

SUBSCRIPTION



MONDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2017

JAMADA ALAWWAL 16, 1438 AH

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Ghanem
delivers
message from
Amir to Sisi



Germany elects
'anti-Trump'
Steinmeier as
new president



IMF's Lagarde
'optimistic'
about US
economy



'Disrespectful'
anthem gaffe
leaves Germans
fuming



150 FILS
NO: 17140
40 PAGES

INTERIOR MINISTRY ASSURES NO CROWDS ON BORDER WITH IRAQ

SECURITY CRACKDOWNS CONTINUING ACROSS KUWAIT



Min 13°
Max 23°
High Tide
00:01 & 13:40
Low Tide
07:23 & 19:16

GHAZALI RD CLOSURE CREATES MASSIVE TRAFFIC SNARL



KUWAIT: Traffic congestion across Kuwait reached epic levels yesterday, with some people waiting up to two hours in traffic due to construction works on Ghazali Road. The Traffic Department warned through local media that a detour would be opened along Ghazali Road at the intersection of Jahra

Road. Due to the construction, heavy trucks would not be allowed to pass along this stretch between 6 am and 4 pm.

As a result, heavy trucks and other port traffic were forced to find alternative routes in and out of Shuwaikh Industrial area. This led to heavy congestion

radiating out from the port, affecting Shuwaikh, Rai and eventually all the surrounding areas, where traffic was brought to a near standstill throughout the rush hours of the day. Even parts of Kuwait City, all the ring roads and traffic heading towards Salmiya, Farwaniya and the airport were impacted. (See Page 4)

KUWAIT: There is no abnormal gathering on the Kuwaiti-Iraqi border and trade movement is going on normally, a senior Kuwaiti security official said yesterday. "The security situation on the border is good and all concerned sectors are doing their duties efficiently," Interior Ministry Undersecretary Lt Gen Suleiman Al-Fahd told reporters.

Commenting on ongoing events in neighboring countries, Fahd said: "What is happening in some neighboring countries are just domestic political conflicts with which Kuwait has nothing to do whatsoever." Fahd made the remarks during a meeting with reporters and media figures at the Ministry of Interior. He called on mass media to spotlight the sacrifices and duties of security personnel and promote their significant role in fighting crimes and safeguarding national security and public safety.



Suleiman Al-Fahd

He extolled the meeting as part of his ministry's strategy to communicate with all mass media and to provide them reliable and accurate information in full transparency. "The current regional circumstances require accuracy, verification and patience ahead of reporting any news about the security situation (in the country)," Fahd urged.

Defending security measures, he said the interior ministry is taking precautionary moves to "fortify" the internal front and maintain national security and public safety. Fahd emphasized that security crackdowns are being carried out nationwide in order to arrest potential lawbreakers. — KUNA

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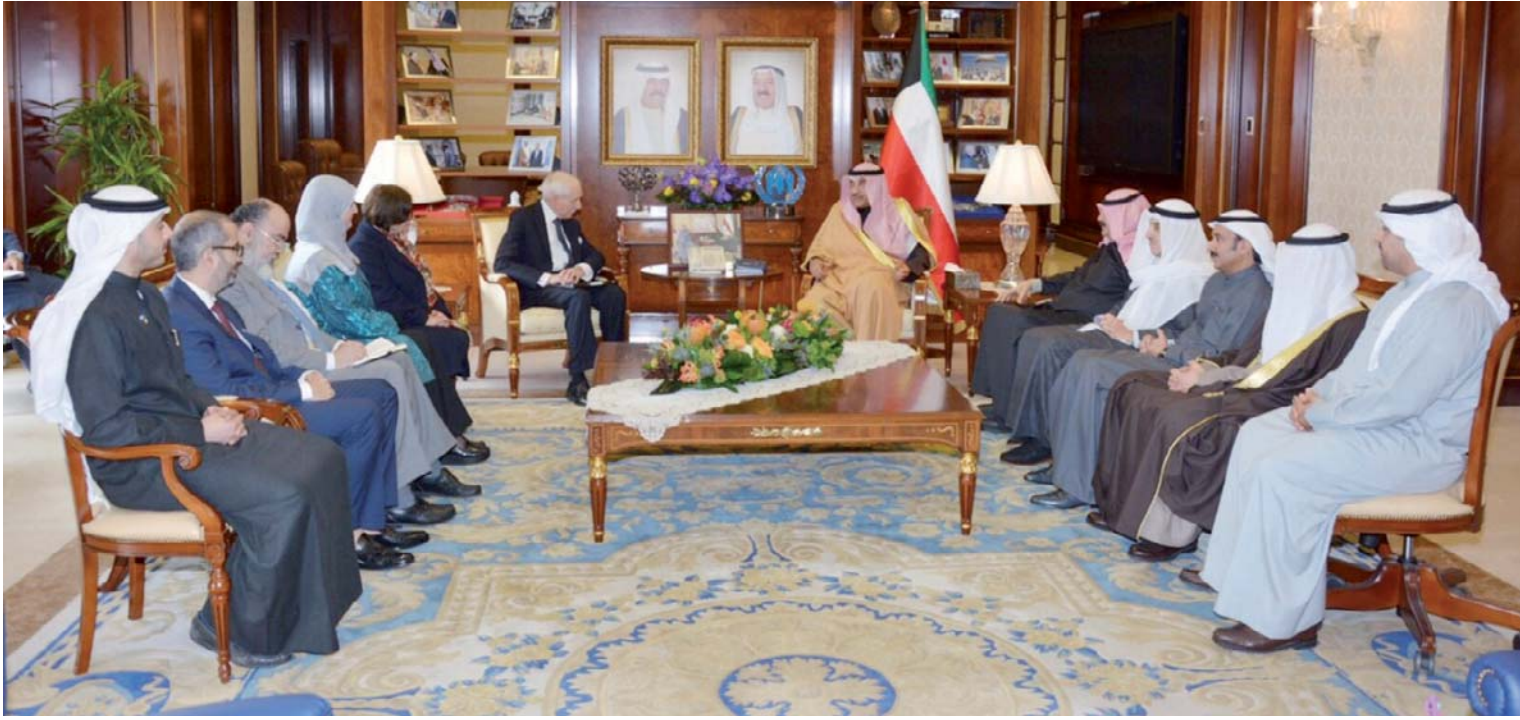
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KUWAIT: Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with IOM's Director General William Lacy Swing.

AMIR MEETS WITH IOM CHIEF

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received yesterday at Bayan Palace First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Sabah, accompanied by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Director General Ambassador William Lacy Swing. The meeting was attended by Deputy Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah.

Swing had expressed gratitude to the State of Kuwait in the realm of global humanitarian activities. During a meeting with Acting Speaker of the National Assembly Essa Al-Kandari, Swing expressed admiration for the State of Kuwait, namely His Highness the Amir, for the efforts that resulted in placing the Gulf State diplomacy high on the international arena. The two sides discussed Kuwait's efforts for safeguarding the expatriate workers' rights and implementing relevant international criteria. The talks also dealt with mutual cooperation regarding the foreign laborers and immigration.

Earlier yesterday, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled and Swing held discussions centered on IOM's humanitarian endeavors that aim to help out those victimized by conflict, particularly, in the Middle East. According to a statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled underscored the need for closer ties with the IOM, given the organization's benevolent aspirations.

Meanwhile, the IOM Director General applauded Kuwait's firm commitment to humanitarian causes all across the globe. The meeting was attended by Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah, Assistant Foreign



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with IOM's Director General Ambassador William Lacy Swing. —KUNA photos

Minister for the Affairs of the First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister's Office Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah, Assistant Foreign Minister for the Affairs of the Foreign Minister's Office Ayham

Al-Omar and Assistant Deputy Foreign Minister for the Affairs of International Organizations Ambassador Nasser Al-Heyn, along with a number of senior Foreign Ministry officials. — KUNA

KUWAIT, UAE DISCUSS ACTIVATING EXTRADITIONS

KUWAIT: The Kuwaiti-UAE Consular Committee, at its second meeting held yesterday, discussed activating the treaty for convicts' extradition between the two countries. Ambassador Ahmad Al-Dhahri, the UAE assistant undersecretary for consular affairs, said in a statement that the accord would be put into effect anew after adopting the meeting minutes today.

The accord primarily stipulates that the convict "should be placed at a correction facility," however such a situation warrants his (or her) approval. Members of the commission discussed during today's session "electronic and temporary passports" and prospected coordination between the two sides in this regard. The common commission held its first meeting in November 2015, in the UAE. Sami Al-Hamad, Kuwait's assistant foreign minister for consular affairs, indicated the mutual need to coordinate at the consular level due to substantial interaction at the investment, tourist and educational levels.

Yesterday's talks focused on furnishing Kuwaiti and UAE citizens with all possible facilities, he added. The committee held a meeting to examine bilateral relations and discuss prospects of achieving sustainable strategic partnership between the two GCC countries. Ambassador Hamad said in a statement



Sami Al-Hamad, Kuwait's assistant foreign minister for consular affairs.

at opening the commission's second session that such a gathering depicts depth of the historic and brotherly relations between the two countries.

The session was held in line with guidelines by First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and his UAE counterpart, Sheikh Abdullah Bin Zayed, for mutual coordination in various sectors. For his part Ambassador Al-Dhahri affirmed the mutual desire to cement cooperation in the consular field. The meeting was attended by representatives of Kuwaiti ministries of interior, finance and justice as well as UAE Ambassador Rahma Al-Zuabi. — KUNA

WGS DRAWS LINK BETWEEN HAPPINESS, GOVT PERFORMANCE: KUWAITI OFFICIAL

DUBAI: The World Government Summit (WGS) has established a correlation between happiness and government performance, Kuwait's Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs and Minister of Information Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Mubarak said yesterday.

Speaking on the sidelines of a summit that tackles potential challenges the future may bring, the Kuwaiti minister noted that the level of happiness is an integral factor to measure government performance.

Moreover, he spoke of aligning Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) views on the need to ensure that government services are provided on a bedrock of gratification, a model that has proven to be highly successful in the UAE. "This method of governance has largely been obscure in the past, but a growing number of

nations are now espousing this standard," Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah pointed out.

The new Minister of Information added that Kuwait will begin to rely on the level of satisfaction to gauge government performance and the progress of development projects. On the WGS, he noted that it features compelling discussions that bring together a bevy of specialists from all across the globe to "examine methods to overcome future hurdles."

Meanwhile, Kuwait's Consul General in Dubai and the Northern Emirates Theyab Al-Rashidi said that Kuwait's participation in this summit allows it the chance to interact with development experts. The WGS is an annual meeting held in Dubai dedicated to shaping the future of government worldwide. —KUNA



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Oman's Ambassador to Kuwait Hamid bin Saeed Al-Ibrahim. —KUNA photos



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Acting National Assembly Speaker Essa Ahmad Al-Kandari.

AMIR RECEIVES LETTER FROM OMAN'S SULTAN QABOOS

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received yesterday at Bayan Palace Oman's Ambassador to Kuwait Hamid bin Saeed Al-Ibrahim. The Omani envoy handed His Highness the Amir a letter from Oman's Sultan Qaboos, on strategies to develop ties within the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). The letter also contained an invitation to His Highness the Amir to visit Oman in the near future.

Earlier yesterday, His Highness the Amir received His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Sabah and Acting National Assembly Speaker Essa Ahmad Al-Kandari. Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince received His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak, Sheikh

Sabah Al-Khaled, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Premier and Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah as well as Deputy Premier and Minister of Finance Anas Al-Saleh. Moreover, His Highness the Crown Prince hosted Kandari and Minister of Commerce and Industry, Acting Minister of State for Youth Affairs Khaled Nasser Abdullah Al-Roudhan. —KUNA



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Commerce and Industry Minister and Acting Minister of State for Youth Affairs Khaled Al-Roudhan.



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

HSE CONFERENCE STARTS WED

KUWAIT: Minister of Oil and Water, Essam Al-Marzouq will be opening the second annual edition of the 'Kuwait International Health, Safety and Environment Conference and Exhibition' (KIHSSE) on Wednesday. In a press statement on Saturday, the conference organizing committee pointed out that this year's conference, which is co-organized by Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) and Britain's Global Events, will be attended by a number of experts in the fields of health, safety and environment (HSE).



The conference aims to raise HSE awareness of the personnel in the oil field, in addition to highlighting that the petroleum companies, which are under KPC umbrella, are complying with highest HSE standards, the statement added.

The statement noted that Oman's Oil Minister Mohammad Al-Rumhi would attend the two-day conference, where participants would share expertise to help formulate strategies aimed at addressing challenges facing oil companies. KPC announced earlier that this year's conference is to boost Kuwait's regional and international status in oil industry, and to further promote environmentally friendly laws adopted by Kuwait.

Production

In other news, a senior petrochemical official said that the actual production of the Olefins III and Aromatics II projects is expected to commence by the second quarter of 2022. A contract has been signed for implementing the designs of the integrated venture with Al-Zour oil refinery, Deputy CEO of Kuwait Petrochemical Industry Company (PIC) for Olefins and Aromatics Hosnia Hashim said in an interview with the company's magazine "Chemia".

The design stage is scheduled to take 17 months since the contract was signed, Hashim said, commending the integrated project with Al-Zour refinery as one of the company's major strategic initiatives aiming at promoting Kuwait's petrochemical position and putting its expansion policy in place.

On the strategy of the sectors of olefins and aromatics after merging them together, she said the company is operating as per a definite strategy based on petrochemical growth through expanded olefin and aromatic ventures.

She added that the company is currently carrying out several joint ventures in Kuwait and the US, and considering a number of opportunities in Bahrain, Korea, Canada and others. The company is currently seeking to boost its petrochemical production quota at the international market in general and the Asian one in particular, the PIC's senior official pointed out. —KUNA

EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT HAILS AMIR'S ROLE IN BOLSTERING ARAB RANKS

CAIRO: Egyptian President Abdelattah Al-Sisi yesterday hailed His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's role in cementing the Arabs' ranks using his wisdom and eminent status among Arab leaders. Presidential spokesman Ambassador Alaa Yousef said in a statement that President Al-Sisi expressed his admiration for His Highness the Amir's key role in this respect during his reception of the visiting Speaker of the Kuwaiti National Assembly Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem.

President Sisi, during the meeting, asked the Speaker to relay his greetings to His Highness the Amir and congratulations on his reign's 11th anniversary. "The appreciated stances by His Highness the Amir and the State of Kuwait would not be forgotten by the Egyptian people and the Kuwaiti-Egyptian solidarity will remain an example to follow at the level of the relations among the Arab brothers," President Al-Sisi said, noting the two countries' keenness on elevating the distinctive and brotherly relations to higher levels for sake of prosperity and progress of the two countries' peoples in various domains.

The president congratulated-Ghanem on his recent re-election as the chairman of the Kuwaiti parliament, hailing the Kuwaiti democratic experience and underlining role of the parliament for

enriching parliamentary work and the "political life in Kuwait." The presidential spokesman added that Ghanem relayed to Sisi salutes of His Highness the Amir noting the brotherly and cordial relations between the two peoples. Ghanem has affirmed that Kuwait is proud of the relations with Cairo and its keenness on solidifying the bonds at the political, economic and social levels, noting that Egypt has backed its Arab brothers in times of crises.

The spokesman added that the two sides discussed regional and international issues, where Sisi affirmed that the present period of time warrants greater solidarity among the Arab states to face the soaring challenges. Moreover, the president emphasized necessity to settle regional problems and strife for the sake of restoring security and stability and safeguarding the Arab states' institutions.

Ghanem had conveyed a verbal message from His Highness the Amir to Sisi, dealing with bilateral relations and regional issues. Speaking as he emerged from the meeting with the Egyptian president at Al-Ittihadiah Palace in Cairo, Ghanem said the conveyed message dealt with bilateral relations and latest developments in the Middle East. He added that Sisi requested that he convey to His Highness his sincere greetings and wishes for life-long wellness.

Speaker Ghanem added that he held



CAIRO: Egyptian President Abdelattah Al-Sisi meets with Kuwaiti National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Ali-Ghanem. — KUNA

talks with the president on pending issues of common concern, noting that the president expressed great admiration for the role played by Kuwait under His Highness the Amir's leadership in the region. Ghanem said he affirmed during the meeting Kuwait's admiration for Egypt's pivotal role in the Middle East and necessity that this role be expanded. "We have also asserted our full soli-

idity with Egypt in face of terrorist acts and bids targeting Egypt's security and stability," he said. Meanwhile, Sisi noted Cairo's historic commitment to Kuwait's security and supporting the country in the face of external threats, as well its keenness on elevating the distinctive ties further. The meeting was attended by the State of Kuwait Ambassador Mohammad Saleh Al-Thuwaiikh. —KUNA

ASSEMBLY TO DEBATE BANK DEPOSITS SCANDAL

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: MPs insisted yesterday that the bank deposits scandal must be exposed during a special debate in the national assembly and warned the government against attempting to prevent the debate tomorrow.

MP Riyadh Al-Adasani has submitted a motion to allocate at least one hour during Tuesday's session to expose the scandal in which current and former lawmakers are accused of receiving cash bribes from the government in 2011.

At least 13 lawmakers from the 2009 national assembly were interrogated by the public prosecution over the allegations but no charges were pressed against them because there were no sufficient laws to send them to court. A number of the 13 politicians are still members in the current assembly.

Adasani, who was a member of a probe committee formed by the opposition-dominated assembly elected in 2012, wants to announce the results of the investigation which have so far been kept confidential.

Unacceptable

Holding documents related to the issue, Adasani said facts about the issue must be revealed to the Kuwaiti people and it is unacceptable to keep the file shelved. Adasani said that the 13 MPs have acknowledged receiving money from members of the cabinet and it is illogical for lawmakers to receive benefits or cash from the government, adding that he is not objecting to the public prosecution decision to shelve the case.

The lawmaker said the investigation committee formed to complete the investigation in the 2013 assembly was a bogus panel, adding that most of the events now is the result of what happened in the 2011 bribery case. Adasani called on lawmakers to support holding the debate and urged the Kuwaiti people to hold to account those MPs who vote against the debate.

Liberal MP Rakan Al-Nasef stressed on the importance of the debate on the bank deposits scandal, saying that although the issue has been closed with regard to the criminal offense because of a legal loophole, it cannot be closed politically.

Nasef said that period represents a dark era for the Kuwaiti democracy, adding that he and other MPs will not accept the session to be held behind closed doors or any attempt by the government to foil it. The lawmaker called on the assembly legal committee to introduce the necessary laws to close the loophole that prevented the trial of those lawmakers. He charged that "legislative corruption" is no longer limited to cash payments and now it also includes the distribution of farms, contracts, accepting illegal transactions and others.

Millions of dollars

Meanwhile, MP Ahmad Al-Fadhl said that there have been reports that members of the national assemblies in 2009, February 2012, December 2012 and 2013 hold properties worth millions of dollars in Turkey and Bosnia.

In a question to the foreign minister, the lawmaker demanded a detailed report of real estates and companies owned by members of those national assemblies. He also asked if those MPs or close relatives own commercial or investment activities in the two countries.

15 DRUG-RELATED ARRESTS IN ONE WEEK

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: The Drugs Control General Department arrested 22 suspects over 15 cases relating to drug trafficking and abuse during the period between the first and ninth of February 2017. The arrested persons include three Indians, two Sri Lankans, four Kuwaitis, two Egyptians, two bedoons and one American. The seized drugs included 533.53 kg of hashish, 1,738 kg of heroin, 3,230 illicit tablets, 550 grams of marijuana and 257 grams of chemicals.

Contest opened

Under the patronage of Deputy Premier and Interior Minister Sheikh Khalid Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah, and follow up by Undersecretary Lt General Suleiman Al-Fahad, and presence of Assistant Undersecretary for Special Security Affairs, the International Elite Raid forces contest was opened Saturday and will continue until Thursday February 16.



By Nawara Fattahova

KUWAIT: Green Line Environmental Group Kuwait yesterday announced concluding the planting and greening project of the military base of the air force in cooperation with the army. "This is the biggest environmental project of its kind among Arab armies. It was done in two phases, and 4,000 saplings of various kinds that are resistant to the drastic desert weather were planted. This project was successfully carried out due to the support of Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Mohammed Al-Khalid Al-Sabah, Armed Forces Chief Lt Gen Mohammed Al-Khudhr, Deputy Armed Forces Chief Lt Gen Abdullah Al-Nawaf Al-Sabah and other officers," said Khalid Al-Hajiri, Head of Green Line.

This project should bring various environmental benefits. "This greenery project will halt sand encroachment and will eliminate the effects of sandstorms on the building and machines of the army. It will also gradually increase the number of trees that can eliminate sand encroachment," he added.

After the project was completed, the armed forces held an award ceremony for Green Line activists and volunteers who executed the greening project of the air force base. Hajiri said Green Line considers this project as one of the major environmental projects in Kuwait for this year, and that this project is registered as a Kuwaiti armed forces achievement.

"We cooperated in this project with



the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR), which opened its nurseries in order to participate in the greening of the base forces. We also appreciate the role of

PAAAFR in previous greening projects of historical locations on Failaka Island and Subbiya to protect these precious locations from sand encroachment," concluded Hajiri.

KISR GRANTED WATER DESALINATION PATENT

By Meshaal Al-Enezi and A Saleh

KUWAIT: The US Patent and Trademark Office agreed to grant Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research's (KISR) water research department patent rights on Jan 10, 2017 for its 'water desalination with a dual system combining multi-effect distillation and multi-phase evaporation' system. The new technology was perfected by Dr Essamuddin Al-Sayyed, who used both methods in temperatures varying between 40-120 degrees centigrade to help face water supply challenges in Kuwait.

Road project

The Ministry of Public Works' assistant undersecretary for road engineering affairs Ahmed Al-Hassan said 65 percent of the western part of Jamal Abdul-Nasser Road's intersection is complete. He added that two bridges will open in March and a third will open in April. Hassan also noted that the project will be concluded by June 2018 at a total cost of KD 34.9 million.

Labor transactions online

Farwaniya labor department manager at the Public Authority

for Manpower Yousif Arti stressed that work permits and transfers to other employers would be soon done online through the government's e-portal. Arti warned that in collaboration with the Interior Ministry's immigration investigation department, strict legal measures would be taken against those who attempt to pass illegal transactions. Arti also said that special halls had been allocated for employers and companies' representatives with more counters to help process transactions easily and without delay.

Legalese

SAYING THANK YOU KINDLY TO TEACHERS

By Attorney Fajer Ahmed

"Technology is just a tool. In terms of getting the kids working together and motivating them, the teacher is the most important." - Bill Gates

There is no question that teachers are one of society's most important pillars, and we are lucky in Kuwait that we have teachers and educators from all over the globe. I have come across teachers from America, New Zealand, the UK, Spain, India, Malawi and many more countries, each bringing to Kuwait their own perspectives and stories to share with us.

