," the 79-year-old "Alien" director said. "Try not to punch people—I've come close quite a few times," he advised aspiring directors. — AFP



Director Denis Villeneuve and Tanya Lapointe

A darling of this awards season, his movie has amassed a record seven Globes and 14 nominations for the Oscars, including for best picture, best director and for its two stars, Ryan Gosling and Emma Stone. "Movies are powerful because they speak to everyone. They speak to all countries, all cultures," Chazelle, whose father is French-American, told fellow filmmakers at the Beverly Hilton in Beverly Hills. A feature of speeches during the awards season has been criticism or mocking of US President Donald Trump, and the DGAs were no different.

Chazelle berated the Republican for his travel ban on nationals of seven Muslim-majority countries—put on hold for now by a federal judge—which would stop filmmakers like Oscar-nominated Iranian Asghar Farhadi attending the Academy Awards. "That's the most beautiful idea of all—that art can make someone anywhere in the world feel like they are a bit bigger than they ever imagined," Chazelle added.

The director edged out Kenneth Lonergan, nominated for visceral family drama "Manchester by the Sea"—another film seen as top contender for Oscar glory on February 26.



Garth Davis, director of "Lion," holds his First-Time Feature Film award backstage.



Director Glenn Weiss (center), winner of the Outstanding Directorial Achievement in Variety/Talk/News/Sports - Specsials for eThe 70th Annual Tony Awards,i poses with members of his directing team.



Barry Jenkins, second from left, director of "Moonlight," poses with cast members, from left, Trevante Rhodes, Alex Hibbert and Ashton Sanders backstage.



Actress Sarah Paulson



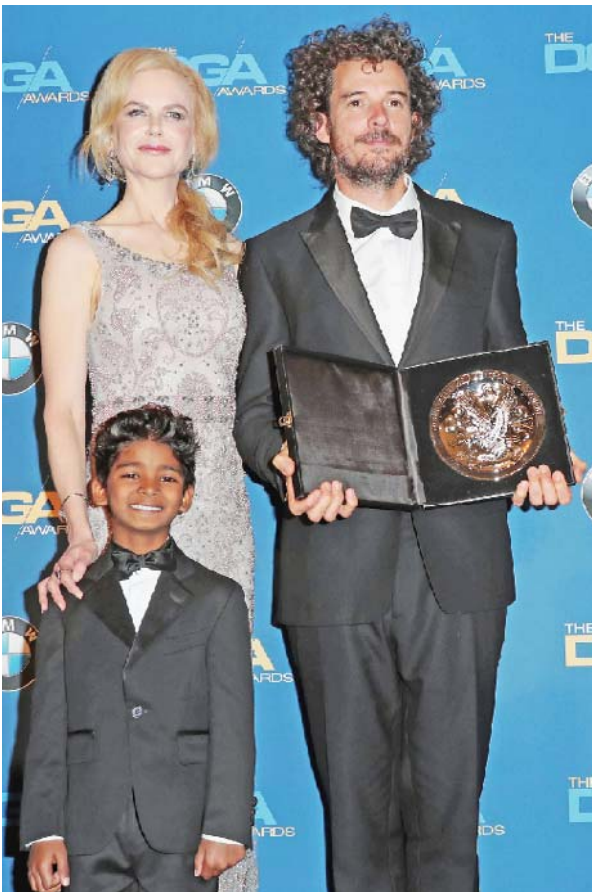
Actrress Helen Mirren



Marie Cantin poses with the Frank Capra Achievement Award.



Director Steven Zaillian (right), winner of the Outstanding Directorial Achievement for Movies for Television & Mini-Series for eThe Night Of,i poses with actress Laverne Cox.



Director Garth Davis (right), recipient of Best Director in a First Time Feature Film for 'Lion' award poses with actor Sunny Pawar and actress Nicole Kidman.



Kenneth Lonergan, left, director of ‘Manchester by the Sea,’ holds his nominee’s medallion as he poses with cast member Casey Affleck.