I myself was fortunate enough to go to one of Kuwait's prominent schools and be surrounded by educators that were compassionate and caring, and therefore it is very moving for me to see clients that walk into the law firm with cases where the schools have been unfair and acted illegally. I urge schools to take care of their employees, especially the teachers, as their stress levels can affect their focus and what they teach our children. Please be nice to them.

Fired for pregnancy

Question: I am working as a French teacher in a school, and I was fired because I am pregnant. Is this legal? What can I do about this? The school said teachers do not fall under Kuwait labor law - instead there are laws just for teachers.

Fajer: Teachers in general fall under Kuwait labor law. With that said though, there are bylaws by the Ministry of Social Affairs And Labor specifically for teachers to regulate issues just teachers deal with. But generally, teachers in the private sector need to look to the Kuwait private labor law. Either way, it is unlawful to terminate an employment contract because of pregnancy - this violates major human rights, because women should be allowed to have families and careers simultaneously. File a complaint at the Ministry of Social Affairs And Labor against the school asking for compensation for unrightfully terminating you.

Question: My school has told me that I can come to Kuwait on a tourist visa. Is this true?

Fajer: No. It is untrue. It is illegal to work on a tourist visa. So do not risk it. Instead, ask the school to finalize your visa procedures before you arrive. Unfortunately though from experience, I have come across many schools that have teachers working for them under tourist visas.

School's housing

Question: If I have been terminated from my school on the spot for something illegal that I have done, could I be evicted from the school's housing that I have been living in, without notice?

Fajer: This is a touchy question. By law, if you are being evicted, you will need to be notified beforehand. Unfortunately though, since you are staying at the school's housing, they could evict you. You will need to read the school's policy and your contract, but generally speaking, yes they could.

Teachers have rewarding yet stressful jobs, so I understand how annoying it can get when they do not have a full understanding of the legal system because it is not accessible. It is important in Kuwait that we change our laws and make it more accessible for both expats and Kuwaitis living here. The law needs to be simple.

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

NATIONAL LABOR RECRUITMENT IN PRIVATE SECTOR INCREASING

KUWAIT: There is a remarkable hike in national labor recruitment in the private sector, including major and new institutions, said Minister of Social Affairs and Labor Hind Al-Sabeeh. Sabeeh, who doubles as Minister of State for Economic Affairs, made the remark to reporters on the sidelines of a two-day national conference on institutional education, organized by the Manpower and Government Restructuring Program (MGRP). She even hoped that the percentage of national labor recruitment in the private sector would further increase, expecting young people to hold high-level posts in private institutions.

On the government's mechanisms for boosting local labor recruitment, the minister unfolded that a fresh decree would see the light in six months' time in this regard. Meanwhile, Sabeeh said Kuwait had recently launched its own national media campaign "New Kuwait" with a view to spotlighting the country's 2035 Development Vision. She reiterated that the Kuwaiti leadership and government are interested in training, rehabilitating and encouraging national labor at private institutions by giving them financial and moral advantages.

On the institutional education conference, the minister elaborated that it mainly aims at developing human skills and resources in the private sector. She added that the event is part of the country's vision intended to transfer Kuwait into a world trade and financial hub thanks to its attractive investment climate where the private sector can act as a development leader. On his part, Secretary-General of the Manpower and Government Restructuring Program (MGRP) Fawzy Al-Majdali said his program spares no effort to achieve the labor strategy aiming at encouraging and supporting national labor. He said the conference is meant to boost public awareness about institutional education concepts by means of spurring students of high schools and universities to work in the private sector's institutions.

Majdali voiced confidence that the conference would fulfill its goals; mainly various programs of action and lectures to be delivered by academicians, experts and advisors both at home and abroad. He noted that the educational gathering serves the State's orientations for applying different concepts in developing Kuwaiti human resources and promoting cooperation among labor institutions in different sectors. — KUNA



KUWAIT: A reported closure for the intersection connecting the Ghazali Bridge with the Jahra Road caused heavy traffic across Kuwait yesterday, especially roads leading to and from Shuwaikh Industrial Area. The intersection will remain closed until entire Ghazali Road renovation project completes in two years, raising questions on how authorities will handle the situation, as well as demands for alternative routes to be secured in hope of easing the traffic congestions. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat and Fouad Al-Shaikh

ROADS SUPPORT PROJECTS IN KUWAIT’S VISION FOR 2035

KUWAIT: The network for main roads and bridges will become the main keys of support to developmental projects based on Kuwait vision 2035, which overlaps with other huge developmental projects currently taken place based on the state plan. The roads and

bridges network conducted by the state are part of the infrastructure projects to coop with the increasing population and residential expansions in the country. — KUNA



Ongoing construction on Jamal Abdul-Nasser Road.



KUWAIT: The Jaber Causeway that connects Shuwaikh with Al-Subbiya via Kuwait Bay. — KUNA



The bridge connecting to Boubiyan Island.



United Nations road connected to Fourth Road Ring.



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KUWAIT: Lidia Hume, Manager International Marketing Officer at Gold Coast Tourism Corporation and Warren Hauck, Australia's Ambassador to Kuwait is seen. —Photo by Joseph Shagra

GOLD COAST TOURISM CORPORATION PROMOTES AUSTRALIA'S TOURISM

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: A promotion by Australia's Gold Coast Tourism Corporation was organized at the ambassador's residence in Adailiya yesterday. Warren Hauck, Australia's Ambassador to Kuwait, thanked Kuwait for its continued patronage of the Australian tourism industry, noting that Kuwaitis visit not only Australia's biggest cities, but the entire continent in general. He urged all Kuwaitis to consider Australia for their next vacation. "We are trying to focus in on Australia's Gold Coast, but bear in mind that the whole Australian continent is an equally stunning and beautiful place to visit," he said. "You can find more of Australia's details in recent supplement with Kuwait Times, (Jan 27, 2017 issue). We are a country of great weather and great people."

Hauck lauded the recent tourist influx from Kuwait, with around 4,000 visiting in 2016 alone. "We have direct flights to Australia from Kuwait, and so many flights per week to other GCC countries. There are many gateways to get down to Australia," he said. "More and more tourists are coming to Australia and I am

really grateful to Middle Eastern people for [that]."

According to Hauck, the visa process is straightforward, with anyone wanting to visit Australia able to acquire one online within 48 hours. "For non-GCC people, they can apply via VFS and usually the visa will be ready within one-month period. The summer in Kuwait was really scorching, so we want you to experience our winter in Australia where the temperature is only 20-28," he added.

Lidia Hume, Manager International Marketing Officer at Gold Coast Tourism Corporation, championed the Gold Coast as a potential tourist destination at the event, which was mainly attended by people from travel agencies and other invited guests. She enticed people to visit the subtropical Gold Coast and experience a place they have never visited before. "In 2016 we had 12 million visitors from all over the world," she said. The Gold Coast is one of Australia's most important tourist destinations. Its surf beaches, high-rise dominated skyline, theme parks, parks, nightlife, and rainforest hinterland make tourism one of its most significant industries. The city will also play host to the 2018 Commonwealth Games.



KUWAIT: The Ambassador of Sri Lanka to Kuwait Kaadeepan Bala hosted a reception at Crowne Plaza Hotel over the weekend to celebrate his country's 69th Independence Day Anniversary. Senior officials, diplomats and media personalities attended the event. —Photos by Joseph Shagra

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Crime

Report

MOTORIST ARRESTED IN FATAL HIT-AND-RUN

KUWAIT: Police arrested an Indian man involved in a hit-and-run accident that resulted in the death of an Egyptian pedestrian in Farwaniya. Detectives were able to identify and arrest the suspect within an hour after he fled the scene. The victim's body was recovered by the forensics department after paramedics pronounced him dead.



Fight

Passersby broke up a women's fight in which purses and shoes were used in the parking lot of a Mubarak Al-Kabeer governorate cafe. An argument began while the women smoked shisha before it escalated into a fistfight. One of the women left for her car, accompanied by two others who attempted to calm her down. The woman with whom she argued followed, starting a fight that lasted until it was broken up and police were called. The women left before police arrived to the scene.

Missing boy found

An Egyptian boy named Mohammad was found three days after his disappearance. The boy spent his time in a mosque, not wanting to face his family after his school grades dropped. His father expressed regret over the way he admonished him. The boy was found and returned by Farwaniya detectives.

Suicide

An Indian banker died in an apparent suicide after he threw himself to death from the fourth floor a Farwaniya building where he lived. The banker spent several days screaming hysterically before committing suicide, according to his neighbors. A security source said detectives inspected the man's apartment and did not find any evidence of foul play. A suicide case was filed and further investigations are in progress. — *Translated from the Arabic press*



Al-Jarida

البيان

Al-Jarida

AMERICAN CLEMENCY LESSONS

By Mudaffar Abdullah

Most of us have seen videos showing the number of people from all across the US who sympathize with immigrants, and Muslims in particular, following the exclusionary policies implemented by the new administration. Many welcomed the arrival of Muslims at Los Angeles Airport, American women wearing the US flag as a head veil in New York, and there were countless other similar examples.

These things were not driven by institutions, and reflect how much an enormous segment of the US' community has absorbed a culture of tolerance and clemency in a society open to immigrants from across the globe. This reflects a dynamic, vigorous group opposed to disfiguring its true identity, formed after long periods of struggle to establish a concept of peaceful co-existence. This is a model that ought to be followed in Muslim countries as they deal with non-Muslims.

Nevertheless, the National Assembly in Kuwait is preparing for a session to discuss the country's demo-

graphic structure, following some wildly offensive comments directed at so-called 'expatriates'. These people should actually be described as 'partners' in building Kuwait since independence. We hope that the issue will be handled reasonably, without an attempt to hide the problem's true causes. Parliament includes many wise men capable of logically addressing the problem without the need for histrionics.

There is a variety of nationalities here that have provided expertise in various fields, both public and private. It is not their fault that our laws have not established a balance between the economy and their standard of living. There is, therefore, no need to use the 'they harmed us' argument in the discussion, because they did not simply sneak into Kuwait.

Off-topic note: None of the officials who talked about Kuwait's vision for 2035 talked about the Jaber Al-Ahmed Cultural Center. What an implication!

— *Translated by Kuwait Times*

البيان

Al-Anbaa

ARAB SMOKE

By Salah Al-Sayer

On the United States' decision to ban citizens from a number of Muslim states from entering the US, I would like to highlight the fuss that Arab media and social media networks have created. We saw how Arabs insist on portraying the decision as a racist and anti-Muslims one, though the US has officially limited the decision to states stricken by civil wars and chaos, or those nurturing and promoting terrorism such as Iran (as per the US); which is a lawful

The hate that some US media establishments have for Trump goes way back before he was elected as president

right for any state and a mandatory duty of its decision makers.

A few minutes before the decision, no one across the world described Syria or Yemen as Muslim states. However, as soon as the decision was made, Arab media started hysterically repeating that 'Trump has banned entry of people from seven Muslim States,' which is a confusion as a result of the lazy Arab mind-sets that are not used to verifying news; rather have been known to 'cut,' 'paste' and steal news from western media, namely the American one, which did so to embarrass president Donald Trump who is already in fierce conflict with the media in his country.

The hate that some US media establishments have for Trump goes way back before he was elected as president. They are both known enemies to each other. During the elections, those establishments tried blocking the roads leading to the White House and did this in the most scandalizing manner that greatly harmed their media credibility. However, the man won the elections despite the misleading media. Therefore, we find so many of those establishments trying to throw more wood in the fire he lit by a decision to regulate entry to the US. The funny thing is that the fire is in America while its smoke is blinding us here in the sad Arab World.

— *Translated by Kuwait Times*



KFH WINS AWARDS AT ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING CONFERENCE

KUWAIT: Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Minister of State for Economic Affairs Hind Al-Sabeeh hailed the role of Kuwait Finance House (KFH) in qualifying and training the national manpower by providing them with intensive training programs and activities of great importance to their career development, indicating this is in line with the strategic direction of Kuwait in

was made during the Organizational Learning Conference held by the Manpower and Government Restructuring Program (MGRP), in addition to the Annual Award Ceremony to announce the winners of 2016 Excellence awards for the institutions of the private sector. Meanwhile, Waleed Mandani, KFH-Group Chief Retail and Private Banking Officer said on the sidelines of receiving the

bank's policy and efforts in training and developing human resources, yet they confirm KFH keenness to attract national manpower and subject them to extensive training programs as per the highest international recognized standards in the field of manpower growth and development. He added that qualifying and honing the skills of human resources stems from KFH national responsibility, especially that KFH considers the human resources as the main asset at the bank. KFH is keen on supporting the Kuwaiti nationals to be in leadership roles. This contributes in achieving comprehensive development.

Mandani illustrated that KFH is an example for the private sector institutions to follow suit. It is the targeted place of work for job seekers due to the bank's significant role in qualifying and training the human resources and equipping them with all necessary tools to empower them and to allow them optimally assume duties at work, which contributes in increasing the productivity level and improving the work environment at the bank.

Moreover, he expressed his happiness for recognizing KFH's efforts and excellence in training and developing the human capital, affirming the ongoing commitment towards pursuing best practices in investing in human resources, noting that increasing the ratio of Kuwaiti nationals at the private sector is essential role for KFH to support the economy and the development process. Mandani extended his thanks and gratitude to the organizers, attendees and participants at the conference, underscoring the importance of achieving the goal of finding creative solutions and fresh ideas to promote effective learning and development in organizations.



terms of implementing a sustainable national manpower development while instilling the concepts of working at the private sector in the Kuwaiti nationals. This statement

bank's awards which are "Best Employer for Job Seekers" and "Best Job Stability Award" at the 2016 Excellence awards ceremony, that the awards come in recognition of the

AHLI UNITED BANK ORGANIZED OMRAH TRIP FOR EMPLOYEES AND THEIR FAMILIES

KUWAIT: As part of its ongoing social responsibility program, Ahli United Bank (AUB) organized an Omrah trip for employees and their families. The initiative is in line with the Bank's wide range of programs that have been developed to reinforce a stronger and more integrated work culture amid a joyful environment.

Naqeeb Amin, General Manager of AUB's Human Resources said, "The Bank's initiative of organizing and sponsoring an Omrah trip for employees is part of our overall commitment towards driving and encouraging

more social and religious activities for all employees, while also promoting a strong corporate culture internally."

Naqeeb added, "We provided all the necessary facilities and services to ensure the comfort of all participants while performing their religious rituals. Moreover, the Bank organized a seminar prior to the Omrah trip which focused on understanding the importance of such religious events, its advantages, as well as values and how to perform it.

AUB also led the way by helping its employees visit holy sites after

completing the Omrah trip." Naqeeb congratulated all employees who have performed their Omrah and promised them with more activities to come.

Participating employees thanked AUB's senior management for the overall commitment towards the Bank's staff and their families. In addition, they expressed their gratitude and appreciation for all the efforts that went into organizing the Omrah trip, which helped in increasing the number of people wanting to take part in the Bank's initiative.

KIB PARTICIPATES IN WORLD CANCER DAY EVENT AT AL-SIDRA ASSOCIATION

KUWAIT: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) recently sponsored the event held by Al-Sidra Association for the Psychological Care of Cancer Patients in commemoration of World Cancer Day and Gulf Cancer Awareness Week. The Bank's participation in this event came as part of its strategic partnership with Al-Sidra, a collaboration which has been renewed for a second consecutive year.

The event featured the participation of several notable social figures, including Sheikhha Azza Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah, Chairman of Al-Sidra Association, Ms. Vicki Silverman, wife of the United States Ambassador to Kuwait, and Dr Ahmad Al-Awadhi, Director of Kuwait Cancer Control Center (KCCC). A number of cancer survivors also took part in the event, showcasing Al-Sidra's role in supporting them through their journey to beat the disease.

In her opening statement, Sheikhha Azza Al-Sabah, expressed her sincere

gratitude to all guests for attending and participating in the event. Following that, Dr Ahmad Al-Awadhi lauded Al-Sidra's efforts and positive influence the Association has had on the psychological well-being of cancer patients, and its continuing participation in various activities and initiatives dedicated to raising awareness about the disease.

Meanwhile, Nawaf Najia, Manager of the Corporate Communications Unit at KIB, praised Al-Sidra, under the leadership of Sheikhha Azza Al-Sabah, for its ongoing efforts to support cancer patients. He said: "Our sponsorship of Al-Sidra Association is a true reflection of our social responsibility philosophy, which focuses on promoting the development and well-being of our local community across all areas. As part of our healthcare focused initiatives, we sponsor many national public health awareness and education campaigns, and we continue to offer our support to numerous civil

society organizations that work to promote a healthier society."

Najia further added, "As their proud strategic partner, KIB fully supports Al-Sidra's goal to provide integrated treatment services to both patients and their families. We are also dedicated to supporting Al-Sidra's mission to promote the well-being of cancer patients, by creating a positive environment that helps them cope with the side effects of the disease and enhances their response to treatment."

It serves to note that KIB believes that the development and progress of modern societies is closely connected to the health and well-being of its people. The Bank has always been a dedicated advocate of healthcare awareness campaigns, especially those addressing the very important topic of cancer - as KIB considers awareness to be a key factor in the fight against cancer and early detection of the disease.





Swiss back new citizenship rules

ISRAELI PARLIAMENT HARDER THAN EVER

N KOREA FIRES BALLISTIC MISSILE

MOVE DRAWS TOUGH RESPONSE FROM TRUMP

SEOUL: North Korea yesterday fired a ballistic missile into the sea in an apparent test of new US President Donald Trump, who responded by pledging “100 percent” support for Washington’s key regional ally Japan. Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, whose country would be in range of any hostile North Korean launch, called the test “absolutely intolerable” during an impromptu press conference with Trump in Florida. The missile was launched around 7:55 am (2255 GMT Saturday) from Banghyon air base in the western province of North Pyongan, and flew east towards the Sea of Japan (East Sea), the South’s defense ministry said. It flew about 500 kilometers before falling into the sea, a ministry spokesman said. “Today’s missile launch... is aimed at drawing global attention to the North by boasting its nuclear and missile capabilities”, the ministry said in a statement. “It is also believed that it was an armed provocation to test the response from the new US administration under President Trump,” it added. The South’s Joint Chiefs of Staff said later the missile was “highly likely” to have been a modified intermediate-range Musudan missile. It was the first such test since last October. Trump, speaking alongside Abe, said Washington was committed to his country’s security. “I just want everybody to understand and fully know that the United States of America stands behind Japan, its great ally, 100 percent,” he said, without elaborating. Japan’s top government spokesman Yoshihide Suge told reporters in Tokyo the test was “clearly a provocation to Japan and the region.” North Korea is barred under UN resolutions from any use of ballistic missile technology. But six sets of UN sanctions since Pyongyang’s first nuclear test in 2006 have failed to halt its drive for what it insists are defensive weapons.

Clear provocation

Last year the country conducted two nuclear tests and numerous missile launches in its quest to develop a nuclear weapons system capable of hitting the US mainland. Seoul-based academic Yang Moo-Jin said the latest

test was “a celebratory launch” to mark the Feb 16 birthday of Kim Jong-Il, late ruler and father of current leader Kim Jong-Un. Pyongyang often celebrates key anniversaries involving current and former leaders with missile launches, Yang, a professor at the University of North Korean Studies, said. South Korea’s acting president Hwang Gyo-Ahn vowed a “corresponding punishment” in response to the launch, which came on the heels of a visit to Seoul by US Defense Secretary James Mattis this month. Mattis had warned Pyongyang that any nuclear attack would be met with an “effective and overwhelming” response. Trump’s national security adviser Michael Flynn spoke to his South Korean counterpart Kim Kwan-Jin by phone and agreed to “seek all possible options” to curb future provocations by the North, Seoul’s presidential office said. Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull also condemned the launch as a “further threat to regional peace and stability” and vowed to work with Beijing, Seoul and Tokyo to heap pressure on Pyongyang. In Jan leader Kim Jong-Un boasted that Pyongyang was in the “final stages” of developing an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) in an apparent attempt to pressure the incoming US president. Trump shot back on Twitter, saying “It won’t happen.” James Char, senior analyst at the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies in Singapore, said the launch was Pyongyang’s “way of showing characteristic defiance against Trump.”

Test for Trump

The latest launch poses a test for Trump, who will need the help of the North’s closest ally China to deal with the reclusive state. Relations have thawed in recent days after Trump reaffirmed Washington’s “One China” policy in what he described as a “very warm” telephone conversation with President Xi Jinping. Analysts are divided over how close Pyongyang is to realizing its full nuclear ambitions, especially as it has never successfully test-fired an ICBM. But all agree it has made enormous strides in that direction since Kim took over after the death of his father in Dec 2011. —AFP



SEOUL: People watch the news showing file footage of North Korea’s missile launch at a railway station in Seoul yesterday. — AFP

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TURKISH TROOPS, SYRIA REBELS ENTER IS-HELD TOWN

BEIRUT: Turkish troops and their Syrian rebel allies entered the Islamic State-held town of Al-Bab in northern Syria Saturday, as government forces moved closer to the jihadist bastion, a monitor said. Turkish state-run Anadolu news agency quoted military sources as saying one Turkish soldier was killed and another wounded in clashes with IS in Al-Bab. Turkish forces and allied insurgents have for weeks pressed an operation code-named Euphrates Shield to drive the jihadists from the flashpoint town.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said Turkish forces and allied militias entered Al-Bab from the west and then took full control of its western suburbs after fierce clashes with the jihadists. The fighting coincided with "Turkish shelling and intensive air strikes" on Al-Bab, the Britain-based monitor said. It said at least six civilians were killed by Turkish artillery fire and air strikes. Al-Bab is the jihadist group's last stronghold in the

northern province of Aleppo and is also being targeted by regime forces.

While Turkish-led forces have been advancing from the north, east and west, Syrian government troops are attacking from the south. Today, Syrian troops severed a road leading into the town from the south and by Friday they were just 1.5 kilometers from the southern outskirts of Al-Bab. Turkey began an unprecedented campaign inside Syria in August, targeting both IS and Kurdish militia. After initial rapid progress, the campaign has been mired since December in the deadly fight for Al-Bab.

66 Turks killed in campaign

Turkey's Dogan news agency says 66 Turkish soldiers have been killed in the campaign since it started, mostly in IS attacks. And on Thursday, three Turkish soldiers were killed when a Russian air strike accidentally hit their position in an attack targeting IS in Al-Bab. Moscow

said it was an accident and is being investigated. Despite backing opposite sides in Syria's conflict-Moscow is a government ally while Turkey supports the opposition-the two countries have worked closely in recent months.

They helped broker a nationwide ceasefire in place since Dec 30, and sponsored a round of peace talks last month in the Kazakh capital, Astana. Al-Bab has been under IS control since 2014, when the group seized large swathes of territory in Syria and neighboring Iraq, proclaiming its self-described caliphate. In recent months, the jihadists have been rolled back in large parts of northern Syria, both by the Turkish campaign but also by a Kurdish-Arab alliance known as the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF).

The SDF fights with air support from the US-led coalition battling IS in Syria and Iraq, but Turkey regards the Kurdish component of the SDF as "terrorists". The alliance is pushing towards IS's de facto

Syrian capital Raqqa in an operation dubbed "Wrath of the Euphrates". The advance has progressed slowly, in part, SDF officials say, because IS has heavily mined territory around Raqqa.

New talks in Astana?

The Observatory said Saturday that SDF fighters had now advanced to around eight kilometers from the eastern outskirts of Raqqa, though their forces are further from the north of the city. Turkey has suggested that it could turn its sights to Raqqa after the Al-Bab operation is complete, with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan discussing both Al-Bab and Raqqa in a call with US President Donald Trump this week. Syria's conflict has killed more than 310,000 people since it began with anti-government protests in March 2011.

Successive rounds of peace talks, including discussions organized by Russia and Turkey in Kazakhstan last

month, have failed to advance a political solution to the conflict. A new round of UN-sponsored talks is scheduled to take place in Geneva on Feb 20, but invitations have yet to be sent out. The High Negotiations Committee, which is set to represent Syria's opposition at the Geneva talks, meanwhile appointed its delegation to the negotiations after two days of discussion in Riyadh.

A statement said the 21-member delegation would be headed by Nasr al-Hariri and would also be supported by 20 advisers. On Saturday, Kazakhstan's foreign ministry said Syrian government officials and rebels were being invited to new talks next week in Astana. "It is planned to hold the latest high-level meeting within the Astana process on resolving the situation in Syria on Feb 15 and 16," the ministry said in a statement. It added that UN peace envoy Staffan de Mistura and US observers would also be invited to the talks.—AFP



NAZARETH: This file photo shows Israeli Arab political leaders posing for a photo holding placards bearing text in Arabic meaning, go to vote for the joint list, for a new tomorrow in the northern Israeli city of Nazareth.—AFP

SYRIA OPPOSITION PICKS DELEGATION FOR PEACE TALKS

BEIRUT: Syria's opposition yesterday announced its 21-member delegation, including 10 rebel representatives, for a new round of UN-sponsored peace talks in Geneva scheduled for Feb 20. The delegation will be headed by Nasr al-Hariri, a member of the National Coalition, replacing Assad al-Zoabi, who led the opposition at several previous rounds of talks in Geneva last year. The delegation's chief negotiator was named as Mohamed Sabra, a lawyer who was part of the opposition's technical team during negotiations in Geneva in 2014.

He replaces Mohamad Alloush, a rebel from the powerful Army of Islam faction. Alloush served as negotiator during three rounds of peace talks in Geneva as well as negotiations in the Kazakh capital Astana in January organized by Turkey and Russia. Neither Alloush nor the Army of Islam were listed as members of the delegation to Geneva, though it was unclear if the group was boycotting the talks or would be represented by other delegates. No reason was given for the decision to replace either Zoabi or Alloush.

The delegation includes representatives from several rebel groups, including Faylaq al-Sham, an Islamist faction active around Damascus, and Liwa Sultan Murad, a battalion close to Turkey.

The umbrella High Negotiations Committee (HNC) opposition group said

the delegation to the talks would for the first time include representatives from two additional opposition groupings, known informally as the Moscow group and the Cairo group. But representatives from both groups denied they were included in the delegation.

In the past, the HNC has opposed including the two rival opposition groupings in its delegation, accusing members of the coalitions of being too flexible with regard to the Syrian government. The Moscow grouping includes former minister Qadri Jamil, and is close to the Russian leadership, while the Cairo grouping includes former foreign ministry spokesman Jihad Makdissi. Invitations to the talks in Geneva have yet to go out, having been delayed in part to allow the opposition to decide on the composition of their delegation.

UN envoy Staffan de Mistura warned last week that he would pick the opposition delegates to the talks if they could not decide on time. But he later appeared to backtrack and said he would delay dispatching invites.

Ahead of the talks, Kazakhstan has invited Syrian rebels and government officials back to Astana on Feb 15-16, but neither party has said officially yet if they will attend. De Mistura will not attend the Astana meeting, but will send a "technical team," his spokeswoman said.—AFP



CAIRO: This file photo shows Secretary-General of the Syrian National Coalition Nasr al-Hariri leaving a meeting with veteran Syrian opposition figure and prominent Syrian human rights activist Haitham al-Maleh and the Arab League's Secretary-General, Nabil al-Arabi, at the Arab League headquarters in Cairo, Egypt.—AFP

HEZBOLLAH URGES LEBANON PLAN FOR SYRIA REFUGEE RETURN

BEIRUT: The head of Lebanon's powerful Hezbollah movement yesterday urged the government to coordinate with Damascus to help refugees to return now that "large areas" of Syria are "safe". In a televised address, Hassan Nasrallah said Syrian refugees should not be coerced into going home, but added that a string of "victories" by President Bashar al-Assad's forces meant it would be safe for many to return. "Military victories in Syria, the most recent of them the victory in Aleppo... have turned large areas into safe and quiet spaces," Nasrallah said.

He urged "cooperation to return the majority of these refugees to their towns and villages and homes, so they will no longer be refugees sitting in tents or in the streets". Lebanon hosts around a million registered Syrian refugees and has struggled with the consequences of the war in neighboring Syria since it began in March 2011. Hezbollah is a key ally of Assad's government, and its fighters battle alongside his troops against opposition forces, including during the December recapture of second city Aleppo. Nasrallah said the process of returning Syrian refugees should be "one of persuasion, not of coercion".

"It is the duty of all Lebanese to deal with this issue in a humanitarian fashion, setting aside political considerations or fears," he added. He also urged the government in Beirut to engage with its Syrian counterpart on the issue,

despite the deep antipathy between Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Hariri and Damascus.

Hariri accused Damascus of involvement in the 2005 assassination of his father, former premier Rafiq al-Hariri, and backed the uprising against Assad. "Frankly, the Lebanese government must end its obstinacy... and talk to the Syrian government: is this issue not pressing?" Nasrallah asked.

He called on the government to work with Damascus "and develop a single plan, because this cannot be addressed by Lebanon alone, and begging will not solve our problem".

Lebanon has struggled to deal with the massive influx of refugees, who have added to the pressure on its already stretched infrastructure and economy. Beirut has regularly called for more international assistance, and President Michel Aoun earlier this month urged the international community to facilitate the safe return of refugees.

At the end of Jan, Syria's Foreign Minister Walid Muallem also "renewed the invitation of the government to Syrian refugees living in neighboring countries to return". He "stressed the country was ready to receive them and grant them a dignified life", state news agency SANA reported. More than half of Syria's population has been displaced internally or externally by the conflict, which has killed more than 310,000 people. Around 4.9 million people have become refugees.—AFP

ISRAELI PARLIAMENT HARDER THAN EVER

MPs FACE CRITICISM, THREATS FROM FELLOW MEMBERS

JERUSALEM: It has never been easy being a lawmaker who identifies as Palestinian in the Israeli parliament, but today it is harder than ever, Arab Israeli MPs say. In recent months they have seen their colleagues discuss banning the early morning Muslim call to prayer and vote to legalize the seizure of hundreds of acres of Palestinian land in the West Bank by Jewish settlers. They have faced criticism and threats from fellow members of Israel's parliament, the Knesset, some of whom refuse to even speak to them.

Ahmed Tibi, a veteran lawmaker in his fifth term, said the situation in parliament is at its worst since he was first elected in 1999, with tensions whipped up by a "right-wing extremist" government. "The Knesset is an extremist place. It's not an easy place to work." The government led by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu that came to power following elections in 2015 is widely considered the most right-wing in the country's history. It strongly supports Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank and east Jerusalem, and some members favour annexing parts of the West Bank.

The 2015 election also saw Arab Israeli parties form a common political front for the first time since the creation of Israel in 1948. They founded the Joint Arab List, a coalition that ranges from Islamists to communists and even a Jewish parliamentarian. With 13 MPs out of 120, it is now the third-largest parliamentary block, but is beset by internal divisions. Five more Arab Israeli parliamentarians belong to other parties.

Discrimination

Making up around 18 percent of Israel's population, Arab Israelis are descended from Palestinians who remained on their land after Israel was established. They have full voting and legal rights but say the state systematically discriminates against them. Tibi said the atmosphere in parliament is increasingly hostile, with some members even refusing to talk to others. He said tensions spiked during three wars with Palestinians in Gaza since 2008.

"When there's a war on, the Knesset is on fire—it's full of racism and blatant aggression," Tibi said. His Jewish colleagues "did not want to hear the Arab point of view, or even to hear Arabic," he said. In Dec, the chairman of Netanyahu's Likud party, David Bitan, said he would prefer if Arab Israelis did not vote, accusing them of "representing Palestinian interests" rather than those of the state of which they are citizens.

Tibi said he has been the target of calls for violence. Right-wing defense minister Avigdor Lieberman once said he should be put before a firing squad, he said. "Every day he tells us that we are terrorists and enemies of the state." Sometimes Arab MPs score points. Aida Touma, for example, broke a glass ceiling in 2015 when she became the first Arab to chair a standing committee in the Knesset. "It means big challenges, as I belong to a parliamentary minority and a national minority within the state," she said. But her colleague Basel Ghattas is now facing prosecution.

Unprecedented

Ghattas was accused of illegally bringing mobile phones to prisoners in an Israeli jail. He partly lost his parliamentary immunity and was indicted after Zeev Elkin, a minister from Netanyahu's Likud party, gathered 72 parliamentary signatures demanding Ghattas be thrown out.

Israeli law says such a vote can be held if at least 70 members support it, but Ghattas is the first such case in Israel's history. Adalah, an Arab Israeli rights group, said it was "unprecedented" and accused the attorney general of failing to give Ghattas the usual 30 days to prepare his defense before a hearing. Today, Ghattas said in an open letter to MPs that he was being subjected to trial by media.

Ayman Odeh, head of the Joint Arab List, told Israeli television the issue "should be conducted within the legal framework" and that Ghattas must be allowed to defend himself. But despite the challenges, parliamentarian Abdallah Abu Maarouf said it is important that Arabs continue to represent their interests in parliament.

"We were living here before Israel was founded, but now we are 20 percent of the population," he said. "As citizens, we have the legitimate right to work to change the policies of discrimination against Arabs in Israel," he said. "So we won't leave this platform."—AFP

NETANYAHU HAILS US VETO OF PALESTINIAN AS LIBYA ENVOY

JERUSALEM: Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu yesterday hailed the US veto of a Palestinian to be named UN envoy to Libya, saying the world body failed to give equal consideration to Israelis. "I was informed of the possibility of the appointment of Salaam Fayyad to a UN position," he said at Israel's weekly cabinet meeting. "I said that the time has come for reciprocity in the UN's relations with Israel and free gifts cannot be constantly given to the Palestinian side," Netanyahu said, welcoming the US veto.

"The time has come for positions and appointments to be made to the Israeli side as well," he said, quoted in a statement issued by the prime minister's office. According to Israeli media reports, the Jewish state could accept the appointment of Fayyad, a former Palestinian premier, if Tzipi Livni, a former foreign minister of Israel, were offered the post of a UN deputy secretary of state. UN chief

Antonio Guterres on Saturday defended his choice of Fayyad to be the UN peace envoy to Libya, a day after the United States blocked the appointment.

The choice "was solely based on Mr Fayyad's recognized personal qualities and his competence for that position," said UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric. "United Nations staff serves strictly in their personal capacity. They do not represent any government or country," Guterres had informed the Security Council on Wednesday of his intention to appoint Fayyad. But the US ambassador to the United Nations, Nikki Haley, said Washington did not "support the signal this appointment would send within the United Nations", where the state of Palestine does not have full membership.

"For too long, the UN has been unfairly biased in favor of the Palestinian Authority to the detriment of our allies in Israel," she said

in a statement. The UN secretary general seeks the unanimous backing of all 15 Security Council members for appointments of his special representatives to conflict areas. Fayyad had been tapped to replace

Germany's Martin Kobler, who has served since Nov 2015 as envoy to Libya, which has been in turmoil on the security and political fronts since a 2011 revolution that overthrew Moamer Kadhafi.—AFP



NEW YORK: This file photo shows United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres shaking hands with new US Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley at the United Nations in New York.—AFP

FATHER MOURNS TRAGIC DEATH OF TEEN IN TUNNEL GUN CASE

NEW JERSEY: The fates of three people who said they were on a rescue mission to help save a teenager from a New York heroin den when they were stopped with a cache of weapons could be decided by a New Jersey judge today. But for the teen at the center of the case, the story has already ended tragically. Jenea Patterson, 18, died of an apparent drug overdose last month at a hospital near Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, according to her father, James Patterson.

"When I went down to get her in New York, I told her right then and there this is a warning sign for you," Patterson said. "I grabbed her and I held her in my arms and I said 'You've gotta get out of the game, Jenea, death is knocking at your door.'" In June, before Patterson went to New York himself, John Cramsey, Dean Smith and Kimberly Arendt, all of Pennsylvania, were stopped on their way to help Patterson. The three reportedly went after Jenea Patterson sent a message to Arendt, her former camp counselor, after a friend died of an overdose in a hotel room.

Grief stricken after the death of his daughter, Cramsey became an anti-drug crusader, starting a group of concerned parents and going on rescue missions to

help addicts get into treatment. He owned a gun range in Pennsylvania but did not have a permit in New Jersey to transport five handguns, a shotgun and semi-automatic military-style rifle. A judge is scheduled to rule Monday on whether a Port Authority of New York and New Jersey police officer had probable cause to stop the car at the Holland Tunnel.

The officer says he stopped them over a windshield crack, but the defendants argue it's more likely they were pulled over because they were driving a truck adorned with cross-hairs and pro-Second Amendment decals. They have pleaded not guilty to weapon possession charges. Patterson says the older of his two daughters had a good heart and enjoyed helping others, but started abusing prescription pills when she was 13. She later started using heroin and was sent to a program for troubled youth in 2014, where she met Arendt. But Patterson said his daughter got worse after leaving.

"I begged people, if you let that child on the street, she's going to die," Patterson said. "Here we are two years later, I'm burying my daughter." Ed Weaver, the admissions director for the

Youth Services Agency program Patterson attended, said that most teens spend about 90 days at the camp in Jim Thorpe, Pennsylvania. He said there are classes and the program also offers anger management, vocational training and trauma-based therapy.

"We try to give them the best skills that we can, but it's ultimately up to where they're going back to," Weaver said. He spoke generally and not of Patterson's case, but said it comes down to "the support of the family and of Children and Youth services and probation officers to keep them on the path." Patterson said that public officials need to do more with job training, tougher sentences for dealers and education for young people.

Just as Cramsey has been working to fight the opioid crisis since his daughter died, Patterson hopes to form an organization to help users and dealers. He's also working to raise money to pay for the expense of his daughter's funeral and for other families whose children meet a similar fate. "I'm trying to link up with everyone who has lost a child of a drug overdose," he said. "If we don't come together and we do nothing, then more of them are going to die."—AP



PENNSYLVANIA: In this file photo, James Patterson discusses a two-day search that located his daughter Jenea Patterson, as he stands near the family's home in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. —AP

US AGENTS CONDUCT FIRST TRUMP-ERA RAIDS

TEARING FAMILIES APART ISN'T WHAT THIS COUNTRY STANDS FOR

WASHINGTON: US authorities arrested hundreds of undocumented migrants this week in the first large-scale raids under President Donald Trump, triggering panic in immigrant communities nationwide. The federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency rounded up undocumented individuals living in Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, Austin and Atlanta, among other cities, two weeks after Trump signed an executive order that broadened which undocumented immigrants would be targeted for deportation.

According to ICE, however, the operations were "routine." "The focus of these operations is no different than the routine, targeted arrests carried out by ICE's Fugitive Operations Teams on a daily basis," said agency spokeswoman Jennifer Elzea. David Marin, head of ICE's removal operations in Los Angeles, told reporters that approximately 160 people had been arrested in the California metropolis. Some 75 percent of them had prior felony convictions, he said, adding that some people had been nabbed solely because they were undocumented. By Friday night, 37 undocumented immigrants had already been expelled to Mexico.

In a Jan 25 decree, Trump prioritized the deportation of undocumented males who had been convicted of or "charged with any criminal offense," including misdemeanors. The order was a move to make good on his campaign pledge to crack down on America's undocumented population, estimated at 11 million people. Marin said the operations were planned prior to Trump's swearing-in and were comparable to past actions. He rebuffed reports about ICE checkpoints and random sweeps, calling them "dangerous and irresponsible."

"Reports like that create panic, and they put communities and law enforcement personnel in unnecessary danger," Marin said. The raids, which hit residential areas and workplaces, sparked protests and provoked the ire of elected Democratic representatives, notably in California and particularly in Los Angeles, where the Pew

Research Center estimates around a million undocumented migrants reside. "President Trump's policy change betrays our values," Democratic Senator Dianne Feinstein said in a statement. "Tearing families apart isn't what this country stands for."

New reality

In Austin, Texas, where 100,000 unauthorized migrants live, a bystander captured video footage of an arrest, which made local

that began in 2011 under Barack Obama.

The agency conducted the last sweep in March 2015, corraling 2,059 undocumented immigrants deemed threats to "public safety." In New York, which hosts the country's largest population of undocumented immigrants — 1.15 million, according to Pew—a few hundred people demonstrated near the immigration services office. Obama deported more immigrants than any of his predecessors, prioritizing the

charged. Activists have rallied around the case of Guadalupe Garcia de Rayos—a 35-year-old mother arrested during a routine visit to Phoenix, Arizona who has become symbolic of Trump's hard-line measures. The mother of two US-born children was caught in 2008 using a fake social security number and slapped with a deportation order.

Authorities had not previously expelled her for practical reasons, however, as she posed little threat.



CALIFORNIA: This image shows US Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers detaining a suspect during an enforcement operation in Los Angeles, California. —AFP

front-page news and ignited demonstrations. Democratic Congressman Joaquin Castro of Texas confirmed the launch of a "targeted operation" aimed at arresting the undocumented. He has asked ICE officials to "clarify whether these individuals are in fact dangerous, violent threats to our communities, and not people who are here peacefully raising families and contributing to our state." Castro said the roundups were part of "Operation Cross Check"—a series of large-scale raids

expulsion of repeat criminal offenders or those convicted of serious crimes, including rape, child pornography and gang membership.

Undocumented migrants with repeated drunk driving convictions were also targeted. With his decree, Trump—who vowed as a candidate to deport some three million undocumented immigrants with criminal records—broadens the scope of the Obama administration's policy, dropping the distinction between convicted criminals and those who had simply been

But by Thursday, she was in Nogales, the Mexican border town where she crossed into the US more than two decades ago. The Mexican Foreign Ministry said her deportation "illustrates the new reality of Mexican community living in the United States in the face of more severe application of migration controls." The ministry urged Mexican citizens to "take precautions" and stay in close contact with consular authorities, echoing instructions from immigrant advocacy groups stateside.—AFP

MEXICANS TO STAGE ANTI-TRUMP PROTESTS

MEXICO CITY: Mexicans are planning their largest protests yet yesterday against US President Donald Trump, hitting back at his anti-Mexican rhetoric and vows to make the country pay for his "big, beautiful" border wall. Marches are planned in some 20 cities across the country, including the capital, Mexico City, with throngs of people expected to turn out dressed in white and waving the red, white and green of the Mexican flag.

Dozens of universities, business associations and civic organizations are backing the protests, which start at 12:00 pm (1800 GMT). "It's time we citizens combine forces and unite our voices to show our indignation and rejection of President Trump, while contributing to the search for concrete solutions," said the coalition behind the marches. US-Mexican relations have plunged to their lowest point in decades since Trump took office on Jan 20.

Trump, who launched his presidential campaign calling Mexican immigrants "criminals" and "rapists," has infuriated the United States's southern neighbor with his plan to stop illegal immigration by building a wall on the border—and in particular with his vows to make

Mexico pay for it. Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto canceled a Jan 31 trip to Washington over Trump's insistence that Mexico pay for the wall.

Trump has also wrought havoc on the Mexican economy with his threats to terminate the country's privileged trade relationship with the United States, blaming Mexico for the loss of American jobs. The Mexican peso has taken a beating nearly every time Trump insisted on renegotiating the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), attacked car-makers and other companies that manufacture in Mexico, or vowed to slap steep tariffs on Mexican-made goods. Mexico sends 80 percent of its exports to the United States—nearly \$300 billion in goods in 2015.

New nationalism

The confrontation has stoked patriotic pride in Mexico, where US companies like Starbucks, Coca-Cola and McDonald's are the targets of boycott campaigns and many people have taken to putting the Mexican flag in their profile pictures on social media. That new nationalism appears to be giving a boost to

Mexican presidential hopeful Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, whom some political analysts call a "leftist Donald Trump" for his populist, anti-establishment rhetoric.

Lopez Obrador—widely known by his initials, AMLO—was the runner-up in the past two presidential elections. He is leading in opinion polls for presidential elections in 2018 — and appears to be benefiting from Trump's anti-Mexican vitriol, which has badly dented the popularity of Pena Nieto and the ruling PRI party, seen by many as too conciliatory toward a bullying neighbor.

Ironically, a Lopez Obrador victory next year could work to Trump's disadvantage, giving him a far more hardline counterpart to work with. As yesterday's protests unfolded in Mexico, Lopez Obrador will be visiting the United States to address both Mexicans and Americans in Los Angeles about Trump's "poisonous" rhetoric. "This campaign... of xenophobia, of causing hate, must be confronted," he said before leaving. "We Mexicans are being persecuted. It's all a political strategy, so I will go to the United States precisely because of this."—AFP

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Mundo

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Trump dice colonias de Israel no favorecen paz

Es la primera vez que el presidente de Estados Unidos asume una posición sobre el desarrollo de los conflictos asentamientos israelíes

JERUSALEM. El presidente estadounidense Donald Trump dijo en una entrevista publicada el viernes que el estatus de Jerusalén de las colonias israelíes "no es bueno para la paz".

La primera toma de posición sobre esta cuestión desde que llegó a la Casa Blanca.