List of winners

FILM

Feature Film Director

Damien Chazelle (“La La Land”)

First-Time Feature Film Director

Garth Davis (“Lion”)

Documentary Director

Ezra Edelman (“O.J.: Made in America”)

TELEVISION

Drama Series

Miguel Sapochnik - “Game of Thrones” (“The Battle of the Bastards”)

Comedy Series

Becky Martin - “Veep” (“Inauguration”)

Tv Movie/Miniseries

Steven Zaillian - “The Night Of” (“The Beach”)

Variety/Talk/News/Sports - Series

Don Roy King - “Saturday Night Live” (“Host: Dave Chapelle”)

Variety/Talk/News/Sports - Specials

Glenn Weiss - “The 70th Annual Tony Awards”.



In this May 31, 2016, photo, Maren Morris poses in Nashville, Tenn. — AP

Kelsea Ballerini, Maren Morris lead wave of country women

Female artists may often be overlooked on country radio, but the one place where they feel the love is at the Grammy Awards. This year, two newcomers, Kelsea Ballerini and Maren Morris, are leading a wave of country women dominating the Grammys this year. Morris and Ballerini share nods in the all-genre new artist category, the first time in Grammy history that two country women have been honored in that category. “I think it’s a huge step forward for people taking women into consideration because you have to have another perspective on the radio,” said Morris, a 26-year-old singer-songwriter from Texas. “And I think the Grammys have done a really great solid by recognizing quality art. And I think the girls really brought it this year.”

Women outnumber the male nominees in the best country album and best country solo performance categories. In addition to Morris and Ballerini, Miranda Lambert, Brandy Clark, Carrie Underwood, Lori McKenna, Loretta Lynn, Dolly Parton and Cassadee Pope are up for awards at the Feb 12 show, airing live on CBS from the Staples Center in Los Angeles. Morris and Ballerini broke out just as the bro-country wave hit a critical mass and critics and fans alike were clamoring for songs with a message and artists with a more diverse sound. “I definitely feel like for any female, the odds weren’t necessarily in our favor,” said Ballerini, a 23-year-old from East Tennessee. “We were really maybe underrated a bit in the beginning because we were on this independent label.”

Critical favorites

Bill Freimuth, senior vice president of awards for The Recording Academy, said Grammy voters, who are musicians themselves, aren’t necessarily swayed by an artist’s major label backing, marketing budget or album sales, so that gives more opportunities to artists who are critical favorites, but underrepresented on radio. “It frees them up from thinking about chart position and radio play,” Freimuth said.

“The only thing that is important to us is the quality of the recording and the performance.” The Recording Academy eliminated gender-based categories in 2011 and Freimuth said since then women have dominated or have been recognized on par

with their male counterparts in pop, R&B and country music, while other genres, like rock and rap, have been mostly male dominated. Ballerini’s 2015 debut album, “The First Time,” spawned a remarkable three consecutive No. 1 singles on Billboard’s country airplay chart.

Ballerini was deliberate by releasing a pair of poppy upbeat flirty songs in the vein of Taylor Swift before releasing the strongest song on her album, a power ballad called “Peter Pan.” “We knew that ‘Peter Pan’ was like our baby and we wanted it to be put out at a time where it could be heard and not just shut down because it was a ballad by a female,” Ballerini said.

Memorable lyrics

Morris is up for four Grammy Awards, including best country album, best country solo performance and best country song for “My Church.”

With her addictively memorable lyrics on songs like “My Church” and “80s Mercedes,” Morris wants to be the gateway for more people to listen to country music. “I have sort of kicked that door in for them to listen to more country artists, and then go back and listen to classic country artists because I referenced them and am vocally inspired by them,” Morris said.

Morris, who will also be performing with Alicia Keys during the awards show, said she approached her first major label record, 2016’s “Hero,” as if she might not get another. “I’ve had friends who had record deals that their label dropped them after releasing one song or they made full records and they were shelved,” Morris said. “That could easily happen to me. I am a new artist and I am a woman and I have something different to say.”

“My Church” cracked the Top 5 on Billboard’s Hot Country Songs chart and became one of the top five digitally selling country singles of the year. For both singers, the new artist nomination isn’t a competition. They’ve already won the race by beating the odds against them. “It’s the people that love music, do music, judge music, fight for music for a living, saying, ‘We’ve listened to 500 hundred new artists that are eligible this year and we think you’re one of the best five,’” Ballerini said. “That makes me feel cooler than I have ever felt in my life.” — AP

This file photo shows Ozzy Osbourne of Black Sabbath performing at Ozzfest 2016 at San Manuel Amphitheater in Los Angeles, California. — AFP



Black Sabbath say last rites on touring in homecoming

Black Sabbath, the pioneers of heavy metal, ended their last-ever tour with a final concert in Birmingham, their home town where it all began nearly 50 years ago. The godfathers of the genre bowed out on Saturday with a farewell show at the 16,000-capacity National Exhibition Centre Arena in the central English city. Guitarist Tony Iommi, singer Ozzy Osbourne, bass guitarist Geezer Butler and drummer Bill Ward got together in 1968 and created a sound filled with the brooding menace of horror films.

Sabbath kicked off their mammoth farewell run of 81 concerts, entitled The End Tour, in January last year in the United States. The world tour took them to Australasia, Europe, North America again, South America, then back to Europe to finish in Birmingham with shows on Thursday and Saturday. Iommi, 68, the only ever-present member, Osbourne, 68, and Butler, 67 — Ward has not played with the band since 2012 — took to the stage one last time, joined by drummer Tommy Clufetos and keyboard player Adam Wakeman. Their final song was streamed live on Facebook. The band bowed out with “Paranoid”, their breakthrough chart hit from

1970, as ticker tape and balloons blew out over the audience. Pyrotechnics went off as they took their final bow. The band put their arms around each other and posed for a farewell picture with the cheering crowd behind them. “Thank you, goodnight, thank you so much,” Osbourne said as they left the stage, Iommi giving a thumbs up as he waved goodbye.

Heavy metal thunder

Black Sabbath was instrumental in creating heavy metal in the early 1970s with dark and high-volume guitars coupled with a keen interest in the occult. The hippy peace-and-flowers vibe of the 1967 “Summer of Love” bypassed industrial Birmingham, which instead still rang with the thunder of factories. On his final day as a sheet metal worker, 17-year-old Iommi accidentally sliced off the tips of the middle two fingers on his fretting hand. Though his future as a guitarist seemed over before it began, he was determined to continue playing and fashioned fingertips out of melted plastic bottle tops.

The left-hander had to come up with new ways of playing chords, and also tuned down his

guitar to a darker, lower tone to make bending the strings easier. The resulting menacing sound spawned the heavy metal genre. Band members came and went, though Iommi, Osbourne, Butler and Ward remained the classic line-up. Geoff Nicholls, who was the metal band’s keyboardist from 1979 to 2004, died last Saturday aged 68 following a battle with lung cancer. Iommi said Sabbath were “not saying goodbye as such... we don’t want to do any more world tours.”

“I wouldn’t rule out doing a one-off show. Or even an album. I think the door’s open,” he told the BBC, though Osbourne, said: “As far as I am concerned, this is the end... I’m not doing it again.” US-based Osbourne, dubbed the Prince of Darkness, admitted his emotions were “all over the place” since returning home for the final shows. “Since I’ve got to this building, I’ve been happy, I’ve been tearful,” he said. “One of the proudest things I have in my heart is the fact that Black Sabbath wasn’t a band that was created by some big mogul,” he said. “It was four guys who said, ‘Let’s have a dream’, and it came true beyond our wildest expectations.” — AFP



This image released by Universal Studios shows John Ortiz in a scene from “A Dog’s Purpose.” — AP

American Humane: Third-party report clears ‘A Dog’s Purpose’

Leaked video showing a frightened dog being forced into churning water during filming of “A Dog’s Purpose” was misleadingly edited and the German shepherd was unharmed, according to third-party findings released by American Humane, the group responsible for overseeing animal safety on the movie set. An independent animal-cruelty expert found that preventative safety measures were in place to protect the dog, Hercules, American Humane said. The board-certified veterinarian, who was not identified, concluded that the dog was momentarily stressed but suffered no lasting ill effects.

The group said the outside expert, whose name was withheld because of the public outcry following the video’s release, found it to be a misrepresentation of events. “The decisions by the individual or individuals who captured and deliberately edited the footage, and then waited longer than 15 months to release the manipulated video only days before the movie’s premiere, raise serious questions about their motives and ethics,” American Humane said Friday.