"No soy alguien que piense que el desarrollo de las colonias sea bueno para la paz", dijo Trump en una entrevista publicada en febrero por el periódico israelí Haaretz.

Trump, pocos días antes de recibir al primer ministro Benjamin Netanyahu.

También aseguró que está estudiando "un

requisito con la política de Estados Unidos y de gran parte de la comunidad internacional, que considera que el estatus de Jerusalén cambia el carácter de la paz", dijo Trump en una entrevista publicada en febrero por el periódico israelí Haaretz.

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Donald Trump, presidente de EE.UU.

Benjamin Netanyahu, primer ministro.

Familiares policías protestan en Brasil

El presidente de Brasil, Michel Temer, dijo que los familiares de los policías asesinados en la operación de la Casa Blanca no tienen derecho a la indemnización.

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GERMANY ELECTS ANTI-TRUMP STEINMEIER AS NEW PRESIDENT

BERLIN: Billed as Germany's "anti-Trump", centre-left former foreign minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier was elected yesterday as the new ceremonial head of state. The 61-year-old, who regularly polls as Germany's most popular politician, will represent the EU's top economy abroad and act as a kind of moral arbiter for the nation. His Social Democrats (SPD) hope the appointment will boost their fortunes just as their candidate Martin Schulz, the former European parliament president, readies to challenge Chancellor Angela Merkel in September elections.

Steinmeier received 931 of 1,239 valid votes after Merkel's conservatives, lacking a strong candidate of their own, agreed to back him to replace incumbent Joachim Gauck, 77, a former pastor from ex-communist East Germany. The vote was held in Berlin's glass-domed Reichstag building by a special Federal Assembly, made up of national lawmakers and electors sent from Germany's 16 states-among them deputies but also artists, writers, musicians and national football coach Joachim Loew.

With his snowy white hair, round glasses and dimpled smile, Steinmeier is one of Germany's best-known politicians, having twice served as top diplomat under Merkel for a total of seven years. Though the trained lawyer is usually measured in his speech, in the thick of last year's US election campaign Steinmeier labeled Donald Trump a "hate preacher". After the billionaire won the White House, Steinmeier predicted relations would get "more difficult" and said his staff was

struggling to detect any "clear and coherent" foreign policy positions from Trump.

Antidote to populists

As Steinmeier has prepared for the new post, which he assumes on March 19, he has vowed to serve as a "counterweight to the trend of boundless simplification", calling this approach "the best antidote to the populists". The Berliner Morgenpost newspaper judged that Steinmeier looks set to be "the anti-Trump president". Steinmeier is only known to have lost his cool once, in 2014, when he yelled at Berlin protesters who had accused him of being a "warmonger" over his Ukraine policy.

The outburst was so unusual it became a minor YouTube hit. A policy wonk by nature, Steinmeier served as advisor and then chief of staff to Merkel's predecessor, the SPD's Gerhard Schroeder. In 2009, Steinmeier ran against Merkel and lost badly, only to return years later to serve in her cabinet. Political scientist Michael Broening of the SPD's think-tank the Friedrich Ebert Foundation said that "as foreign minister, Steinmeier often acted as a voice of reason, bridging gaps and bringing people together". "It is hardly surprising that Steinmeier has branded himself as the essential anti-Trump," he added. Steinmeier is well known in the world's capitals, but his appointment worries some in eastern Europe, who see him as too soft on Russian President Vladimir Putin. He raised eyebrows with NATO partners last year when he criticised a military exercise in Poland as "saber rattling". —AFP



BERLIN: New elected German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier (bottom) is congratulated by the President of the Bundestag (lower house of parliament) Norbert Lammert (top C) after the presidential election at the Bundesversammlung federal assembly Bundestag (lower house of parliament) yesterday in Berlin. —AFP

SWISS BACK NEW CITIZENSHIP RULES IN DEFEAT FOR RIGHTWING EASY MEASURES FOR IMMIGRANTS TO BECOME CITIZENS

GENEVA: Swiss voters yesterday approved a measure to make it easier for third-generation immigrants to become citizens, crushing rightwing nationalists who had stoked fears about granting nationality to more Muslims. The "Yes" camp met the two criteria for a win by securing a majority of total votes and a majority of Switzerland's 26 cantons, the public broadcaster RTS and national news agency ATS said. Fifty-nine percent voted "Yes," according to provisional figures given by the polling institute gfs.bern, and at least 14 cantons were in favor, according to official results.

The government as well as most lawmakers and political parties supported the proposal. Under it, the grandchildren of immigrants will be able to skip several steps in the lengthy process of securing a Swiss passport. But the rightwing Swiss Peoples Party (SVP), the largest party in Switzerland's parliament, fought against it by putting issues of Islam and national identity at the centre of the debate. Reacting to the defeat, SVP lawmaker Jean-Luc Ador said his side was "alone against everyone in this campaign". "The problem of Islam, I'm afraid, it will catch up with us in a few years," he told RTS.



OBERSAXEN: People count the votes in Obersaxen, Switzerland, yesterday. —AP

According to a migration department study, less than 25,000 people in the country of about eight million currently qualify as third-generation immigrants, a definition meaning they have at least one grandparent who was born here or acquired Swiss residency. Nearly 60 percent of that group are Italians, followed by those with origins in the Balkans and Turkish nationals. Debate on the proposal had nothing to do with reli-

gion at the outset, said Sophie Guignard of the Institute of Political Science at the University of Bern.

It was the SVP, a party repeatedly accused of demonizing Islam, that focused on the risks of more Muslims becoming citizens and the possible "loss of Swiss values", Guignard said. Yesterday's referendum is one of four each year for voting on subjects affecting federal as well as local laws and institutions.

Poster controversy

The No2 camp faced heavy criticism over a widely-distributed poster showing a woman staring out from a black niqab with a tagline urging voters to reject "uncontrolled citizenship".

The SVP is not officially responsible for the poster. It was commissioned by the Committee Against Facilitated Citizenship, which has several SVP members and was co-chaired by Ador. Guignard said mainstream politicians and journalists viewed the poster as "a violent attack against Muslims". Ador defended it again yesterday by saying its intent was to "affirm the identity of this country and the need to preserve it".

Political initiatives that either directly or implicitly target Muslims may be on the rise in the West, notably including US President Donald Trump's travel ban against seven mainly Muslim countries, which has now been rejected by two US federal courts. The SVP in 2009 successfully persuaded Swiss voters to approve a ban on new mosque minaret construction, while religiously-charged messages have been a part of multiple referendums on immigration since.—AFP

AFTER HARD YEARS, REFUGEE FINDS A HOME WITH FRENCH FAMILY

PALAISEAU, France: When the Gandais family decided to host a refugee at their home in a middle class neighborhood outside Paris, they assumed their guest would be a Syrian or an Iraqi fleeing war. Instead, a 25-year-old journalist with a young family in the former French colony of Guinea is the person sleeping gratefully in a spare bedroom, sharing unfamiliar food and nourishing hopes for a better life. As anti-immigrant sentiment and anti-Muslim views find footing in Europe and elsewhere, the Gandais family has found welcoming a refugee into the house to be a source of happiness.

"The experience is much more enriching than costing," says Loic Gandais, 56, a public servant for the Paris region. His wife, Murielle Gandais, 54, first raised the idea last summer, responding to the French government's call for solidarity amid the migrant crisis in Europe. She and Loic have three adult children in their 20s -two of them still living at home. Everyone quickly agreed they wanted to be a host family. During a process not dissimilar to adoption, a humanitarian organization, Samu social de Paris, visited the Gandais' house to make sure they had a suitable bedroom available.

A psychologist spoke with family members about their motivations and expectations for sheltering a stranger who had experienced difficulties they would find hard to comprehend. "Someone's coming who is fragile because he lived difficult things, is coming to France and is alone. That's not easy. But at the same time, it's someone who has things to share," Murielle Gandais says. The shy, tall young man selected to stay with them was Cheikh Ahmed, a married father of 4-year-old twins from Guinea. He left his country and family behind two years ago because he felt his life was in danger from his reporting on a sensitive issue.

Fear of safety

He asked for his last name and other personal details to be withheld because he still fears for his safety. Cheikh Ahmed lived for two months on the streets of Paris in a filthy camp of migrants periodically evacuated by police. He begged for money on the subway and saved enough to have his personal documents sent from Guinea to France so he could apply for asylum as a political refugee. From the street, he went from staying with a Guinean friend to an overcrowded hotel paid for by social services until finally being welcomed by the Gandais family. Sitting on his wide, comfortable bed,

smiling widely, Cheikh Ahmed says he feels as if his dignity has been restored.

"Imagine living on the streets. It is not a life," he said. "You cannot properly wash, you don't eat well and when you sleep, often police or other people come to wake you up." Cheikh Ahmed is a Muslim, hosted by a Christian family, but religion has not been a barrier to intimacy or acceptance on either side. He speaks French, English, a bit of Spanish and the three national languages of Guinea - Susu, Pular and Maninka. Murielle and Loic are used to having a full house between their children's friends and relatives. Murielle recalls it took Cheikh Ahmed a while to open up about his life.

"In the beginning, we felt he didn't want to talk about Guinea or anything," she said. After three months with the Gandais, Cheikh Ahmed is at ease in the kitchen, sets the table and helps himself to food. He has gotten used to their rules and rituals, such as having the housekeeper clean his room and clothes as she does for other family members.

He feels comfortable enough to laugh out loud at the dinner table, although he still can't stomach eating cheese - a staple of the French diet, he jokes. Now that he has a part-time job as a salesman at a clothing store, Cheikh Ahmed is starting to build a life in France.

Wave of racism

The Gandais often check on him, calling to see if everything is OK when he's out and about. He can stay with his host family as long as he needs to afford his own apartment. "I feel loved. I feel surrounded by people who care about me," he said. Cheikh Ahmed says he looks forward to the future, when he will bring his wife and children to France. "Everyone gets a turn at the hairdresser," he said, quoting an African proverb that in Guinea is the equivalent of saying "good things come to those who wait." France granted refugee status to 26,531 people last year, compared to the 256,136 granted asylum in Germany.

Samu social de Paris started recruiting host families in June, focuses on refugees who have obtained asylum but still are living in shelters or other short-term accommodations, if not in the street, program chief Nadege Letellier said. About 30 French families have joined, and they are looking for others. The program hopes to place at least 336 refugees in the Paris region over the next two years. Most come from Afghanistan, Tibet, and several African countries like Sudan and Eritrea. Many are men under age 25 who have fled war, violence and persecution due to their ethnicity, sexual orientation or political activities. — AP



PARIS: In this photo, Loic Gandais, left, and his wife Murielle Gandais, right, sit in the living room with Cheikh Ahmed, centre, a refugee from Guinea staying at their home in Palaiseau, south of Paris, France.—AP

CLASHES AT FRENCH PROTEST OVER ALLEGED POLICE RAPE

BOBIGNY, France: Police fired tear gas after clashes erupted Saturday in the suburbs of Paris as demonstrators protested over the assault of a young black man who was allegedly raped with a truncheon while being arrested. Surrounded by a heavy police contingent, about 2,000 protesters, some carrying placards saying "Police rape" and "Police kill innocent people," gathered in Bobigny, northeast of the French capital, to demand "Justice for Theo".

Theo, a 22-year-old black youth worker, required surgery after his arrest on Feb 2 in the "3,000" estate in the gritty suburb of Aulnay-sous-Bois, when he claims a police officer sodomised him with a baton. Projectiles were thrown at police on a footbridge with several vehicles torched and windows smashed on the sidelines of the protest, police said.

"Several hundred violent and very mobile individuals" committed various "acts of violence and damage," said the Paris police prefecture. In a statement it listed projectiles thrown against public buildings, four vehicles torched, two shops and a bus station damaged and several bins burned.

"The police had to intervene to res-

cue a young child in a burning vehicle," the police said, adding however that no injuries had been reported so far during the protest. Two media vehicles were also attacked, with no casualties reported. The demonstration ended in the evening after police fired tear gas. Theo, who is still in hospital, and his family have appealed for calm after several days of protests over the alleged assault. Rape charges have been filed against the officer and all four police involved in Theo's stop-and-search have been suspended pending an investigation.

With a presidential election this year, the incident has become highly politicized. It has also underscored the breakdown in trust between young people and the authorities in French suburbs. "All the time, we get checks, we get assaulted, they talk trash to us, we say, 'Shut up!...' We are given little slaps," a young man of about 20 named Kenzo said.

"I didn't think it still exists," said 18-year-old Anissa. "How can they say it's an accident?" Rallies took place in other French cities, including Rouen where some 200 people demonstrated, while around 250 gathered in Toulouse and more than 300 in Nantes.—AFP

CAMBODIAN OPPOSITION PREPARES FOR POLLS WITHOUT LEADER

PHNOM PENH: Cambodia's opposition party will head into local elections without a president after its founder's shock resignation, a party spokesman said yesterday, confirming his position would not be filled until 2018. Sam Rainsy, who has been at the forefront of the kingdom's opposition movement for two decades, announced his resignation from the Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP) in a letter posted on social media late Saturday.

His surprise departure casts new doubt over the prospects of a party that poses the only viable challenge to PM Hun Sen's authoritarian government in local elections in June and a 2018 general poll. Rainsy, who has been living in self-imposed exile since 2015 to avoid convictions and charges he says are politically motivated, did not elaborate on the reasons for his resignation. But analysts say it was an attempt to dodge legislation recently proposed by Hun Sen's government that would bar convicts from serving as party leaders and could lead to the CNRP's dissolution if Rainsy stayed on.

After a party meeting yesterday spokesman Yim Sovann told reporters a new chief would not be selected until April 2018, months before the scheduled national poll. Rainsy's deputy Kem Sokha will continue to serve as acting leader and guide the party through the local polls, he added. The spokesman hailed Rainsy's resignation



PHNOM PENH: In this file photo, Kem Sokha, deputy leader of the Cambodia National Rescue Party, gestures as he speaks at the party's headquarters in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. —AP

as an act of "devotion" to the party to protect it from "demolition".

The CNRP made significant gains in the last 2013 national election, riding a wave of frustration over the endemic corruption and rights abuses under Hun Sen's 32-year rule. But the party has been hampered since then by an onslaught of lawsuits that rights groups say is part of the strongman's crackdown on critics as he looks to extend his grip on power. Political analyst Ou Virak called Rainsy's step-down a "new low" for a party that has been floundering under mounting pressure from Hun Sen.—AFP

THOUSANDS OF ROMANIANS MARCH AGAINST GOVERNMENT

BUCHAREST: Thousands of protesters braved the cold to march in Romania's main cities on Saturday, angered by government attempts to water down anti-corruption laws. In the capital Bucharest, where a major rally was planned yesterday, around 3,000 people gathered at the seat of government despite sub-zero temperatures. "We are resisting, we aren't going away" yelled the protesters, who are calling for the left-leaning Social Democrat government, which only took power in Dec, to stand down.

Another 8,000 people took part in protests in the rest of the country, according to the national Agerpres news agency. These included 3,000 in Timisoara, in the west and around 2,500 at protests in towns of Cluj and Sibiu. Saturday's demonstrations, the 12th consecutive day of protests against the government, took place despite the administration backing down over a planned controversial decree which would have made abuse of power a crime punishable by jail

only if the sums involved exceeded 200,000 lei (44,000 euros, \$47,500).

The demonstrations, the largest since the ousting and summary execution of communist dictator Nicolae Ceausescu in 1989, have also continued despite the resignation on Thursday of justice minister Florin Iordache. Romania joined the European Union in 2007 and Brussels has long taken Bucharest to task over slow progress dealing with corruption and organized crime. The country has intensified the fight against corruption in recent years with the creation of a prosecutor attached to the DNA anti-corruption agency, which has become one of the most popular government agencies following the conviction of several ministers and senior officials. Graft watchdog Transparency International ranked Romania below all but three of its fellow EU states in a Jan report based on public perception of the prevalence of corruption. Worldwide, the country ranked 57th.—AFP

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AFGHAN REFUGEE WOUNDED IN KABUL ATTACK

GERMAN GOVERNMENT UNDER PRESSURE

KABUL: Barely two weeks after Germany deported him, an Afghan asylum seeker was struck by flying shrapnel in a suicide bombing in Kabul, highlighting the perils of repatriation to the war-battered country. Atiqullah Akbari, 23, was caught up in Tuesday's militant attack at the Supreme Court in Kabul, a terrifying scene of carnage, bloodshed and agonizing screams, which left 20 people dead and 41 others wounded. Akbari, now battling severe headaches after shrapnel injured his face, was deported to Kabul on Jan 24 after he was picked up a day earlier by German police in his home in Bavaria where he sought refuge. He is among 60 Afghan nationals who have been returned to Kabul since Dec under an agreement signed between the European Union and Afghanistan last Oct.

"I will go back, I must go back," Akbari said on the day he arrived, clutching two handbags, his only possessions. "I have nothing left here. My family has fled to Turkey after selling our house," he said, seemingly lost in the crowd on the snowy day. Germany's government is under pressure to act as the migrant influx has boosted a right-wing populist and anti-immigration movement, and the number of far-right hate crimes against foreigners has

soared. But the government has also faced increasing opposition at the state level against sending Afghan nationals back home to an increasingly dangerous environment.

No, Afghanistan is not safe

In October 2015 Akbari fled his home in the western city of Herat, where he worked for an Afghan NGO, after what he described as death threats. "We'll kill you, your family first, then it will be you," he recalled, without specifying the source of the threat. "Here there is 100 percent danger for me," he said, explaining his motivation to flee to Germany—first to Munich and then to the town of Bamberg in Bavaria. This is where Uschi Josat, a German merchant from the neighboring area of Strullendorf took him under her wings, eventually becoming a mother figure to him.

"We helped him out, he came to eat with us and on weekends he slept at home," Josat said. "Atiqullah was completely integrated in Germany. He learnt to speak and write German... He was the best in his integration class," Josat added, voicing dismay over his deportation. They have spoken nearly every night since he returned to Kabul. "Psychologically he is very affected," she said.



KABUL: In this photograph, Afghan refugee Atiqullah Akbari (Left), 23, who has been deported from Germany, arrives at the international airport in Kabul. —AFP

"It was unfair that he was expelled. He did nothing wrong. He needs another chance."

Afghanistan is plagued by insecurity, poverty and unemployment, and is increasingly overwhelmed by people repatriated from Pakistan, Iran and Europe along with hundreds of thousands of others displaced by war. Germany, which has taken in over one million asylum seekers since 2015, last Thursday announced plans to speed up the deportation of those denied refugee status. Five German state governments have decided to halt most expulsions to Afghanistan, according to media reports, citing the worsening instability in the strife-torn country.

Chancellor Angela Merkel—who faces a re-election bid in September amid a voter backlash over the mass influx—argues that though it was "not easy" to send Afghans back home, those denied asylum could be sent back to certain regions that were safer. "No, Afghanistan is not a safe country," placards said at protests in various German cities on Saturday against the deportations. The United Nations reported in early February that civilian casualties in Afghanistan peaked in 2016, with nearly 11,500 non-combatants—one third of them children—killed or wounded.—AFP



SURIGAO CITY: In this photo, Malacanang Palace, police officers walk past a damaged building, two days after it was rocked by a powerful earthquake late Friday in Surigao del Norte province in southern Philippines yesterday. —AP

AFTERSHOCKS ROCK PHILIPPINE QUAKE CITY SURVIVORS

SURIGAO CITY: Thousands of residents of a quake-hit city in the southern Philippines sought refuge on the streets as aftershocks hit the region yesterday, two days after a quake killed six. The 6.5-magnitude quake struck Surigao and nearby areas of Mindanao island late Friday, injuring 202, with more than a thousand homes destroyed or damaged, according to officials. People who had fled their damaged homes wrapped themselves in blankets and sacks for a second night as they slept side-by-side on the pavement Saturday, an AFP photographer at the scene said.

The state seismology office recorded 130 weaker quakes in Surigao, a city of 152,000 people, and in the predominantly agricultural region around it since the quake struck, though there were no additional reports of casualties or damage. "The people are terrified about the aftershocks," Romina Marasigan, spokeswoman for

the government's National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council told reporters. "This was the first time Surigao had suffered a quake this strong. The previous one occurred in the 1800s," President Rodrigo Duterte's spokesman Martin Andanan, a native of the region, said over government radio.

Duterte flew to the region yesterday to inspect the response effort, which officials said has shifted to relief and rehabilitation after the last of the dead and injured were pulled from the rubble. He was accompanied by a military transport plane loaded with generator sets, solar lamps, high-energy biscuits, mosquito nets and blankets for the displaced residents, Marasigan said. Early yesterday, long lines of people carrying pails and jugs queued for water rations supplied by fire trucks after the quake cut off tap water supply.

"We're still being hit by aftershocks, and as of

now we do not have tap water supply. The people are suffering," provincial information officer Mary Escalante told ABS-CBN television in an interview. "Buildings that suffered structural damage have been closed," she said, adding some schools and gyms that were meant to serve as evacuation centers were among those damaged by the quake. The quake also damaged bridges and roads and knocked out the power supply, though electricity was restored in most of Surigao on Saturday.

An average of five earthquakes, most of them undetectable except through instruments, hit daily across the Philippines, which lies on the so-called Ring of Fire, a vast Pacific Ocean region where many earthquakes and volcanic eruptions occur. The last lethal quake that hit the country measured 7.1-magnitude. It left over 220 people dead and destroyed historic churches when it struck the central islands in Oct 2013.—AFP

SEVEN KILLED IN MILITANT BATTLE IN INDIA'S KASHMIR

SRINAGAR: Four militants and two Indian soldiers were among seven people killed in a gun battle in Kashmir yesterday, a police spokesman said, the latest sign of increasing tension in the Himalayan region disputed by nuclear-armed neighbors India and Pakistan.

Militants opened fire on army troops in the village of Prisal south of Srinagar, the summer capital of India's state of Jammu and Kashmir, S.P. Pani, the deputy inspector general of police, told Reuters.

"Two army men, four militants, and a civilian, the house owner, were killed in the gun battle," Pani added, referring to the building where the militants had holed up. Three soldiers were injured in the exchange

of fire. The army seized four weapons from the site of the encounter in the village, which security forces had cordoned off, army spokesman Rajesh Kalia said.

India has blamed Pakistan for stoking violence in Kashmir by supplying fighters and material across the border, but Pakistan has denied these charges.