“The video was deliberately edited for the purpose of misleading the public and stoking outrage. In fact, the two scenes shown in the edited video were filmed at different times,” the group said in reporting the findings. That con-

clusion was based on viewing unedited footage from the set and on eyewitness accounts, group spokesman Mark Stubis said Saturday. Who may have leaked the video wasn’t addressed in the report, and American Humane doesn’t know who is responsible, he said. The video had an immediate impact on “A Dog’s Purpose,” starring Dennis Quaid and featuring Josh Gads’ voice, as a planned press day and starry premiere were canceled. But producer Amblin Entertainment and distributor Universal Pictures stuck to plans to release the PG-rated film a week ago in more than 3,000 North American theaters.

Animal safety

Despite the controversy, the feel-good film that had been pegged to open in the mid-\$20-million range still managed to earn an estimated \$18.4 million and place second at the box office, behind “Split.” Studio representatives said that was in line with their hopes. Amblin Entertainment and Universal Pictures declined comment on the report Saturday. American Humane, which had an animal safety representative on the set, acknowledged that “the handling of the dog in the first scene in the video should have been gentler and signs of stress recognized earlier.”

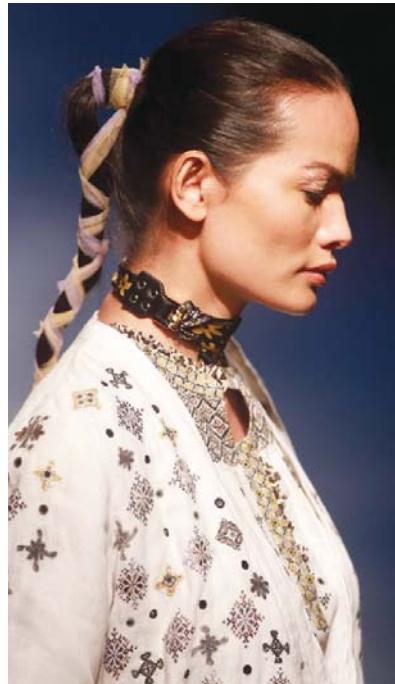
“That being said, it is important to note that this was recognized and the scene did not pro-

ceed as insinuated by the misleadingly edited video,” the group added. The dog was immediately taken to a warming tent, an examination found no signs of stress, and the dog later was returned to filming, it said. The on-set representative, who American Humane said was joined by three trainers, a safety coordinator and a water safety diver throughout the scene, was suspended after the video’s release. The group declined to address the person’s status, citing confidentiality for personnel issues.

Lisa Lange, senior vice president for the animal rights group PETA, called the report’s findings incomplete and said the video still shows “a frightened dog who did not wish to go into the water.” “The fact that the dog did not get injured or die is not at issue, but questions remain,” including why the dog was checked at the time, Lange said in a statement. “In the making of a film, no animal should be frightened at all. It is a film.” Dr Kwane Stewart, the veterinarian in charge of American Humane’s “No Animals Were Harmed” program based on filming guidelines developed by a scientific advisory committee, said in a statement that the organization is “the first to address fight cruelty and abuse” and that none occurred on the movie set. American Humane is the sole industry-sanctioned animal safety group on film and TV production sets. — AP



Nepal's first transgender model Anjali Lama (left) showcases a creation by designer Gen Next at Lakme Fashion Week.



Anjali Lama, a transgender model from Nepal, walks the ramp at the Lakme Fashion week in Mumbai, India. — AP/AFP photos

Transgender Nepali has her big moment on Indian catwalk



Anjali Lama, center, a transgender model from Nepal, interacts with other models after walking the ramp during Lakme Fashion week.

It was her big moment. Anjali Lama sashayed down the catwalk in the swanky Mumbai auditorium. A fitted, cream dress highlighted her tall, slender frame. Her pulled-back hair showed off her high cheekbones. Modeling at Lakme Fashion Week often seemed like a dream far beyond her reach, but Lama has become the first transgender woman to model at one of the top events on India's fashion calendar and one sponsored by a top Indian cosmetics brand.

Growing up as the fifth son in a poor farming family in Nepal, Lama didn't dream early in life to be a fashion model. First was the painful struggle to accept that he felt deeply female. "I knew even as a child that I didn't like being a boy, wearing those clothes," Lama said by phone as she juggled fittings and photoshoots in Mumbai, India's entertainment capital. The years in the village were hard. Other children in school made fun of the boy, then called Nabin Waiba, and he struggled with figuring out why he felt so uncomfortable. "I began to feel really confused and depressed. I kept asking myself 'I'm a boy, so why do I feel this way?'" "I tried to change but it

was mental torture."

Coming to Kathmandu as a teenager brought some anonymity but few answers. "I would walk around the city and see the beautiful saris and dresses in shop and wish I could dress like that. I used to wish God had made me a girl," she said. A chance encounter with transgender women turned Lama's life around by putting her in touch with the Blue Diamond Society, an advocacy group for Nepal's LGBT community. In 2005 she came out to her friends and family as transgender. "It was like a rebirth for me. I remember thinking, 'Oh my God, I'm not alone in this world. There are others like me,' she said.

Five years later she got silicone breast implants. The dream of a career in fashion followed. "People began to notice me and tell me how I had the figure and height to become a model. That felt very nice." A magazine wrote a cover story about transgender people in Nepal and put her on the cover. She felt close to her dream but it continued to elude her. After years of struggling and getting only small gigs in her home country, Lama decided to try her luck in India's massive fashion

industry. "I felt I had to at least try and take a chance." And that chance came in December when after two failed auditions she finally made the cut. "I'm very, very excited. I'm trying to just enjoy this moment," she said, giggling over the phone. "This is a dream come true." — AP



Nepal's first transgender model Anjali Lama showcases a creation by designer Gen Next at Lakme Fashion Week.



Anjali Lama, a transgender model from Nepal, stands backstage at the Lakme Fashion week.



In this photo members of the Endiablada brotherhood pose for a group photo during the "Endiablada" traditional festival in Almonacid del Marquesado, Spain. Since medieval times, the 400 residents of Almonacid del Marquesado have celebrated the "Endiablada" (Brotherhood of the Devils) festival each Feb 2-3.

What the devil? Spaniards clang bells in religious festival

For two days in a tiny Spanish village, the devil ceases to be enemy No. 1 for a few devout Catholics. Since medieval times, the 400 residents of Almonacid del Marquesado have celebrated the "Endiablada" (Brotherhood of the Devils) festival each Feb 2-3. Members of the town's all-male religious brotherhood dress up in what they consider devil-type characters, donning colorful jumpsuits and red miter hats. Almost every male in the village, from boys up to the elderly, then take part in processions through the twisting village streets. They each carry heavy copper cowbells around their waist, which they clang incessantly, and some run and

jump to make as much noise as possible. Each man in the brotherhood also has his own wooden staff that they have inherited or carved, some of which include images of a devil.

The Feb 2 procession, the "Candelaria," represents the Virgin Mary presenting the baby Jesus to authorities in the temple 40 days after Christmas. The protocol is believed to have caused her some embarrassment, and the bell-clanging is thought to be a way of diverting the public's attention.

On this day, the brotherhood also visits the local cemetery to pay respects to its members who have passed away that year. Starting in the morning, the brotherhood parades to the town's church,



where the clamor of the bells is amplified to a deafening din inside its old stone walls. Aniceto Rodrigo, 80, presides over the celebrations. He's the

Diablo Mayor, or "great devil," because he's the person who has the longest streak of participating in the celebrations without missing a single year. Although the processions are similar, the

two holidays have different origins. The Feb 3 procession commemorates the day of Saint Blas.

According to a local legend, town shepherds found a statue of the saint and then won a competition with a nearby town to keep the effigy, ringing the bells of their animals in celebration. This bit of lore is said to have inspired the walking sticks the men carry, harking back to shepherds' crooks.