The violence peaked last year after Burhan Wani, a 22-year-old separatist leader who enjoyed widespread support in the Muslim-majority region, was shot dead by Indian security forces in July. Last month, three road building workers were killed after unidentified militants attacked a camp housing them, police said.—Reuters

S KOREAN INVESTIGATORS TO SUMMON SAMSUNG HEIR

SEOUL: South Korean prosecutors investigating the corruption scandal involving impeached President Park Geun-hye said yesterday that they plan to summon Samsung heir Lee Jae-yong again as they look into bribery allegations between Park and the country's largest business group. Lee, the billionaire vice chairman of technology giant Samsung Electronics, will be summoned along with two other group officials on Monday morning, said Lee Kyuchul, the spokesman of the prosecution team.

Investigators had sought to arrest Lee when they summoned him last month, but a court ruled there wasn't enough evidence to justify Lee's arrest at that point. Investigators will question Lee over new findings they made in the past few weeks and may consider requesting an arrest warrant for him again, said the prosecution spokesman. The investigators also want to question Park in person, but have yet to agree with her office on how and when to

do it. On Friday, prosecutors filed a lawsuit against the presidential Blue House to try to force Park's aides to stop blocking searches of her compound. They tried to enter the Blue House with a court-issued warrant to collect evidence earlier this month, but Park's aides turned them away, citing a law that can block searches of sites containing state secrets.

Samsung is suspected of providing tens of millions of dollars in money and favors to Park and her jailed friend Choi Soon-sil in exchange for government support of a controversial merger deal between two Samsung affiliates in 2015. The merger helped Lee promote a father-to-son transfer of leadership and wealth at the group. Moon Hyung-pyo, the country's former health minister, has been indicted on charges that he pressured the National Pension Service to support the merger even though the fund's stake in one of the companies lost an estimated hundreds of millions of dollars in value.—AP



SEOUL: In this file photo, Lee Jae-yong, front, a vice chairman of Samsung Electronics Co. arrives for the hearing at the Seoul Central District Court in Seoul, South Korea. —AP

GRENADE EXPLOSION KILLS TWO CHILDREN IN PAKISTAN

PESHAWAR: Two children were killed and another critically wounded in a grenade explosion in northwestern Pakistan yesterday, officials said.

The children of a shepherd family were playing in a mountainous village in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

province when they found the hand grenade and accidentally set it off, local government official Zariful Maani said. The two brothers aged nine and 10 died, while their seven-year-old female cousin is in a critical condition, Maani said.

Another local government offi-

cial, Aizaz Ahmad, confirmed the details. The village is close to the Swat Valley, where the army sent 30,000 troops in 2009 to battle Taliban fighters led locally by cleric Maulana Fazlullah.

He had taken control of the valley and waged a campaign of vio-

lence, including beheadings and attacks on girls' schools.

Pakistani officials say that Fazlullah fled to neighboring Afghanistan during the offensive. In 2013 Fazlullah became chief of the wider Pakistan Taliban group.—AFP

INDONESIANS TO VOTE IN LOCAL POLLS WITH EYE ON PRESIDENCY

JAKARTA: Tens of millions of Indonesians head to the polls on Wednesday in local elections across the Muslim-majority country, with bitter feuding over the powerful post of Jakarta governor stoking political and religious tensions. Incumbent Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, Jakarta's first ethnic Chinese and Christian leader, has angered some Muslim voters for allegedly insulting the Quran. He has denied wrongdoing, but is on trial for blasphemy in a case that rights groups and his supporters view as politically motivated.

Purnama is backed by President Joko Widodo's party and is running against Agus Yudhoyono, the son of former President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono,

and ex-education minister Anies Baswedan. The two Muslim candidates appear to have won over much of the conservative Islamic vote and some Purnama supporters.

"In terms of performance, I support Ahok," said Ferdi Ramadhan, 20, referring to Purnama's nickname. "However, there's the consideration of religion. I'm a Muslim...so I think I will vote for Anies Baswedan," he said, after participating in a skate-boarding contest park at a park in the capital. It was built under Purnama's administration on the site of a former red-light district.

Purnama has been popular among the middle classes for cutting red tape in the traffic-clogged city and pushing

through infrastructure projects, such as constructing defenses against sea water intrusion. But the forced evictions of slum dwellers from their riverbank homes to ease chronic flooding in the city have also angered many mainly Muslim residents. Muslims make up around 85 percent of the city's population, which also has sizeable Christian and other minorities.

The divisions have played out among communities, families and friends - much of it on social media and exacerbated by "fake news" stories - echoing the rifts seen in Britain over Brexit and the United States over the election of President Donald Trump. "I personally am sick of arguing about these candidates

and would like to just move on. It puts a lot of strain on friendships," said Sari Ekaputri, a 38-year old marketing executive who lives in Jakarta.

Close race

Jakarta police will deploy 16,000 officers ahead of voting day as concerns remain about hard line Muslim groups trying to hold similar rallies to the mass protests seen late last year calling for the jailing of Purnama. Police banned a rally that was being planned by Islamist groups on Feb. 11, citing security concerns. Despite the blasphemy allegations, Purnama has rebounded in opinion polls to remain a frontrunner. Even if he is convicted, he is legally allowed to

run the city as long as appeals are under way, according to analysts.

Jakarta's poll is one of scores of regional elections due to be held in other provinces, cities, and districts throughout Indonesia. But nowhere are the stakes quite as high as in Jakarta. Winning Jakarta can be a stepping stone to the presidency and Wednesday's vote is widely being seen as a proxy ahead of the 2019 presidential, explaining how intense the campaigning has been. "This election can determine the trajectory of future Indonesian politics...whether we will see an ugly future, where religion and ethnicity is further politicized for gains," said Tobias Basuki, a political analyst at a Jakarta-based think tank.—Reuters



RIYADH: UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres (left) speaks alongside Saudi Minister of Foreign Affairs Adel Al-Jubeir during a joint press conference in the Saudi capital yesterday. — AFP

‘ISLAMOPHOBIA’ FUELLING TERRORISM, SAYS UN CHIEF

GUTERRES SEEKS YEMEN TALKS ‘RESURRECTION’

RIYADH: “Islamophobia” in parts of the world is fuelling terrorism, the head of the United Nations said on a visit to Saudi Arabia yesterday, as anti-immigrant sentiment rises in some countries. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres made the comment to reporters after talks with Saudi King Salman, Crown Prince and Interior Minister Mohammed bin Nayef, and Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.

“One of the things that fuel terrorism is the expression in some parts of the world of Islamophobic feelings and Islamophobic policies and Islamophobic hate speeches,” Guterres said at a joint news conference with Saudi Foreign Minister Adel Al-Jubeir. “This is sometimes the best support that Daesh can have to make its own propaganda,” Guterres said, using an Arabic acronym for the Islamic State group of extremists in Syria and Iraq. The group has also claimed deadly attacks in Saudi Arabia and in Europe.

Anti-immigration politicians including France’s Marine Le Pen have seen their popularity rise after an influx to Europe of migrants, many of them Muslims fleeing wars in Syria and elsewhere. US President Donald Trump issued an order in late January that denied entry to all refugees for 120 days. It also blocked travellers from Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen for 90 days. Refugees from Syria were blocked indefinitely. But the order has faced obstacles and on Thursday an appellate court decided unanimously to maintain a block on Trump’s order.

Syria’s conflict has created 4.8 million refugees and killed more than 310,000 people since it began with anti-government protests in March 2011. Guterres said “we will never be successful in fighting terrorism in Syria if an inclusive political solution is not found for the Syrian people.” A new round of UN-sponsored peace talks is scheduled for Feb 20 in Geneva. Guterres arrived in Saudi Arabia from Turkey and

is to be in Dubai today for the World Government Summit during his regional tour.

Guterres also called for the “resurrection” of peace talks between Yemen’s warring sides to end the suffering of civilians. Thousands of people have died in Yemen and millions are struggling to feed themselves almost two years after a Saudi-led coalition intervened to support Yemen’s government and halt an advance by rebels. Seven ceasefires brokered between government and rebel forces by the United Nations have failed, while UN-backed peace talks have repeatedly broken down.

“You know, I am a Catholic. And Catholics believe in resurrection,” Guterres told reporters. “So if negotiations are dead they can always resurrect. And I do believe that they need to for a very simple reason, the suffering of the Yemeni people.” The world body has called repeatedly for a ceasefire to allow the delivery of relief supplies. UN aid chief Stephen O’Brien warned last month that Yemen could face famine this year if no immediate action is taken.

Guterres, who visited Yemen in his former post as UN High Commissioner for Refugees, praised the generosity of Yemenis despite their poverty. He said that to see them “suffering so much is something that really breaks my heart”. UN peace envoy Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed also attended the press briefing as he continues to push a peace plan that would restore a ceasefire and lead to a political transition in the country.

A Saudi-led coalition of several Arab states began air strikes over Yemen in March 2015 to support the internationally recognized government of President Abedrabbo Mansour Hadi against the Iran-backed Houthi rebels. The Houthis are allied with former members of the security forces loyal to ex-president Ali Abdullah Saleh. — AFP

CIA CHIEF GIVES MEDAL TO SAUDI CROWN PRINCE

RIYADH: The heir to Saudi Arabia’s throne has been awarded a medal by the new director of the US Central Intelligence Agency, who honored his counter-terrorism work. Mike Pompeo, making his first overseas tour since being confirmed as spy agency chief in late January, made the presentation to Crown Prince Mohammed bin Nayef at a weekend ceremony, the official Saudi Press Agency (SPA) said.

Prince Mohammed, 57, has been interior minister since 2012 and has years of experience in intelligence work. Widely respected in the West for his efforts to combat violent extremism, he oversaw a crackdown on Al-Qaeda which killed security officers and foreigners in the kingdom between 2003 and 2007. In 2009 Prince Mohammed survived with only light injuries an assassination attempt by Al-Qaeda.

Pompeo awarded him the George Tenet Medal in recognition of his “excellent intelligence performance, in the domain of counter-terrorism and his unbound contribution to realise world security and peace”. George Tenet was the CIA’s longest-serving director, from 1996 to 2004. Pompeo and Prince Mohammed also held talks

on security issues, SPA said. The prince told SPA that “no attempt will succeed in driving a wedge between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the US”.

It was the latest Saudi reaffirmation of ties between the absolute Islamic monarchy and Washington since President Donald Trump took office on Jan 20. The United States and Saudi Arabia have a decades-old relationship founded on the exchange of American security for Saudi oil. But ties between Riyadh and Washington became increasingly frayed during the eight-year administration of former president Barack Obama. Saudi Arabia’s leaders felt Obama was reluctant to get involved in the civil war in Syria and was tilting towards its rival Iran.

Pompeo is a strident critic of an international deal reached in 2015 to lift sanctions on Iran in exchange for guarantees that it will not pursue a nuclear weapons capability. In interviews and written pieces, Pompeo has pointed to Iran as the primary source of conflict in the Middle East since Tehran’s 1979 revolution - views which coincide with those of Riyadh. Pompeo had been in Turkey late last week for talks with officials there. — AFP



MANAMA: Bahraini King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa welcomes Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan yesterday. — AFP

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Focus

BRAZIL'S PRESIDENT
DIGS IN AHEAD OF
GRAFT TIME-BOMB

In the face of pending corruption allegations likened to a ticking bomb, Brazilian President Michel Temer is building himself a bunker. An embezzlement and bribery probe called Operation Car Wash has already shaken high level Brazilian politics for almost three years. But far from winding down, it's expected soon to escalate. Prosecutors are looking into whether Temer and many others, often from his PMDB party, took part in a gigantic corruption network that embezzled from state oil company Petrobras and filled election campaign coffers with dirty money.

The president and some of his allies are among those implicated in testimony given in plea bargains by 77 executives from Odebrecht, a construction firm that ran a whole secret department just for bribing politicians. The testimony remains secret. But it could soon be released by the Supreme Court - and the president's team is scrambling to take cover. "The approach of the tsunami has prompted the government to enact its emergency plan," said Bernardo Mello Franco, a columnist with Folha de Sao Paulo daily, reaching for yet another apocalyptic metaphor. "The order has gone out to reinforce the dikes and try to protect friends with buoys and life jackets."

Protecting the president

According to leaked testimony, then vice-president Temer asked Odebrecht in 2014 to give the center-right PMDB millions of dollars in campaign funds. He denies doing anything improper and a sitting president cannot be prosecuted for crimes that allegedly occurred before his term began. But with large numbers of other politicians also expected to be implicated, the potential scandal could still be huge. For sitting politicians accused of crimes, it will be up to the Supreme Court whether to authorize further investigations and whether to go to trial.

That's seen as an advantage compared to the fate of executives and ex-politicians caught in Operation Car Wash. They must instead face a set of crusading prosecutors and judges at a lower court level. When the Supreme Court's main justice for Car Wash cases, Teori Zavascki, died in a plane crash in January, some worried the probe might be derailed. Others questioned whether the crash, coming just as the Odebrecht time-bomb was being prepared, was even an accident.

But so far, the Supreme Court appears determined to press on and analysts say Temer's inner circle is scrambling to gain whatever advantage it can. For example, earlier this week, Temer named a highly partisan figure to fill Zavascki's seat - his justice minister, Alexandre de Moraes. As Globo newspaper's columnist Miriam Leitao put it, "Temer was not being subtle." "He wants to guarantee at least one vote (on the court) in his favor," Leitao added.

Temer also this week named one of his closest advisors, Wellington Moreira Franco, to a ministerial-level post. The reshuffle was instantly criticized as an attempt to get Moreira Franco - who like so many others has been implicated in the Car Wash probe - out of the clutches of lower courts. An intense legal battle erupted, with one judge barring the nomination, another overturning that decision and a third intervening again, leaving a final decision to the Supreme Court.

Legislators feeling heat

The government is not alone in getting edgy about the coming Odebrecht testimony. Congress and much of Temer's PMDB and allied PSDB party are anxious. The speakers of the senate, Eunício Oliveira, and of the lower house, Rodrigo Maia, have both been implicated in bribe taking in the Car Wash scheme.

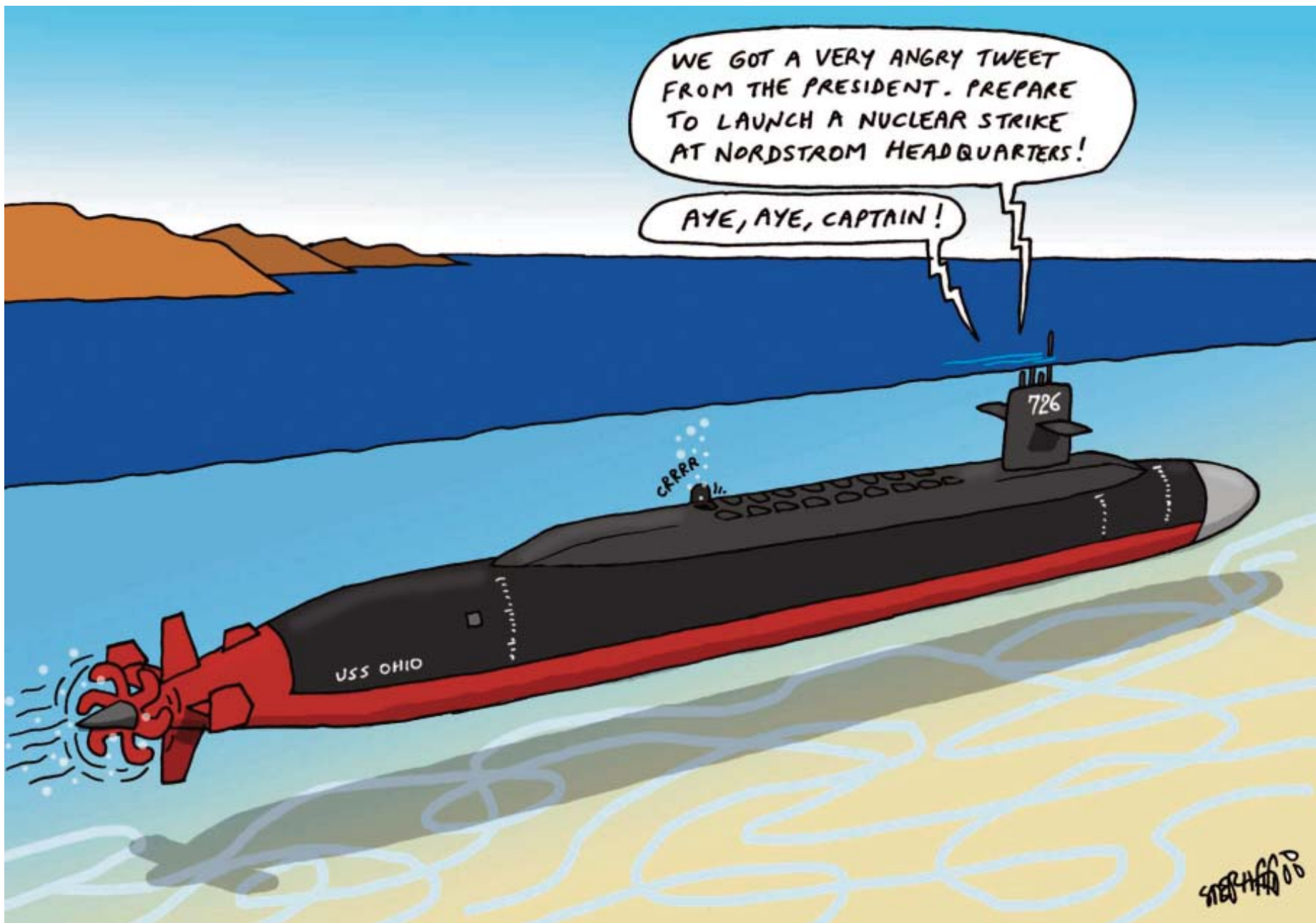
Their recent predecessors Renan Calheiros and Eduardo Cunha are also caught up in the affair.

Maia took fire this week for apparently attempting to rush through passage of a law that would reduce punishment for political parties taking suspect campaign donations.

Supreme Court Justice Gilmar Mendes, sometimes seen as less friendly than other judges to the Car Wash investigation, accused Congress of crafting a law that "will give impunity to political parties misusing public resources."

Maia quickly backtracked. David Fleischer, professor emeritus at the University of Brasilia, describes the situation in Brasilia as "waiting for the end of the world." And "everyone's building firewalls," Fleischer said. —AFP

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NO MATTER THE ISSUE, TRUMP KNOWS A GUY

US President Donald Trump knows a guy. No matter what issue Trump is addressing, he seems either to know somebody with a relevant personal experience or he's got a firsthand tale to recount. When he met airline CEOs on Thursday, Trump said his own pilot - "who's a real expert" - had told him about problems with obsolete equipment. When he met business and economic experts a week earlier, Trump cited the difficulties his friends in business were having borrowing money from banks as he spoke about the need to reduce financial regulations.

When he approvingly sized up Britain's vote to leave the European Union, Trump said last month that he'd had a "very bad experience" in his own businesses when dealing with the EU bureaucracy. "Getting the approvals from Europe," he said, "was very, very tough." Call him the anecdotal president: For good or ill, Trump processes policy proposals through his own personal frame of reference. "It's all about him," says Jeff Shesol, who wrote speeches for President Bill Clinton. "His frame for Europe, his frame for the airlines, his frame for the banking system ... is himself."

It's not necessarily a bad thing to draw on real-world experiences in developing or justifying policy. Plenty of presidents and politicians have recognized the value of anecdotal storytelling in advancing their agendas. President Barack Obama offered his own improbable life story as a metaphor for the wide-open possibilities available to all Americans. And he frequently drew on the concerns that came up in the 10 letters a day that he read from people who wrote to the White House.

Clinton was famous for sketching his encounters with ordinary Americans. President Lyndon Johnson drew on his early experiences teaching disadvantaged Mexican-Americans in stressing the importance of education and economic opportunity for all Americans. "I think it was then that I made up my mind that this nation could never rest while the door to knowledge remained closed to any American," Johnson said after signing the Higher Education Act of 1965. "Great Communicator" Ronald Reagan related the story of a woman who falsely collected welfare payments - then parlayed it

into a stereotype of "welfare queens" cheating the system.

Anecdotes

Kathleen Hall Jamieson, a University of Pennsylvania professor specializing in political communication, says that in his first three weeks in office, Trump has surpassed even Reagan in his reliance on the use of "argument by anecdote." "Given the extemporaneous nature of Trump's presidency," she says, "we can reasonably assume that these individual moments are playing a more important role for him" in developing policy than they did for presidents past. The risk, she adds, is that an overreliance on personal experiences "can lead to the assumption that something is typical when it's atypical."

With Trump, it's hard to tell exactly what goes into his policymaking. But the billionaire businessman-turned-politician cites experiences from his own, very rarefied world that wouldn't necessarily track those

of ordinary Americans. When he complained about onerous EU regulations, Trump appeared to be alluding to his failure to get approval for a sea wall at the Trump Organization's golf resort in Ireland.

When he talked during the campaign about crumbling airport infrastructure, he mentioned the potholes at New York's LaGuardia Airport - where Trump would have landed in his gilded private jet. When he talked about the dangers of nuclear weaponry during the campaign, he would often invoke the expertise of his "brilliant" late Uncle John, a scientist at MIT.

In some cases, Trump may be drawing lessons from somewhat scrambled tales. In calling for an investigation into alleged wide-scale voter fraud, for example, Trump has privately related a story about a pro golfer who either told Trump he had trouble voting himself or who had a friend who wasn't allowed to vote even as others who somehow looked like they should be eligi-

ble to vote cast ballots, according to The New York Times.

Golfer Bernard Langer, a German citizen who is not eligible to vote in the US, later issued a statement to Golf Digest saying that elements of the story had gotten lost in translation. Langer said he'd told a friend the story of someone who couldn't vote, and that tale had made its way to someone with ties to the White House and "from there, this was misconstrued."

As for Trump's difficulties with the EU, he did run into regulatory problems with the proposed sea wall at his Irish golf course, but he also encountered local opposition to that project. In an interview in December, Trump said he'd also sought approval for a "massive, beautiful expansion" of the course but had dropped the idea after getting the OK from Ireland because it would have taken years to get EU clearance. However, there's no record of him seeking approval for such an expansion. —AP



In this Feb 3, 2017 photo, US President Donald Trump speaks during a meeting with business leaders in the State Dining Room of the White House in Washington. —AP

TURMOIL GROWS OVER CORRESPONDENTS' DINNER

It is supposed to be a light-hearted gathering of journalists, celebrities and the president, where differences are put aside for good-natured jibes. But amid a bitter war of words between the Trump administration and the Fourth Estate, plans for the 2017 White House Correspondents' Association Dinner in April have been thrown into turmoil. After President Donald Trump's repeated barbs against the "dishonest media" and "fake news," some journalists and media outlets are thinking twice about their participation in the April 29 dinner, a tradition that dates back to 1921.