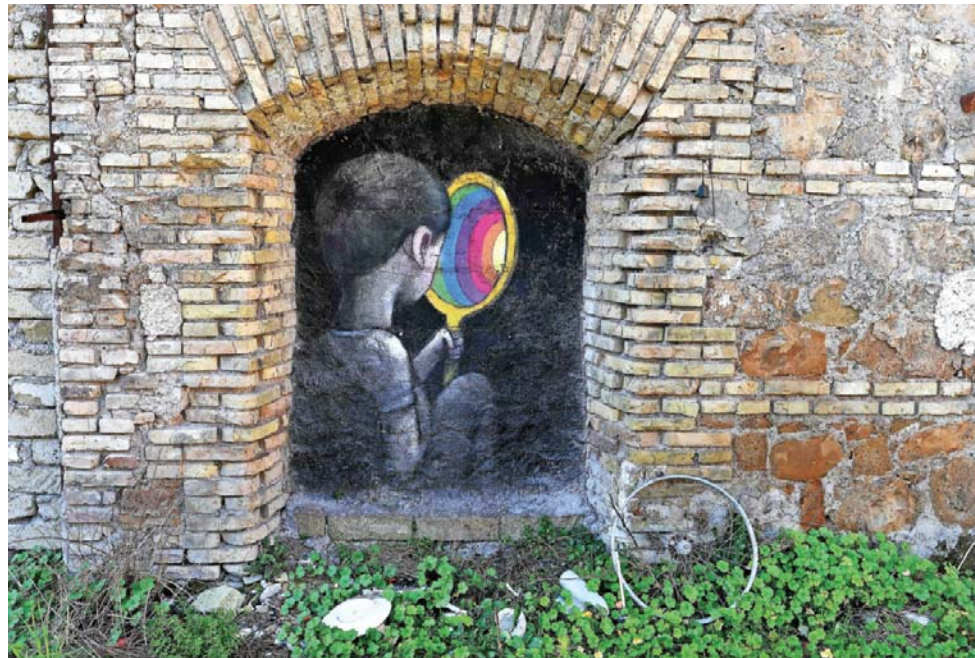
While some of the village's women join the spectators who have come from other towns to enjoy the parades, others are busy cooking traditional "rosquillas" treats. Here's a gallery of images from this year's festivals. — AP



In this photos wood carved staffs from members of the 'Endiablada' brotherhood are displayed, during a break in the traditional festival, in Almonacid del Marquesado, Spain. — AP photos

ART SPRINGS

FROM RUINS OF ROME'S INDUSTRIAL PAST



A picture shows a painting named in Latin "Vultus Est Index Animi" at the ex Mira Lanza factory hosting installations and paintings by French artist Julien Malland a.k.a Seth as part of the exhibition "Range ta chambre" which means "clean up your room" in Rome. —AFP photos



Roma people Tito (right) and Lena, pose at the ex Mira Lanza factory hosting installations and paintings by French artist Julien Malland a.k.a Seth as part of the exhibition "Range ta chambre".

The ruins of a landmark industrial building in Rome have become home to a thought-provoking art project that casts an unflattering light on the capital's patchy record on urban regeneration. Sections of the abandoned shell of the Mira Lanza, once a factory where soap was first produced in Italy, are now home to a collection of works created by Seth, a French street artist who camped, illegally, on the rubbish-strewn site for two months last year.

Now looked after by a group of ethnic Roma migrants, who have set up camp inside the ruins, the paintings and installations created from the on-site debris are already starting to decay. And that is exactly the point, according to Stefano Antonelli, a director of 999Contemporary, the not-for-profit organization behind the initiative. Piled-up books, which initially appeared to provide a seat for a boy painted onto the brick walls of the listed 19th-Century building, have fallen over and now lie encrusted in mud on the soggy floor. The paintwork on what was the re-creation of an empty swimming pool has been mostly washed away by the rain. So why not touch up the paint, put the books back in place?

Unthinkable elsewhere

"This is the destiny of these works," says Antonelli. "This place has been abandoned since the factory closed in 1957. Since I was a little boy there have been plans to turn it into a museum, student accommodation, something. "But nothing has ever come of it. So now, we are asking the question: what is the destiny of the Mira Lanza going to be?" That such a prime site, located a short walk from the trendy downtown neighborhood of Testaccio and only a few kilometers (miles) from the ancient heart of



A picture shows a painting named in Latin "Felix Qui Potuit Rerum Cognoscere Causas" at the ex Mira Lanza factory.

Rome, should have been left undeveloped for 60 years would be unthinkable in most comparable cities.

That it has been appears to be down to a combination of Rome's chronically weak urban planning—seen most notably in its underdeveloped transport network—and some unfortunate twists of fate. The books were brought to the site when plans to develop it as an offshoot of a prestigious drama college were at an advanced stage.

But those plans and most of the books went up in smoke when the building was ravaged by a fire that broke out after hundreds of squatters were forcibly evicted from the site in 2014.

In an area the squatters used as a latrine, the artist has painted a crouching boy with his head emerging into the light, a work entitled Lux in Tenebris (Light in Darkness) in homage to how it came to be. "To clear the space we literally had to shovel out

piles of shit—it is not what you usually associate with curating a contemporary art exhibition," said Antonelli.

Brickseat or Brexit

Another wall sports paintings of migrants crammed onto boats bound for Italy's southern shores. The colorful images create a similar impression to a run of stained glass windows in a church. In the adjacent, roofless hall, the surviving, often lopsided, pillars have been painted in the colors of the rainbow to create an installation inspired by the destruction of treasured Roman monuments in Palmyra, Syria, by the Islamic State group.

Since the roof's collapse, the colorful pillars have themselves become damaged history. A pile of painted bricks provides the support for another painted little boy: "Brickseat" it's called, in a nod to the Brexit vote that had just taken place when Seth was creating the collection. The Paris-born artist, whose real name is Julien Malland, has created large-scale murals and colorful street art all over the world. In the aftermath of the 2014 fire, Antonelli's organization put together a proposal to clean up the site, make it safe and put on a pilot exhibition to demonstrate its potential.

With a budget of 50,000 euros (\$54,000), plus the cost of employing an architect for 50 days, that vision won the backing of former mayor Ignazio Marino. But he was forced to resign on the very day the accord was due to be signed and it was back to square one. Fifteen months later, the collective is hoping to persuade his replacement Virginia Raggi to sign up. But with her administration beset by more pressing issues, a resolution of the fate of the Mira Lanza does not look imminent. — AFP



Muezira poses at the entrance of her makeshift house near a painting called "Oculus Habit Et Non Videbunt".



A picture shows a painting called "Lampedusa".



A picture shows an installation and painting called "Brickseat".



Home Centre's latest catalogue features 850 new style inspirations

Home Centre, the region's leading home retailer, has released its latest 140-page catalogue that showcases an extensive collection of furniture and home accessories, both classic and contemporary. With over 850 new inspiring styles, this catalogue promises to let customers rediscover the joy of shopping for their homes.



Like every year, this edition too will reflect the year's global trends in home furnishing, customized and presented beautifully for regional shoppers.

In addition to the print version, the latest catalogue is also available online and features interactive elements and new-age technological components such as a mobile responsive design and informative embedded videos.

The catalogue offers customers a preview of Home Centre's latest range of interior products categorized as Living, Dining, Sleeping and Playing solutions. A new addition this year are the modular and mix-and-match solutions like the Blend table, Signature sofa, Stellar bed and Infinity wardrobe, which enable customers to select components that perfectly suit their space and personalities.

This year, Home Centre has introduced three breath-taking collections - Arabesque, Marrakesh and Majestic - each of them inspired by distinctive styles and curated to create beautiful homes. The new catalogue also features 'Great Deals', offering customers a selection of best priced products. Adding to this year's exciting offerings, Home Centre has introduced warranties for up to two years on furniture and up to a year on household items.

Designed to meet the customers' evolving style and design requirements, the catalogue offers home design tips, style advice and practical suggestions for the discerning homemaker. The print catalogue will be available at all Home Centre stores located at Al-Rai, Shuwaikh, The Avenues, Kuwait City, Fahaheel and Sama Mall, while the interactive catalogue can be viewed online at homecentre.com.



Lifestyle

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2017

Chazelle wins top DGA prize for 'La La Land'

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All-female troupes from the Tian Eng Dragon and Lion Dance Centre perform with a LED phoenix dance at Gardens by the Bay to usher in the Lunar New Year in Singapore on February 4, 2017. — AFP

NY museum protests Trump travel ban through art



A woman looks at artwork by Iranian painter and sculptor Charles Hossein Zenderoudi-K+L+32+H+4 Mon pere et moi, 1962 (left) — at The Museum of Modern Art in New York City. — AFP photos

A famed New York art museum has joined the throng of protests against President Donald Trump's travel ban by replacing Western art with pieces by Iranian, Iraqi and Sudanese artists.

The Museum of Modern Art said works by Sudanese painter Ibrahim El-Salahi, Iraqi-born architect Zaha Hadid and five artists with Iranian backgrounds replaced seven Western

works, including by Picasso and Matisse.