"How can media clink glasses with a White House that makes clear its contempt for press freedom and its admiration for (Russian President Vladimir) Putin methods?" tweeted David Frum, a senior editor at The Atlantic. The association, which organizes the annual event that raises money for journalism scholarships, said the dinner will be held as planned. The White House has indicated it is on Trump's calendar - despite some doubts about whether he will attend.

Opinion editor Robert Schlesinger of US News & World Report said that regardless of what Trump does, "the media should boycott the dinner." "News organizations should buy tickets as usual (it's for a good cause) but make other plans that night and if he does attend, let the ratings- and crowd-obsessed narcissist freak address an empty ballroom," Schlesinger wrote. Ironically, some analysts say the 2011 dinner in which then president Barack Obama skewered Trump became a pivotal moment in the billionaire's decision to make a White House run.

In recent years, the dinner has become a star-studded event attracting A-list celebrities ranging from George

Clooney to Helen Mirren to Lindsay Lohan, with politics mainly an afterthought. This year, The New Yorker and Vanity Fair have canceled parties they traditionally host as part of the hoopla surrounding the dinner. Also, many stars are avoiding the event this year and no "headliner" comedian has committed so far, according to The Hollywood Reporter.

'Stick a fork in it'

Washington Post media columnist Margaret Sullivan said the glitzy party and related events around it no longer seem appropriate. "Once merely embarrassing and ridiculous, the annual White House correspondents' dinner is poised to tip over into journalistic self-abasement," she wrote. "It's time to stick a silver-plated fork in it." Slate correspondent Jacob Weisberg echoed those sentiments, saying in a tweet: "Please cancel the White House Correspondents' Dinner. Unseemly spectacle, totally at odds with the press holding administration accountable."

Meanwhile, late-night comedy show host Samantha Bee is planning an alternative event the same evening, "welcoming journalists and non-irritating celebrities from around the world". All proceeds from that event - dubbed "Not the White House Correspondents' Dinner" - will go to the Committee to Protect Journalists, Bee said. Although all presidents have had scrapes with the press corps, relations between the media and the White House are at what some see as an all-time low.

After some news organizations called out Trump for "lies" on a variety of topics, the president disparaged journalists as "among the most dishonest human beings on earth". His top aide Stephen Bannon called the news

media "the opposition party". Association president Jeff Mason of Reuters said the dinner would be held as usual "to celebrate the First Amendment (on freedom of the press) and the role an independent press plays in a healthy republic."

Dining with 'the enemy'

The pro-Trump news outlet Daily Caller reported there was "chatter" that the president may skip the gathering, in an article titled "Will Donald Trump Dine With The Enemy?" Brent Decker, a former newspaper editor who authored "The Conservative Case for Trump," suggested he steer clear of the dinner. "I don't think #PresidentTrump should go into the coliseum to wrestle with the wild animals," Decker tweeted. Daily Beast editor Lloyd Grove argued that the show should go on. "Despite aesthetic and even principled objections to this annual rite of spring, the dinner continues to serve a valid journalistic interest. Journalism can frequently be a messy enterprise," Grove wrote.

But Northeastern University journalism professor Dan Kennedy said the event serves little purpose and "should have been canceled a long time ago". "The public sees Washington journalists as out-of-touch, well-heeled insiders more concerned about access than they are in holding the powerful to account," Kennedy said. Deborah Potter, a former CBS News correspondent who heads the NewsLab training center, said the event has long been "awkward" and "raises legitimate questions about coziness between reporters and their sources". She said that the dinner "has become a creature of the White House, at which journalists take on the role of bit players in service to those in power. That's not OK under any administration." —AFP

BARCA'S VIDAL TO MISS REST OF SEASON

BARCELONA: Barcelona right-back Aleix Vidal will take no further part in the Spanish champions quest for a treble this season after suffering a dislocated right ankle that will keep him out for five months. Vidal was injured with just three minutes to go of Barca's 6-0 rout at Alaves on Saturday when he came off worst in a challenge with on-loan Atletico Madrid defender Lucas Hernandez. "The player has been transferred to a hospital in Vitoria and a dislocation to the right ankle that required reconstructive surgery has been confirmed," Barca said in a statement. "The approximate downtime will be about five months." Vidal had only just recently fought his way back into Barca boss Luis Enrique's plans after being cast aside for large parts of the opening half of the campaign. "I am upset by Aleix's injury, the way it came about and what it means for him," said Enrique. "I hope it doesn't turn out to be as bad as it looks," added Barca midfielder Ivan Rakitic. "I was quite shocked. Hopefully he'll be back soon as he is a great guy and he was playing excellently." — AFP



SWISS CANTON REJECTS FUNDS TO MOUNT 2026 BID

ST MORITZ: Voters in the Swiss canton of Graubunden yesterday rejected a loan that would have helped finance a bid to host the 2026 Winter Olympics. The result effectively rules out an effort to host the Games by the eastern Switzerland region. The cantonal government in December approved the proposed financing scheme worth 25 million Swiss francs (\$25 million, 23.4 million euros). The plan foresaw the Swiss Olympic committee, the federal government and the regional government each making 8 million Swiss francs available to support a bid, with locals chipping in an additional million. Graubunden's Alpine resort town of St-Moritz, currently hosting the World Ski Championships, was home to the Winter Games previously in 1928 and 1948. The now thwarted 2026 bid called for events to be shared in several places including St-Moritz and Davos, which also hosts the World Economic Forum gathering of political and business elite each year. Yesterday's referendum on the measure was part of Switzerland's direct democracy system that includes four votes per year on federal initiatives as well as local laws and institutions. Switzerland's National Olympic Committee is due to announce its plans for a 2026 bid on March 7. —AFP

FORMER ALL BLACK LAUAKI DIES AGED 35

WELLINGTON: Former All Black Sione Lauaki has died at the age of 35, New Zealand Rugby said yesterday. The cause of death was not immediately revealed but the powerful loose forward had apparently suffered from kidney failure. "The thoughts of everyone are with the family of Sione Lauaki. Sione played 17 Tests from 2005-2008. AB#1055. Gone too soon. RIP, Wax," New Zealand Rugby tweeted, referring to Lauaki by his nickname. Lauaki made his Super Rugby debut for the Waikato Chiefs in 2004 and was selected for the All Blacks for his maiden Test against Fiji the following year. He was a member of the 2007 World Cup squad. "Another brother gone! Much love and Condolences to his family," tweeted former All Blacks captain Tana Umaga, leading tributes from former teammates. Sonny Bill Williams referred to Lauaki as Dox, a reference to the Dox Brothers fashion label he was involved with. "Damn. It's a sad day today, rest easy Dox," Williams wrote on Twitter. — AFP



FEUZ DRIVES SWISS WILD WITH DOWNHILL GOLD

ST MORITZ: Beat Feuz assuaged the absence through injury of Swiss teammate Lara Gut by storming to gold in the men's downhill at the World Ski Championships yesterday to drive a raucous home crowd wild. Feuz, a bronze medalist at the 2015 Beaver Creek worlds, timed 1min 38.91sec down the slightly shortened Corviglia course, its diabolical 'Free Fall' 45-degree opening kick-out cut over fears of fog that had seen the downhill postponed from Saturday.

"It's my best present, I couldn't dream of more!" beamed Feuz, who celebrated his 30th birthday Saturday. "It's unbelievable: in Switzerland at the world championships and I win!"

Erik Guay missed out on following in the footsteps of Hermann Maier (1999) and Bode Miller (2005) by claiming a speed double by just 0.12sec, the Canadian however adding silver to the gold he won in Wednesday's super-G.

"It's absolutely wonderful," said 35-year-old Guay, who has bounced back astonishingly well from a bad crash in Garmisch at the end of January.

"Everything that's happened in the last

10 days, going from Garmisch to winning the super-G to cancelling the downhill and with some fog today...

"It was quite a stressful week for me, but I'm really happy with the way things worked out." Austrian Max Franz, 27 and with just one World Cup victory to his name, took bronze, 0.37sec adrift of Feuz's pace. Defending world champion Patrick Kueng of Switzerland shared fourth place with Norway's much-touted and super-G silver medal-winning Kjetil Jansrud, just two-hundredths of a second off the podium. "It's not a nice place, here in Switzerland at the world championships and you get fourth," acknowledged Kueng.

"Two-hundredths is nothing... but that's life," Austria's defending Olympic champion Matthias Mayer finished down in 11th (+0.86). Despite the race starting with fog patches up top, racers soon glided into perfect sunny conditions, a large partisan flag-waving crowd of some 35,000 basking in anticipation in the finish area.

ELECTRIC ATMOSPHERE

The atmosphere was progressively notched up as each racer trumped their predecessor, to roars from the expectant crowd. When Kueng matched Jansrud's time before him, many thought the Swiss racer would be the first to defend his world downhill title since Bernhard Russi in 1972.

But it was not to be as Feuz, starting with bib number 13, laid down an amazing run with speeds touching 125kph to take him down a piste on which he won both the super-G and downhill at last year's World Cup finals.

Feuz, with Swiss tennis legend Roger Federer looking on, safely negotiated the rolling terrain and three monster jumps with aplomb, picking the right exit lines to become the fourth Swiss skier to claim the downhill title on home snow after Walter Prager (1931), David Zogg (1934) and Peter Mueller (1987).

There was still drama to come, however: first Germany's Andreas Sander threatened up top before fading, before the nerve-racking descents of Austria's 2015 super-G champion Hannes Reichelt, and then Guay, Franz and Mayer.

Each time their times flashed up red, to indicate the racer was not the new leader, Feuz was left clutching his head before punching the air in relief. —AFP



ST MORITZ: Beat Feuz of Switzerland, winner, reacts during the men's downhill winner presentation at the 2017 FIS Alpine Skiing World Championships in St Moritz, Switzerland, yesterday. —AP

HIRSCHER TAKES ON PINTURAUT IN COMBINED

ST MORITZ: Austrian Marcel Hirscher will face a stiff challenge from French rival Alexis Pinturault as he bids to defend his alpine combined title at the World Ski Championships in St Moritz today.

Hirscher, 27, has proved the real heavyweight of the World Cup in recent seasons and has in his sights a sixth successive overall winner's crystal globe. The Austrian was a clear winner at the last worlds in Beaver Creek two years ago, and warmed up for today's test with a 21st-place finish in last week's super-G.

Suffering from 'flu-like symptoms at the time, Hirscher was back on the slopes Saturday for training under the watchful eyes of his trainers, including his father.

Hirscher this season has four victories to his name, winning the Kitzbuehel and Levi slaloms and giant slaloms in Alta Badia and Garmisch. Pinturault, meanwhile, has racked up three giant slalom victories and also won the combined event in Santa Caterina in December ahead of Hirscher. In the Beaver Creek worlds, Pinturault disappointed, finishing only fifth, Hirscher topping the podium ahead of Norway's Kjetil Jansrud, silver medalist in the super-G here, and American Ted Ligety, currently sidelined through injury. But "Pintu" was confident

going into the St Moritz combined, with the opening downhill scheduled for 0900 GMT followed three hours later by a slalom. "I've won the combined crystal globe for the last two seasons," said Pinturault. "I must try to do the same thing here." The 25-year-old Frenchman, who will face off again against Hirscher in Friday's giant slalom, said he felt "even more" favourite for the combined because "before there was a (Ivica) Kostelic or a Ligety, even if there'll still be a Marcel!"

"A lot will come down to how you handle the downhill because it's very testing with many hidden gates and jumps."

Pinturault has proved his worth down the Corviglia slope, however, topping Friday's final downhill training run, ahead of Italian Peter Fill but also in the absence of a raft of speed specialists who skipped the session. The second combined of the World Cup season, in Wengen last month, went to Swiss surprise Niels Hintermann ahead of France's Maxence Muzaton. Also in the running for a podium place on Monday will be Norway's Aleksander Aamodt Kilde, and a strong Swiss trio of Justin Murisier, Luca Aerni and Mauro Caviezel. "You just have to get used to the jumps and know what's coming," Kilde warned of the downhill slope. — AFP



Marcel Hirscher



ST MORITZ: From left, Silver medalist Stephanie Venier of Austria, Gold medalist Ilka Stuhec of Slovenia and Bronze medalist Lindsey Vonn of the USA celebrate on the podium during the women's downhill race at the 2017 FIS Alpine Skiing World Championships in St Moritz, Switzerland, yesterday. —AP

ALPINE SKIING

STUHEC EMULATES MAZE, HISTORIC BRONZE FOR VONN

ST MORITZ: Ilka Stuhec reproduced her impressive World Cup form to maintain Slovenia's grip on the world downhill title when she won gold in the blue riband event in St Moritz yesterday. Stuhec, with four World Cup victories to her name this season (three downhill and one super-G), timed 1min 32.85sec down the 2.6km-long Engiadina course to emulate the feat of retired former teammate Tina Maze two years ago in Beaver Creek. Unheralded Austrian Stephanie Venier took silver - just her second podium, at 0.40sec, while Lindsey Vonn made history when she claimed bronze (+0.45), her seventh world medal. Vonn, the 2009 world downhill champion, showed all her experience to produce a strong bottom section to secure third place and become the oldest medalist, at the age of 32 years and 117 days, in any women's event at the World Ski Championships. The previous record was held by Austrian Anita Wachter when she won giant slalom bronze in 1999.

Hitting speeds of 80kph within four seconds of leaving the start gate and motorway-coasting maximums of 125.6kph, the race was held in ideal conditions with none of the fog that had seen the men's downhill on Saturday rescheduled to run after the women's.

Stuhec had shown her mettle down the course by topping two of the training sessions and finishing second in the downhill section of the combined, in which she fluffed by crashing out of the slalom six gates in. She started no differently yesterday, attacking the downhill from the off, running with start number seven. Sheer speed allied with technical mastery of the tricky, turny part of the bottom section of the slope guaranteed that the 26-year-old Slovene topped the podium to carry on Maze's legacy.

GOGGIA'S COSTLY MISTAKE

For a terrible mistake two gates from the finish line, Italian Sofia Goggia, a remarkable ninth-time World Cup podium finisher this season, would also have been on the podium here.

She eventually missed it by just seven-hundredths, capping a couple of miserable days for the Italian who was first after the combined downhill but bombed out of the slalom after just three gates. "Being fourth in the world champs is nothing," lamented Goggia. "It's hard to accept with the mistake I made because I was pretty fast before. It hurts bad."

Austrian Nicole Schmidhofer failed to live up to her billing after winning the super-G. Starting with bib number one, she came in 16th, 1.76sec off the pace, while silver medalist in that discipline, Tina Weirather of Liechtenstein, was 10th (+1.18). The race unfortunately had two high-profile absentees in the shape of Austrian Anna Veith and home star Lara Gut, whose mouth-watering head-to-head with Stuhec and Vonn had been touted as one of the stand-outs of the worlds held high in the picturesque Engadin mountains. Gut was ruled out for the season after suffering a bad knee injury in training for

the slalom section of Friday's alpine combined event, a cruel blow for the Swiss team for whom the 25-year-old has become a standard bearer,

especially in the speed events. Veith pulled out of the downhill saying she was not ready in her comeback from a knee injury. — AFP

UHLAENDER WAITING TO SEE IF SHE'S A SOCHI MEDALIST

NEW YORK: US women's skeleton slider Katie Uhlaender has high hopes and a very realistic chance of being in Pyeongchang, South Korea, at this time next year, for what would be her fourth chance to compete in a Winter Olympics. She'll be trying to win her first Olympic medal. That is, unless one arrives in the mail beforehand. Uhlaender finished in fourth place at the Sochi Games three years ago, behind Britain's Lizzy Yarnold, US teammate Noelle Pikus-Pace and Russia's Elena Nikitina - an athlete who was temporarily suspended by skeleton's governing body earlier this season over "an alleged anti-doping rule violation" at those Olympics.

The probe into Russia's state-sponsored doping program continues, and if the International Olympic Committee concludes that Nikitina was among the athletes who had doping samples doctored as part of that scandal at the Sochi Games, then it would almost certainly order her medal reallocated to the next finisher.

That would be Uhlaender, who is left to wait and see what's going to happen. "I've held my integrity. Maybe it was a blessing so that I didn't quit," Uhlaender said. "I have one title left to win. I've won every title there is in this sport. There's one left. If I do that, I think I can walk away from this sport fulfilled. And the bronze, if it was awarded to me, it would motivate me even more to just prove that I deserved it."

There's no timetable for when the IOC could decide on what to do with the Russian athletes who won medals in Sochi and were implicated in the scandal. And if Uhlaender does get the medal, it's not like she gets to go back to Sochi, climb onto the medal stand and see the US flag swaying in her honor.

"You don't get that moment back," said longtime US bobsledder and close friend Steven Holcomb. "It's a shame." Uhlaender has been the overall World Cup champion, won the world title at Lake Placid in 2012 and is the only woman in her sport - where sliders go headfirst down an icy mountainside chute at speeds that can exceed 80 mph - to win gold, silver and bronze medals at the world championships in her career.

HOSPITALISED

All that has come in a career marred by personal tragedy (notably the death of her father

just before the 2010 Vancouver Games), numerous injuries (many of which threatened her career), a concussion and most recently a nasty infection that kept her off the ice for the first part of this season and left her hospitalised. The tribulations, she insists, have brought her peace and perspective. "It's been a long and hard road back," Uhlaender said. "I'm trying to not take it too seriously, not get too stressed about something I can't control, it's all about just enjoying every moment and I think that's how you go fast on a skeleton sled." Bobsled's and skeleton's world championships start this week in Königssee, Germany. They were originally slated to be held in Sochi, then moved late last year after many sliders said they would skip worlds unless they were moved - a direct response to the Russian scandal. To explain the move, the International Bobsled and Skeleton Federation said it wanted "a competition that focuses on sport rather than accusations and discussions."

Uhlaender won't be competing. Doomed in part by missing the first half of the season with that illness, Uhlaender didn't make the US team heading to worlds; Annie O'Shea, Kendall Wesenberg and Savannah Graybill qualified over her. —AP



Katie Uhlaender

NEW ZEALAND’S RONCHI RETURNS FOR SOUTH AFRICA SERIES

WELLINGTON: New Zealand wicket-keeper Luke Ronchi has recovered from injury and is back in their limited-overs squads for the upcoming home series against South Africa, Black Caps selector Gavin Larsen said.

New Zealand will play South Africa in a Twenty20 match at Auckland before the teams play a five-match one-day

international series. The hosts named 14-man squads for the T20 match and the first two ODIs.

“It will be great to have Luke back in the mix,” Larsen said. “He’s the number one white-ball wicketkeeper in the country and brings considerable experience to the group.”

Ronchi’s return means wicketkeeper

Tom Blundell was dropped, while middle-order batsman Colin Munro was also omitted after scoring three and two against Australia.

“Colin hasn’t quite shown the consistency he would like in the middle order and we feel Jimmy (Neesham) is deserved of an opportunity with the bat at six,” Larsen added.

Opening batsman Martin Guptill, who missed the last two matches against Australia with an injury, was named in both squads.

T20I squad: Kane Williamson (captain), Corey Anderson, Trent Boult, Tom Bruce, Lockie Ferguson, Colin de Grandhomme, Martin Guptill, Colin Munro, James Neesham, Luke Ronchi,

Mitchell Santner, Ish Sodhi, Tim Southee, Ben Wheeler.

ODI squad: Kane Williamson (captain), Trent Boult, Neil Broom, Lockie Ferguson, Colin de Grandhomme, Martin Guptill, Matt Henry, Tom Latham, James Neesham, Luke Ronchi, Mitchell Santner, Tim Southee, Ish Sodhi, Ross Taylor. —Reuters

GOLF

SPIETH SURGES TO 6-SHOT LEAD AT PEBBLE BEACH

SAN FRANCISCO: Jordan Spieth fired eight birdies in a seven-under par 65 on Saturday to seize a six-shot lead after three rounds of the weather-disrupted US PGA Tour Pebble Beach National Pro-Am.

Spieth, in a three-way tie for the lead with world number one Jason Day and Derek Fathauer when the second round concluded early Saturday, pulled inexorably away with a sparkling effort at Pebble Beach Golf Links, one of three courses in use over the first three rounds of the tournament.

The two-time major champion, seeking his first PGA title of 2017, opened with back to back birdies. His only bogey of the round, at the eighth, was followed by three birdies in a row at the ninth, 10th and 11th.

Having picked up another shot at 15, he rolled in a 16-footer for birdie at the par-three 17th, and left himself inches for a birdie at 18.

“I couldn’t have asked for a better putting day, with greens that are poa annua and have a lot of traffic because they have been so soft with this weather, it’s very difficult even to make a putt from four feet,” said Spieth, whose 17-under par total of 198 put him six in front of American Brandt Snedeker, who carded a five-under 67 at Pebble Beach. It was a further stroke back to two-time winner Dustin Johnson and unheralded Kelly Kraft, Americans who posted 65s for 205.

DAY IN DIFFICULTY
World number one Day made a disas-



PEBBLE BEACH: Jordan Spieth hits out of a bunker on the sixth fairway of the Pebble Beach Golf Links during the third round of the AT&T Pebble Beach National Pro-Am golf tournament Saturday, in Pebble Beach, Calif. —AP

BRILLIANT ZANOTTI EAGLES LAST FOR MALAYSIA TRIUMPH

KUALA LUMPUR: Fabrizio Zanotti completed a brilliant final round with a birdie-eagle finish to claim a one-shot victory at the Maybank Championship yesterday as the Paraguayan stormed to his second European Tour title.

The 33-year-old trailed overnight leader Danny Willett by six shots at the start of the day, aware that only a faultless 18 holes were required to capture a first win since he triumphed in a playoff at the 2014 BMW International Open.

He duly obliged, scorching the Saujana Golf and Country Club course with a bogey-free round of nine-under-par 63 to finish with a 72-hole total of 19-under.

As US Masters champion Willett let slip his three-shot advantage, David Lipsky emerged as Zanotti’s closest rival but the American failed to get up-and-down from a greenside bunker for a birdie at the last that would have forced a playoff.

“It was a great effort, a great day for me. I am really happy,” Zanotti said in a post-round interview after Lipsky’s 12-foot birdie putt stopped short of the cup and confirmed his title.

Lipsky carded a 67 to finish on 18-under, one stroke ahead of Austria’s Bernd Wiesberger and two clear of France’s Alexander Levy.

Willett, who has yet to win since his triumph at Augusta last April, never found any consistency and a bogey at the last completed a disappointing one-over round that dropped him into a share of fifth place alongside China’s Li Haotong.

TAKING IT EASY

Zanotti arrived in Malaysia after three missed cuts in as many tournaments this season and few would have tipped him to emerge victorious at an event co-sanctioned by the Asian Tour.