The Republican president's explosive executive order came into effect last Friday, closing US borders to refugees for 120 days and visa holders from Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen for 90 days. Syrian refugees have been banned indefinitely. The museum switched the artworks late Thursday in its fifth-floor galleries, which ordinarily are devoted to



A man looks at artwork by Iraqi-born architect Zaha Hadid "The Peak Project, Hong Kong China, 1991".

Western modernism before 1945. The changes were reported by The New York Times and confirmed by the museum.

The five artists with Iranian backgrounds include Marcos Grigorian, the Los Angeles based video artist Tala Madani, photographer Shirana Shahbazi, sculptor Parviz Tanavoli and painter Charles Hossein Zenderoudi. The museum also placed a large sculpture of alu-

minum and steel by Siah Armajani, a US artist who was born in Iran, in a lobby courtyard.

The museum has scheduled screenings of films from people subject to the ban, including the Iraqi-born German director Kais Al-Zubaidi and Oussama Mohammad, a Syrian filmmaker living in France. Founded in 1929, the museum is one of the world's premier modern art museums. A gateway for immi-

grants into America for centuries, New York has staged multiple protests since the travel ban came into effect last Friday.

Hollywood actor-turned-activist Shia LaBeouf has collaborated with two artists on a live-stream protest outside New York's Museum of the Moving Image, which he vows will continue for the duration of Trump's time in office. — AFP



This is a design by Debbie Smith for the 2016 captain's costume, Mystic Krewe of Nyx.

Museum exhibit: Women's Carnival krewes since 1896

A Louisiana State Museum exhibition that opens Friday (Feb 10) will commemorate the centennial of New Orleans' oldest surviving women's Carnival parade krewe and the evolution of women's krewes from the 1890s to the present. The Krewe of Iris, which was formed in 1917, and the krewes of Muses and Nyx provided display material and helped financially with the exhibit, called "Iris and the Goddesses of Carnival," said Wayne Phillips, the museum's curator of carnival collections.

The exhibit runs through December 2018 at the Presbytere. Museum artifacts on display include a photo of the first queen of the first women's krewe, called Les Mysterieuses (lay mis-TEHR-ee-UHZ), which held leap year balls in 1896 and 1900. A new group has taken the name, and gave a ball in late December, billing it as the third Les Mysterieuses ball, Phillips said. He said a number of groups, many of them very short-lived, sprang up in the first two decades of the 20th century.

"The late 1800s and early 1900s were a very active time for ladies' social clubs, many of which embraced the fight for suffrage," he said. World War I may have killed some of the groups, he said. "Everything ground to a halt Mardi-Gras-wise in World War I; a lot of those krewes disappeared after 1916 or 1917," Phillips said. Iris may have started out as a social club, but almost

nothing is known about its early years, he said. The group held its first ball in 1922, but disbanded in 1929, and some of its members created a



This is a photo by Moore shows Arthemise Baldwin, first queen of Les Mysterieuses, circa 1896.

new group called Iridis, meaning "rainbow." Iris re-formed about 1938, Phillips said. It didn't parade until 1959, but wasn't the first women's group to do so. Men's groups had sponsored every parade until 1941, when the Krewe of Venus put on its first parade.

"The woman who founded Iris also founded Muses, Nyx, Femme Fatale, Shangri-La, and Cleopatra. The exhibit will include a detailed overview of women's krewe parades, including forgotten groups such as Mittens, the Mystic Maids, Emphyreans, and Titanians, Phillips said in a news release.

Items on display come from the museum and a number of lenders. Those include Arnaud's restaurant, which owns the earliest known existing Iris queen's dress, worn in 1941 by Irma Cazenave, wife of Count Arnaud Cazenave. Rare photographs from the late 1800s and early 1900s and ball favors, invitations and dance cards from the early 20th century are among items to be shown. The exhibit is part of the Women of New Orleans: Builders and Rebuilders exhibition initiative of the nonprofit Nola4Women, launched in honor of New Orleans' tricentennial. — AP



This is a design by John Scheffler for 1986 captain's costume, Krewe of Selena, entitled "Exotic Orchids." — AP photos



This is a dance card for Les Mysterieuses, the first women's krewe, circa 1900.