“Golf is like that. I have been working a lot in the pre-season with my coach, with my team and making a few changes, seeing my golf swing,” he said.

“I just got here... three missed cuts in a row. I thought I will just take it easy this

week. It was that way. I played very calm, played shot-by-shot all the four rounds.”

In a round worthy of winning any title, Zanotti picked up four shots on the front nine and added three more birdies coming in before he celebrated the spectacular eagle on the par-five 18th in Seve Ballesteros style with a fist pump and a roar. The Paraguayan admitted that he had not considered winning the tournament until he registered his sixth birdie of the day. “When I made the birdie on 15th, that one was a good birdie,” he said. “That moment I thought ‘Your never know but you might have a chance.’”

Lipsky made his bid for victory with a brilliant run of four straight birdies from the 10th but a bogey on the 14th halted his momentum.

The American stayed calm and moved to within one shot of the lead with a birdie on the penultimate hole, set up by a pinpoint approach, but his wayward second shot on the last nestled in the sand next to the green and a poor bunker shot ended his chances. —Reuters



KUALA LUMPUR: Fabrizio Zanotti of Paraguay poses with his trophy after winning the Maybank Championship golf tournament in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia yesterday. —AP



HYDERABAD: India’s wicketkeeper Wriddhiman Saha, left, and Lokesh Rahul, center, react after Bangladesh’s Mahmudullah, right, plays a shot during the fourth day of the cricket Test match in Hyderabad, India, yesterday. —AP

CRICKET

BANGLADESH BATTLE FOR SURVIVAL IN INDIA TEST

HYDERABAD: Bangladesh reached 103-3 in 35 overs at stumps on day four of the one-off Test against India in Hyderabad yesterday.

The tourists, chasing an improbable 459-run target, need another 356 runs for victory. Bangladesh was bowled out for 388 in their first innings, prompting India to declare at 159-4 in their second innings to set up the chase.

At stumps, Shakib Al Hasan was unbeaten on 21 runs, while Mahmudullah was batting on 9 not out. Post tea, Bangladesh made a poor start as Tamim Iqbal (3) was dismissed off Ravichandran Ashwin (2-34) in the sixth over. India called for a DRS review, which showed the batsman got an inside-edge onto his pad before he was caught at gully. Soumya Sarkar (42) and Mominul Haque (27) then put on 60 runs for the second wicket. Sarkar survived a caught behind shout off Ashwin via DRS review.

Ravindra Jadeja (1-27) removed Sarkar, caught at slip in the 22nd over, and then Ashwin made it a quick double blow three overs later, with Haque caught at slip as well.

Shakib too survived a caught behind appeal via DRS, and later his 28-run partnership with Mahmudullah pushed Bangladesh past 100 in the 32nd over. Bangladesh faces an uphill battle to steal a draw from this match.

“It’s not just one batsman but we as a group have to build a 50-60 partnership and then see how it goes from the lunch time. We have to get through the first hour and stay cool in the dressing room as well,” said Bangladesh’s batting coach Thilan Samaraweera. Earlier, India declared its second innings after reaching 159-4 in 29 overs. They made a poor start with Taskin Ahmed (2-43) removing the opening pair and reducing the home side to 23-2. Lokesh Rahul (7) and Murali Vijay (10) were both caught behind. Virat Kohli (38) and Cheteshwar Pujara (54 not out) then added 67 runs for the third wicket, upping the scoring rate.

SURRENDER

Kohli was caught at midwicket off Shakib Al Hasan (2-50). Pujara put on 38 runs with Ajinkya Rahane (28), who too was bowled by Shakib.

Ravindra Jadeja (16 not out) was promoted up the order and hit a couple lusty blows in a quick-fire 31-run partnership with Pujara.

Pujara completed his 12th Test half-century off 57 balls. He hit six fours and a six, as India declared during the tea break. This was after Bangladesh was bowled out for 388 shortly before lunch to surrender a 299-run lead. India didn’t enforce the follow on.

“Since we fielded for more than 100 overs, the idea was to give bowlers a break for a session, and then they can recover and come back fresh. We were looking to add another 150-200 runs,” said Cheteshwar Pujara after the day’s play.

Mushfiquur Rahim scored 127, for his fifth test hundred, as he led Bangladesh’s fight back in response to the host’s mammoth first innings’ total of 687-6d. Starting from overnight 322-6, Bhuvneshwar Kumar (1-52) bowled Mehedi Hasan Miraz for 51, ending his 87-run partnership with Rahim for the seventh wicket. Rahim reached his hundred off 235 balls as Bangladesh crossed 350 in the 118th over. Tajjul Islam (10) and Taskin Ahmed (8) made India work hard for their wickets as Bangladesh batted for time knowing it will need to bat last on a turning wicket to save the game. Rahim was then the last man dismissed, caught behind off Ravichandran Ashwin (2-98) after playing for 381

SCOREBOARD

HYDERABAD, India: Scoreboard at stumps on the fourth day of the one-off Test between India and Bangladesh in Hyderabad yesterday.			
India 1st innings 687-6 dec (Kohli 204, Saha 106 not out; Islam 3-156, Hasan 2-165)			
Bangladesh 1st innings (overnight 322-6; Rahim 81 not out, Hasan 51 not out)			
Tamim Iqbal run out (Yadav/Kumar)	24	L. Rahul c Rahim b Ahmed	10
Soumya Sarkar c Saha b Yadav	15	C. Pujara not out	54
Mominul Haque lbw b Yadav	12	V. Kohli c Mahmudullah b Shakib	38
Mahmudullah lbw b Sharma	28	A. Rahane b Shakib	28
Shakib Al Hasan c Yadav b Ashwin	82	R. Jadeja not out	16
Mushfiquur Rahim c Saha b Ashwin	127	Extras (lb5, w1)	6
Sabbir Rahman lbw b Jadeja	16	Total (4 wickets dec; 29 overs)	159
Mehedi Hasan b Kumar	51	Fall of wicket: 1-12 (Vijay), 2-23 (Rahul), 3-90 (Kohli), 4-128 (Rahane)	
Tajjul Islam c Saha b Yadav	10	Bowling: Tajjul 6-1-29-0, Ahmed 7-0-43-2, Shakib 9-0-50-2, Hasan 7-0-32-0	
Taskin Ahmed c Rahane b Jadeja	8	Did not bat: W. Saha, R. Ashwin, B. Kumar, U. Yadav, I. Sharma	
Kamrul Islam Rabbi not out	0	Bangladesh 2nd innings (target 459)	
Extras (lb15)	15	Tamim Iqbal c Kohli b Ashwin	3
Total (all out, 127.5 overs)	388	Soumya Sarkar c Rahane b Jadeja	42
Fall of wickets: 1-38 (Sarkar), 2-44 (Iqbal), 3-64 (Haque), 4-109 (Mahmudullah), 5-216 (Shakib), 6-235 (Rahman), 7-322 (Hasan), 8-339 (Tajjul), 9-378 (Ahmed), 10-388 (Rahim).		Mominul Haque c Rahane b Ashwin	27
Bowling: Kumar 21-7-52-1, Sharma 20-5-69-1, Ashwin 28.5-7-98-2, Yadav 25-6-84-3, Jadeja 33-8-70-2.		Mahmudullah not out	9
India 2nd innings			
M. Vijay c Rahim b Ahmed	7	Shakib Al Hasan	21
		Extras (nb1)	1
		Total (3 wickets; 35 overs)	103
		Fall of wickets: 1-11 (Iqbal), 2-71 (Sarkar), 3-75 (Haque)	
		Bowling: Kumar 5-2-14-0, Ashwin 16-6-34-2, Sharma 3-0-19-0 (1nb), Yadav 3-0-9-0, Jadeja 8-2-27-1.	
		Still to bat: Mushfiquur Rahim, Sabbir Rahman, Mehedi Hasan, Tajjul Islam, Taskin Ahmed, Kamrul Islam Rabbi.	

minutes. He faced 262 deliveries and hit 16 fours as well as two sixes. It was Ashwin’s 250th wicket in 45 tests, surpassing Australian paceman Dennis Lillee’s record of 48 matches. He will be extra lethal on day five and make Bangladesh’s

task much tougher. “The ball has started turning now, probably more than on day three. They batted well in the first innings. We are hopeful that we will get those remaining seven wickets as early as possible,” said Pujara. — AP

SWEDEN WIN PUTS LATVALA ON TOP

TORSBY: Finland’s Jari-Matti Latvala in a Toyota climbed atop the overall standings yesterday when he won the Rally of Sweden a day after pacesetter Thierry Neuville crashed out again. The Belgian Hyundai driver had a 43sec lead over Latvala going into Saturday’s final stage, but lost a wheel when hitting a barrier on a simple run around the Karlstad hippodrome meant a second consecutive bomb out. For Latvala it was a fourth win on the ice-covered roads with snowbanks, breakneck speeds in sub-zero temperatures as Ford pair Estonia’s Ott Tõnõk and world champion Sebastian Ogier came second and third trailing by 29.2sec and 1min respectively. “It’s simply magnificent. New team, only the second rally and we’ve got this win,” Latvala said. Despite Neuville’s misfortune the Finn was a deserved winner after crushing the opposition in all three specials yesterday.

Defending champion Ogier, who won here last year, blew his chances when he spun his Fiesta through the very first corner yesterday.

“That was a stupid mistake. I caught some fresh snow on the inside and spun. I took it easy afterwards because I knew it was over,” said the Frenchman who had been trailing by just 16 seconds at the time. The result leaves Latvala on 48 points, Ogier on 44 and Tanak on 33 after the second event on the 13 date calendar.

After the snow of Sweden next up for the new, bigger and lighter cars is the testing gravel tracks at the Rally of Guanajuato in northern Mexico from March 12.

Results:
1. Jari-Matti Latvala-Miikka Anttila (FIN/Toyota Yaris) 2h36:03.6

2. Ott Tõnõk-Raigo Molder (EST/Ford Fiesta RS) at 29.2
3. Sebastian Ogier-Julien Ingrassia (FRA/Ford Fiesta RS) 59.5
4. Dani Sordo-Marc Marti (ESP/Hyundai i20) 2:11.5
5. Craig Breen-Scott Martin (IRL-GBR/Citroën C3) 2:51.2
6. Elfyn Evans-Daniel Barritt (GBR/Ford Fiesta RS) 5:26.6
7. Hayden Paddon-John Kennard (NZL/Hyundai i20) 5:31.2
8. Stephane Lefebvre-Gabin Moreau (FRA/Citroën DS3) 7:14.7
9. Pontus Tidemand-Jonas Andersson (SWE/Skoda Fabia) 9:11.1 (1er catégorie WRC2)
10. Teemu Suninen-Mikko Markkula (FIN/Ford Fiesta RS) 10:02.9

Power Stage (ES18):
1. Jari-Matti Latvala-Miikka Anttila (FIN/Toyota Yaris) 5 pts
2. Sebastian Ogier-Julien Ingrassia (FRA/Ford Fiesta RS) 4 pts
3. Thierry Neuville-Nicolas Gilsoul (BEL/Hyundai i20) 3 pts
4. Kris Meeke-Paul Nagle (GBR-IRL/Citroën C3) 2 pts
5. Hayden Paddon-John Kennard (NZL/Hyundai i20) 1 pt

Specials winners:
Latvala 6 (ES1, ES4, ES13, ES16, ES17, ES18)
Neuville 6 (ES2, ES3, ES5, ES6, ES7, ES14), Tõnõk 4 (ES8, ES9, ES10, ES11), Sordo 1 (ES15), ES12 cancelled. — AFP

TENNIS

‘DISRESPECTFUL’ ANTHEM GAFFE LEAVES GERMANS FUMING

LOS ANGELES: Andrea Petkovic says she has ‘never felt so disrespected’ after a gaffe involving the German national anthem during their Fed Cup tie against the United States.

The Germans were upset and angry following a blunder at the opening ceremony to the World Group tie in Maui, Hawaii, on Saturday.

An American soloist sang an old version of the German anthem which leads off with a stanza considered overtly nationalist — “Deutschland, Deutschland ueber alles”—a reference to German supremacy.

Singing that version is a major ‘no-no’ in Germany, because of its strong links to the Nazi era, and only the third stanza

of the old anthem is now in use.

Organisers apologised for the gaffe but a fuming Petkovic went on to lose to Alison Riske 7-6 (12/10), 6-2 to put the USA 1-0 up in the first singles rubber.

“I have never felt so disrespected in my life, it was an absolute effrontery and insolence, of the very worst kind,” said the 29-year-old Petkovic adding that she and team-mate Julia Georges were in tears. “It is with some distance the worst thing which has happened to me in my life, especially at the Fed Cup. “We’re in 2017 — something like this should not happen in America. “It is embarrassing and smacks of ignorance. “Jule (Goerges) started to cry at once, I had tears in my eyes and was angry,” she added.

“The bad thing is that this effects us, not the Americans.” Germany’s team boss Barbara Rittner was horrified by the “respectless number.”

SINCERE APOLOGY

“This is a real scandal and is inexcusable,” said Rittner, who said she had even thought of snatching the microphone from the singer. “I could have cried, because it is always a special moment, which gives you goosebumps, when you hear the anthem being played.

“What happened here hits us hard.”

The president of the US Tennis Association, Katrina Adams, immediately apologised to Rittner in person and has said they will investigate.

“The USTA extends a sincere apology to the German Fed Cup team & fans 4 the outdated National Anthem,” the US Tennis Association wrote in a tweet. “This mistake will not occur again.”

The German tennis federation replied tersely, “@usta we hope so...”, prompting the USTA to respond, “@DTB Tennis We can assure that it won’t. Again, our sincere apologies.” The anthem gaffe cast a cloud over the German camp even before Petkovic’s defeat. After taking the first set tie-breaker, Riske roared to a 5-0 lead in the second and fought through a tense spell to seal the victory.

It gave the USA a leg up to surprise Australian Open semi-finalist CoCo Vandeweghe, who was to take on Julia

Goerges in the second singles.

Vandeweghe took the first set from Goerges 6-3 and was up 3-1 in the second when Goerges slipped on a rain-slicked baseline, hurting her knee. A medical timeout coincided with a rain delay, and the match never resumed.

Play was to resume on Sunday, meaning both will be in singles action twice on the final day of the best-of-five match tie-with Vandeweghe also slated for doubles. The winner of the tie will face either the defending champion Czech Republic or Spain, who were level at 1-1 after day one in Ostrava. The United States own a record 17 Fed Cup titles, but haven’t won the nations tournament since 2000. — AFP

KERBER ‘READY’ TO PLAY AGAIN IN QATAR

DOHA: Angelique Kerber said yesterday she was “ready” to return to action as she prepared for her first competitive match since losing her Australian Open title and world number one ranking. The German star is the number one seed at this week’s Qatar Open, a tournament which boasts five players from the world’s top seven. All eyes will focus, initially at least, on Kerber as the 29-year-old looks to overcome the twin disappointments she suffered in Melbourne last month. There she crashed out limply in the fourth round to Coco Vandeweghe and when Serena Williams claimed her seventh Australian Open title, the American also ensured Kerber fell to number two in the rankings. But ahead of her first match—most likely to be played on Tuesday—Kerber said there would be no after effects from the Australian Open.

“I’m feeling ready to play again,” she told reporters. “I’m feeling good. Of course, the first rounds are always a little bit tougher because you have to get used to the tournament feeling again, to the match things.

“But, yeah, I think that I’m ready. I really enjoy my tennis right now on the practice court—so, yeah, for me the tournament can start already.” Asked if she felt confident that she could regain her world number one ranking, Kerber replied: “I will do my best. “If you play good tennis, then you

have results. “This is actually for me the most important thing, to win matches again, getting the confidence back, then we will see what happens.” If Kerber wins this week in Doha and next week in the UAE at the Dubai Tennis Championships, she will regain the coveted number one spot from Williams. The first leg of that could prove very difficult.

Last year she lost in the second round in Doha—after receiving a bye in the first, just like this year—in straight sets to China’s Zheng Saisai. And also playing this week in Doha are the world numbers three, five, six and seven—Karolina Pliskova, Dominika Cibulkova, Agnieszka Radwanska and Garbine Muguruza.

Slovakian Cibulkova said she was confident she could improve on her current best world ranking. “I’m 100 per cent convinced I can improve on the ranking,” she told reporters, also yesterday.

“This is the mentality I need to have. I need to have the mentality I want to improve my ranking. I can see it go even further.” Like Kerber, Pliskova, Cibulkova and Radwanska have all received byes into the second round.

One player not in Doha this week though is defending champion Carla Suarez Navarro who was a late withdrawal with a shoulder injury. — AFP

TEENAGER SABALENKA PUTS BELARUS INTO FED SEMIS

MINSK: The 18-year-old Aryna Sabalenka put Belarus into the Fed Cup semi-finals yesterday with a straight-sets win over Michaella Krajicek of the Netherlands in the World Group opening round tie. Sabalenka, who is 142 in the world, won 7-6 (7/5), 6-4 her first ever meeting with Krajicek, 28, to give the hosts Belarus an unassailable 3-1 advantage.

“It’s unbelievable! It’s an incredible feeling,” Sabalenka said. “We all acted as a single unit and that was the key to our success. I failed to recover completely after yesterday’s match with Kiki Bertens and experienced some problems with my serve. But everything ended well.” The rivals traded breaks throughout the opening set, which Sabalanka took in a tiebreak after 50 minutes on court. The second set was almost a carbon copy of the first as the exchange of breaks continued. But the Belarus teenager was a bit more accurate again taking the set and the match in one hour 37 minutes. Earlier yesterday Aliaksandra Sasnovich, ranked 128th, put Belarus into a 2-1 lead as she beat Bertens also in straight sets 6-3, 6-4 in one hour 23 minutes ending the Dutch star’s eight-match winning streak in Fed Cup. “I’m very happy,” Sasnovich said.

“I knew how to play against Bertens after watching yesterday’s Aryna (Sabalenka) match with her. That match boosted my self-confidence a great deal,” Sasnovich acted confidently from the start at the hard court of Minsk Chizhovka Arena under watchful gaze of Belarus president Alexander Lukashenko. She produced four breaks to earn a one-set advantage after 41

minutes, while Bertens broke back only on two occasions. The opponents traded break throughout the second set but Sasnovich was more precise winning the set and the match to level her record with Bertens, ranked 24th in the world, at 1-1. “I didn’t play well today. That’s all,” Bertens said. “I was hoping that yesterday’s win will help me today but it didn’t happen.” — AFP



MINSK: Belarus Aryna Sabalenka returns a service to Dutch Michaella Krajicek during the Fed Cup World Group first round tennis match against between Belarus and Netherlands in Minsk yesterday. — AFP

ZVEREV DENIES GASQUET MONTPELLIER HAT-TRICK

MONTPELLIER: Rising German Alexander Zverev denied home favourite Richard Gasquet a third consecutive Open Sud de France title in Montpellier with a 7-6(4) 6-3 victory yesterday.

Local favourite Gasquet, bidding for a fourth title overall at the indoor event, dropped the first set on the tiebreak and was broken twice in the second as the 19-year-old Zverev claimed his second career title.

Defeat ended world number 22 Gasquet’s 10-match winning streak in Montpellier. Zverev, who will compete in the doubles final later on Sunday alongside his brother Mischa, had beaten much-fancied second seed Jo-Wilfried Tsonga in his semi final. Gasquet saw off compatriot Benoit Paire to reach the final. — Reuters



MONTPELLIER: German Alexander Zverev poses with his trophy after winning the final tennis match of the ATP World Tour Open Sud de France in Montpellier, southern France, yesterday. Alexander Zverev won the Montpellier ATP title for the first time. — AFP



OKLAHOMA CITY: Klay Thompson #11 of the Golden State Warriors jumps over Domantas Sabonis #3 of the Oklahoma City Thunder after he stole the ball during the first half of a NBA game at the Chesapeake Energy Arena on Saturday in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.— AFP

BASKETBALL

DURANT SHAKES OFF JEERS TO LEAD WARRIORS TO WIN

OKLAHOMA CITY: Kevin Durant scored 34 points while being booed throughout his return to Oklahoma City, and the Golden State Warriors beat the Thunder 130-114 in a tough-fought game on Saturday night. It was Durant’s first game back since he left the Thunder after eight seasons in Oklahoma City to join the rival Warriors as a free agent last summer. The crowd jeered him loudly during pregame warmups, starter introductions and whenever he touched the ball. Emotions ran high throughout the game. At one point in the third quarter, Durant and Oklahoma City’s Russell Westbrook yelled at each other as they walked toward their benches during a timeout. Later in the third quarter, Oklahoma City’s Andre Roberson fouled Durant hard, and the two got in each other’s faces and were called for double technicals. Westbrook finished with 47 points, 11 rebounds and eight assists.

CAVALIERS 125, NUGGETS 109

LeBron James and Kyrie Irving each scored 27 points and combined for three 3-pointers in Cleveland’s long-range barrage in the third quarter. James added 12 assists in 32 minutes as the defending NBA champions won for the fifth time in six February games after going 7-8 in January. Back from a four-game road trip, the Cavs didn’t find their range until after halftime, when they opened the third with an 18-0 run to take control. Irving drained two 3s on consecutive possessions, Kevin Love hit two more and James dropped another in a span of 2:43 as Cleveland pulled away and improved to 23-5 at Quicken Loans Arena. Nikola Jokic had 27 points and 13 rebounds for the Nuggets, who played their third game in four nights.

76ERS 117, HEAT 109

Nerlens Noel, Robert Covington and Dario Saric each scored 19 points to lead the Philadelphia over Miami, snapping the Heat’s winning streak at 13 games. Goran Dragic had 30 points for the Heat, whose winning streak was the longest in the NBA this season, the third-best in team history and tops in league history by a sub-.500 team. Miami, which fell 1 1/2 games back of idle Detroit for the Eastern Conference’s final playoff spot, hadn’t lost since Jan. 13 at Milwaukee. Philadelphia center Joel Embiid missed his ninth straight game and 12th in the last 13 due to a bone bruise on his left knee. Team president Bryan Colangelo also revealed before the game that Embiid has a slightly torn meniscus in the same knee. Philadelphia put seven players in double figures.

CLIPPERS 107, HORNETS 102

Blake Griffin had 20 points and 12 rebounds, Austin Rivers scored 16 of his 18 points in the second half and Los Angeles beat Charlotte. Griffin finished two assists shy of his second triple-double in his past three

games. Jamal Crawford provided a spark off the bench, scoring 22 points while going 5 for 8 on 3-pointers. Nicolas Batum had 25 points, six rebounds and eight assists for the Hornets, who have lost nine of their past 10 games. The Clippers started 0 for 6 from the field, and the Hornets extended their lead to 11 points in the first quarter. Griffin, however, had 11 points, three rebounds and four assists in the period to help Los Angeles enter the second with a 29-27 lead.

BUCKS 116, PACERS 100

Giannis Antetokoumpo had 20 points, 10 assists and eight rebounds to help Milwaukee beat Indiana. Mirza Teletovic made five 3-pointers and had 19 points, and Malcolm Brogdon and Greg Monroe each added 17 for the Bucks. C.J. Miles had six 3s and scored 23 points, and Monta Ellis and Myles Turner each had 18 points for the Pacers. They have dropped three straight after a season-best seven-game winning streak. After Indiana tied it at 62 in early in the second half, the Bucks went on a 12-2 run and took a 74-64 lead on Monroe’s dunk with 5:21 remaining in the third quarter. Monroe made a pair of free throws to make it 90-74 at the start of the fourth quarter.

ROCKETS 133, SUNS 102

James Harden scored 40 points in three quarters and Houston never trailed against short-handed Phoenix. Houston led by 26 at halftime and opened the second half with a 14-3 run, led by six points from Harden, to make it 91-54 with nine minutes left in the third quarter. Harden made three 3-pointers in the third quarter, capped by one from the top of the key with about 30 seconds left that gave him 40 points. He found Sam Dekker on an alley-oop after that, and the Rockets got a

huge ovation when Dekker finished with a one-handed dunk to make it 111-77 entering the fourth quarter. The Suns were playing without starters Eric Bledsoe and Tyson Chandler, who didn’t make the trip for a scheduled day of rest after Phoenix played Chicago at home on Friday night. Devin Booker had 18 points for the Suns, who lost for the ninth time in 11 games.

MAVERICKS 112, MAGIC 80

Wesley Matthews scored 12 of his 20 points in the first quarter, and Dallas cruised past Orlando. Dirk Nowitzki scored 14 points in 18 minutes, hitting a 3-pointer to give Dallas its first 30-point lead at 67-37 in the first minute of the third quarter before going to the bench for good a little more than six minutes later. The Mavericks won for the sixth time in eight games - including three victories against division leaders - in what’s becoming a turnaround season. Dallas’ first meeting with the Magic in November was in the middle of an eight-game losing streak, which was the longest for the Mavericks in 19 years and ended with them at 2-13. Bismack Biyombo scored 15 points, nine in a meaningless fourth quarter, as the Magic lost their fourth straight.

CELTICS 112, JAZZ 104

Isaiah Thomas scored 29 points and Kelly Olynyk added 19 to help the Boston Celtics defeat the Utah Jazz for their ninth win in their last 10 games. Gerald Green and Al Horford each added 16 points, and Horford also had eight rebounds. The Celtics swept the season series with Utah after beating the Jazz 115-104 on Jan. 3. Gordon Hayward scored 25 points and George Hill added 22 to lead the Jazz, who could not overcome poor shooting and struggled to get defensive stops during critical stretches. —AP

NBA results/standings

Boston 112, Utah 104; Houston 133, Phoenix 102; Dallas 112, Orlando 80; Golden State 130, Oklahoma City 114; Cleveland 125, Denver 109; Philadelphia 117, Miami 109; Milwaukee 116, Indiana 100; LA Clippers 107, Charlotte 102.

Eastern Conference					Western Conference				
Atlantic Division					Northwest Division				
	W	L	PCT	GB					
Boston	35	19	.648	-	Utah	34	21	.618	-
Toronto	32	22	.593	3	Oklahoma City	31	24	.564	3
NY Knicks	22	33	.400	13.5	Denver	24	30	.444	9.5
Philadelphia	20	34	.370	15	Portland	23	31	.426	10.5
Brooklyn	9	45	.167	26	Minnesota	20	34	.370	13.5
Central Division					Pacific Division				
Cleveland	37	16	.698	-	Golden State	46	8	.852	-
Indiana	29	25	.537	8.5	LA Clippers	33	21	.611	13
Chicago	26	28	.481	11.5	Sacramento	22	32	.407	24
Detroit	25	29	.463	12.5	LA Lakers	19	37	.339	28
Milwaukee	23	30	.434	14	Phoenix	17	38	.309	29.5
Southeast Division					Southwest Division				
Washington	32	21	.604	-	San Antonio	41	12	.774	-
Atlanta	31	23	.574	1.5	Houston	40	17	.702	3
Charlotte	24	30	.444	8.5	Memphis	33	23	.589	9.5
Miami	24	31	.436	9	Dallas	22	32	.407	19.5
Orlando	20	36	.357	13.5	New Orleans	21	33	.389	20.5

ATHLETICS

CARTER EYES LONDON AMID DOPING APPEAL

KINGSTON: Jamaican sprinter Nesta Carter, who returned to competition on Saturday as he battles a doping charge, has his eye on the athletics World Championships in London in August. The 31-year-old who won an individual bronze in the men's 100m at the 2013 Moscow World Championships has been a staple in the all-conquering Jamaican sprint relay teams that have swept all before them since 2008. But a re-test of his sample from the 2008 Beijing Olympics was found to be positive for the banned substance methyl-hexaneamine, which resulted in Jamaica — and superstar Usain Bolt-being stripped of the gold medal last month. Minutes after anchoring his MVP TC team to second in the men's 4x100m relays at the 39th Milo Western Relays in Montego Bay and without mentioning his doping case, Carter said he was "grateful" to be competing again after being out of action for 17 months.

"Yes the World Championships are this year, but we still have a few meets to go before we get there, just one meet at a time," said Carter, who hadn't raced since a meeting in Rieti, Italy, in September of

2015. Carter, whose appeal of his doping sanction is thought to have been filed with the Court of Arbitration for Sport, was welcomed back to competition by a loud, appreciative crowd that cheered when his name was mentioned by the meet announcer.

"It is always good running at home and in front of the home fans and you try and put on a good show for the fans," said Carter, who was cleared to run days earlier after the IAAF ruled that he had not been banned despite the retroactive positive test from 2008. "I haven't run in almost two years, you can just imagine how the legs feel, especially on the anchor leg," Carter added. He has been battling injuries he said, including a bothersome left big toe. "I have not been able to train properly, as I am nursing a few niggling injuries, especially left big toe, not the same injury but same foot (as last year) but I am just happy to be back on the track.

"Injuries are part of the sport and I just try to deal with it as quick as possible, no frustrations, just try to maintain it and get back as soon as I can." —AFP

‘SPIDER’ SILVA TOPS BRUNSON BY UNANIMOUS DECISION AT UFC 208

NEW YORK: "The Spider's" career still has legs. Anderson Silva had one more big win left in the MMA octagon, an effective performance to beat Derek Brunson in the co-main event of UFC 208 on Saturday night.

Silva had the Brooklyn crowd clearly on his side, and his familiar dose of swagger and showmanship were on full display at the Barclays Center in a 29-28, 29-28, 30-27 victory.

Silva crouched in his yellow trunks, the crowd going wild for "The Spider," all hoping he could recreate the greatness of his prime. He landed a spin kick to the body in the first round that rattled Brunson but otherwise never came close to dominating the middleweight bout.

Silva dropped his longtime entrance song, DMX's "Ain't No Sunshine," for an original tune called "Doom" by his teenage son Kalyi. "I'm the best ever," repeated one of the lyrics.

The 41-year-old Silva is certainly on the short list of all-time great MMA fighters. Holly Holm (10-2) was set to fight for her slice of UFC history against Germaine de Randamie (6-3) in the main event. Holm, the first fighter to defeat Ronda Rousey, could become the first two-division women's champion with a victory.

Silva (34-8) was hit with emotion and appeared to choke back tears as he held a hand to his face. Chris Weidman, who ended Silva's dominant run in 2013, sat in the front row and nodded in approval as the sellout crowd chanted "Silva! Silva! Silva!"

"I know I'm too old to fight," Silva said. Silva said he climbs inside the cage these days for love the sport and for his family and friends. Talk of future shots have faded into the background, and this victory over Brunson (16-5) certainly did nothing to prove he's up next for another crack at the belt.

ROBBED

"Everyone is telling me that I won. I feel



NEW YORK: Derek Brunson (R) of United States lands a punch against Anderson Silva (L) of Brazil in their middleweight bout during UFC 208 at the Barclays Center on Saturday in the Brooklyn Borough of New York City. — AFP

RUGBY

SCHMIDT BEHIND ITALY IN RELEGATION DEBATE

MILAN: Ireland coach Joe Schmidt has thrown his weight behind Italy counterpart Conor O'Shea amid suggestions the Azzurri's Six Nations status could eventually come under threat from Georgia and Romania. Italy began this year's tournament with renewed hope and confidence following a historic 20-18 win over South Africa in the November test series. But despite glimpses of promise in their opening two games at the Stadio Olimpico, the Azzurri are staring at a likely 12th wooden spoon in 18 editions following defeats to Wales (33-7) and Ireland, who registered their highest ever Six Nations away win over Italy in a nine-try, 63-10 romp on Saturday. In 2015 Octavian Morariu, the president of Rugby Union's governing body for promotion and development, called for Georgia and Romania's entry to the Six Nations following their successes on the European stage and some good showings

in the rugby World Cup. O'Shea said Saturday there is "no debate" and New Zealander Schmidt was quick to prop up that belief. He believes O'Shea's track record of previous success will help Italy overcome their current teething problems and make them competitive again.

"To coin a phrase, 'Rome wasn't built in a day'—I think he (O'Shea) will build something," said Schmidt, who led Ireland to an historic win over the All Blacks last year.

"He's got a track record for being able to build systems and a structure and a belief in a group that can be competitive.

"When he went in to Harlequins, they weren't the competitive animal that they became. They (Italy) have some really good players." Ireland's previous highest score against Italy was a 60-13 win at Lansdowne Road in 2000. Saturday's 63-10 win equalled that margin, but was their biggest away win over the Azzurri. —AFP



GLENDALE: Goaltender Mike Smith #41 of the Arizona Coyotes makes a save as Luke Schenn #2 looks to clear the puck during the first period of the NHL game against the Pittsburgh Penguins at Gila River Arena on Saturday, in Glendale, Arizona. —AFP

NHL

ANDERSON HAS 33-SAVE SHUTOUT IN RETURN TO SENATORS LINEUP

OTTAWA: Craig Anderson made his first start in 69 days and turned aside 33 shots as the Ottawa Senators beat the New York Islanders 3-0 on Saturday. Anderson left the club in early December to be with his wife, Nicholle, who is battling cancer, and returned to practice last week. The shutout was the fourth of the season for Anderson in 20 games and eighth of the season for the Senators. Mike Condon has the other four. The win is the second straight for the Senators. Mark Stone, Zack Smith and Jean-Gabriel Pageau scored for the Senators, who now have six goals in their past two games after being outscored 10-0 in the two previous games. Thomas Greiss made 21 saves for the Islanders in his eighth start in the past nine games. It was just the second regulation loss for the Islanders in their past 12 games.

COYOTES 4, PENGUINS 3, OT

Connor Murphy's first goal of the season came with 21.8 seconds left in overtime, giving Arizona a win over Pittsburgh. Murphy's winner came after the Penguins overcame a 3-1 deficit inside of 5 1/2 minutes left to play in regulation. Josh Archibald's short-handed goal at 14:38 made it 3-2, and Phil Kessel put in a deflected shot from Kris Letang with 14.2 seconds to play to force overtime. Martin Hanzal scored twice and Tobias Rieder added another goal for Arizona. The Coyotes had to survive a two-goal night from Archibald, who was called up from the AHL on Friday. Archibald's late goal came on an error in stick-handling near the net by Coyotes goalie Mike Smith. The Penguins had an extra attacker on the ice for the tying goal.

CAPITALS 6, DUCKS 4

Rookie Zach Sanford scored his first NHL goal to break a tie late in the third period and Washington beat Anaheim despite giving back a three-goal lead. Nicklas Backstrom had a goal and two assists, and T.J. Oshie, Daniel Winnik and Marcus Johansson had a goal and an assist each for the Capitals. Washington won its 12th straight at home entering its bye week.

Braden Holtby made 18 saves to win his 14th consecutive start, and Washington tied an NHL record by scoring five or more goals in an 11th straight home game. Ryan Getzlaf had a goal and two assists for the Ducks, who scored twice in the second and twice in the third period to overcome early deficits of 3-0 and 4-1. John Gibson made 33 saves for Anaheim, which fell to 1-3-1 with one game left on a six-game road trip.

RANGERS 4, AVALANCHE 2

Henrik Lundqvist made 32 saves for his 400th career win and New York earned its fifth consecutive victory. Lundqvist is the 12th goaltender in NHL history with at least 400 wins and the first European-born goaltender to reach the mark. Lundqvist also is the third goaltender to get 400 wins with one franchise. The others are Martin Brodeur (Devils) and Tony Esposito (Blackhawks). Defenseman Kevin Klein had two goals and Rick Nash had the go-ahead score for the Rangers, who swept their season-long four-game homestand and have won eight of 10 overall. Kevin Hayes added an empty-net goal to clinch it. Gabriel Landeskog and John Mitchell scored and Calvin Pickard made 26 saves for Colorado, which has the fewest wins in the NHL with 15.

BLUE JACKETS 2, RED WINGS 1

Cam Atkinson scored the go-ahead goal in the second period, Sergei Bobrovsky stopped 35 shots and Columbus beat Detroit. Boone

Jenner also scored and Brandon Dubinsky had two assists for Columbus. Atkinson got his team-leading 27th goal of the season. Thomas Vanek scored for the Red Wings, but Detroit dropped its third straight game and lost to the Blue Jackets for the second time in four days. That despite the efforts of Peter Mrazek, who had 37 saves. This was Detroit's first game since owner Mike Ilitch died Friday. He was 87.

BRUINS 4, CANUCKS 3

David Pastrnak scored with two minutes left in the third period and Boston won its second straight game under interim coach Bruce Cassidy. Cassidy took over earlier in the week when the Bruins fired Claude Julien, who was in his 10th season. Boston also won in Cassidy's debut. Frank Vatrano had a goal and two assists, and Kevan Miller and Colin Miller each had a goal for the Bruins, who won for the fifth time in seven games. Backup goaltender Anton Khudobin made 29 saves for Boston. Ryan Miller had 26 for the Canucks. Pastrnak took a pass along the left wing, slid the puck backward to himself before recollecting it and slipping a wristed pass to Ryan Miller.

FLYERS 2, SHARKS 1, OT

Wayne Simmonds scored on a breakaway just over a minute into overtime and Michal Neuvirth made 23 saves, helping Philadelphia end a three-game losing streak. Ivan Provorov scored in regulation for Philadelphia. Patrick Marleau had the goal for Pacific Division-leading San Jose, which lost its fourth straight game and fifth in the last seven. Three of the Sharks' losses during the losing skid have been after regulation. Simmonds capitalized on a turnover at center ice by Brent Burns and beat Aaron Dell with a shot that went off Dell's left pad and over the line. The goal was confirmed after video review. The Flyers entered the game trailing Boston by one point for the Eastern Conference's second wild-card spot.

PANTHERS 7, PREDATORS 4

Nick Bjugstad and Vincent Trocheck scored 29 seconds apart in the second period, and Florida beat Nashville. Jaromir Jagr also scored for the 1,899th point of his NHL career as the Panthers kicked off a five-game trip by scoring four goals in the second. Trocheck finished with two goals and an assist, Jonathan Huberdeau added a goal and two assists and Jussi Jokinen had a goal and an assist to help Florida sweep the season series against

Nashville. Nashville's Pekka Rinne gave up four goals on 16 shots, including three on six shots in the second period, before being pulled. Juuse Saros quickly gave up a power-play goal to Aleksander Barkov, who capped the four-goal flurry for the Panthers before midway through the period. Viktor Arvidsson had his first career hat trick for Nashville.

BLUES 4, CANADIENS 2

Patrik Berglund scored three goals to lift St. Louis over Montreal for its fourth straight road win. David Perron also scored for the Blues, who end a stretch of five consecutive away games on Wednesday in Detroit. St. Louis has won five of its last six games overall. Berglund's hat trick gave him six goals in his last five games and 17 on the season. Shea Weber and Max Pacioretty scored for the slumping Canadiens, who are 1-4-1 in their last six.

STARS 5, HURRICANES 2

Patrick Eaves scored two goals and Dallas beat Carolina. His first goal was one of three in the first 6:11 against goalie Cam Ward. In the second period, Eaves scored his career-high 21st goal, his 11th on the power play this season. Esa Lindell and Curtis McKenzie added unassisted goals in the first period. Adam Cracknell scored midway through the third. Sebastian Aho scored Carolina's first goal in the second period, and Justin Faulk put in a rebound on the power play in the third. Ward and Dallas goalie Kari Lehtonen each made 22 saves.

LIGHTNING 4, JETS 1

Brayden Point, Ondrej Palat and Victor Hedman each had a goal and an assist as Tampa Bay beat Winnipeg. Brian Boyle also scored for the Lightning, who extended their points streak to four games (3-0-1). Ben Bishop made 32 saves in picking up his 14th win of the season for Tampa Bay. Winnipeg defenseman Jacob Trouba scored his fifth goal of the season to end Bishop's shutout attempt at 11:15 of the third period. Connor Hellebuyck stopped 26 of 29 shots for Winnipeg, which lost its fourth straight game.

SABRES 3, MAPLE LEAFS 1

Evander Kane scored twice, Jack Eichel had a career-high three assists and Buffalo handed Toronto its sixth loss in eight games. Sam Reinhart also scored for Buffalo, and Robin Lehner made 43 saves. Mitch Marner scored for Toronto, and Frederik Andersen allowed three goals on 23 shots. — AP

NHL results/standings

Washington 6, Anaheim 4; NY Rangers 4, Colorado 2; Tampa Bay 4, Winnipeg 1; St. Louis 4, Montreal 2; Buffalo 3, Toronto 1; Columbus 2, Detroit 1; Florida 7, Nashville 4; Dallas 5, Carolina 2; Philadelphia 2, San Jose 1 (OT); Boston 4, Vancouver 3; Ottawa 3, NY Islanders 0.

Western Conference Central Division						
	W	L	OTL	GF	GA	PTS
Minnesota	36	12	6	181	126	78
Chicago	35	17	5	166	147	75
St. Louis	29	22	5	161	165	63
Nashville	26	21	8	153	148	60
Dallas	22	24	10	155	177	54
Winnipeg	25	29	4	166	185	54
Colorado	15	35	2	106	176	32
Pacific Division						
San Jose	33	18	5	152	134	71
Anaheim	29	18	10	151	147	68
Edmonton	29	19	8	157	146	66
Los Angeles	28	23	4	138	136	60
Calgary	28	25	3	149	159	59
Vancouver	24	25	6	131	158	54
Arizona	18	28	7	124	169	43

Eastern Conference Atlantic Division						
Montreal	31	18	8	165	146	70

Ottawa	29	18	6	143	143	64
Boston	28	23	6	153	155	62
Toronto	25	18	11	165	161	61
Florida	24	20	10	134	153	58
Tampa Bay	25	24	7	154	160	57
Buffalo	23	22	10	136	155	56
Detroit	22	23	10	138	163	54

Metropolitan Division						
Washington	39	11	6	192	121	84
Columbus	35	14	5	175	133	75
Pittsburgh	34	13	7	193	155	75
NY Rangers	36	18	1	189	145	73
Philadelphia	27	22	7	147	168	61
NY Islanders	24	19	10	156	157	58
New Jersey	23	21	10	127	153	56
Carolina	24	22	7	140	156	55

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

MAN UTD DON'T GET ENOUGH CREDIT, SAYS MOURINHO

MANCHESTER: Manchester United manager Jose Mourinho claims his side's attacking efforts would be hailed more if someone else was in charge at Old Trafford.

United completely outplayed Watford in Saturday's 2-0 Premier League win as goals from Juan Mata and Anthony Martial took Mourinho's men to within a point of the Champions League places.

Their display belied Mourinho's reputation as a defence-minded manager and he said United would get more credit for the quality of their football if he was not sitting in the dug-out.

"It was a very good (performance)," he said. "It was the kind of football that if it was somebody else's team, you would say it was 'art', but because it was my team, you will just say it was 'very good'.

But that is fine." Mata's 32nd-minute goal helped United break through Watford's defensive resistance on an afternoon when Mourinho's men had the run of the pitch. Watford goalkeeper Heurelho Gomes was the busiest man in the stadium and after initially keeping United at bay, he could do nothing as Mata slid home Martial's cross from just three yards out.

Martial had been one of those running Watford ragged and when he made it 2-0 on the hour, the game was well and truly over. It was United's fourth consecutive clean sheet and while that pleased Mourinho, he knows the club's fans demand to be entertained more than anything else.

"We are not a team scoring lots of goals so it is important to keep the clean

sheets," Mourinho told his post-game press conference. "I am really happy with the performance. "When I got the job they were saying at Manchester United you need to play football in a certain way and I agree.

"Sixteen (league) games unbeaten is an amazing record, but it would be the perfect record with two or three fewer draws at home. We have an amazing record of being unbeaten, but we should have more."

MARTIAL 'WORKING VERY WELL'

Martial has recently been in Mourinho's bad books, with the United manager hitting out at the player's agent for openly discussing interest in his client from other clubs.

The 21-year-old French forward had

not featured in United's previous three league games, but he was back to his best against Watford, much to his manager's delight. "I want the Martial of the last two weeks in training," said Mourinho, whose side remain sixth.

"Because then he performs naturally like he did here. He's working very well. I gave him the chance to start.

"Anthony needs to feel that I am looking at him and that I know he did well in training. I gave him his chance and he played well." Watford battled manfully throughout the game, but offered little going forward apart from the occasional foray from on-loan AC Milan striker M'Baye Niang and Jose Holebas.

A fine second-half free-kick from Mauro Zarate that David de Gea did well to block was the brightest moment as

Watford's recent impressive recent run ended following consecutive victories over Arsenal and Burnley. Manager Walter Mazzarri said: "Today we played as a group in a different way. Some of the chances United had were only because of things we did wrong. "We need to grow as a team altogether. Passing more and taking less touches on the ball. If we didn't do these things then we have a chance to get at least a point. "I want us to fight in each game, have the same intensity and play each game better. We started very well. But during the game we kept the ball too much in midfield.

"We lost the ball too easily and gave them chances. If it wasn't for our mistake for their second goal, maybe we could have got a point." — AFP

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE TABLE

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

Chelsea	25	19	3	3	52	18	60
Tottenham	25	14	8	3	46	18	50
Arsenal	25	15	5	5	54	28	50
Liverpool	25	14	7	4	54	30	49
Man City	24	15	4	5	49	29	49
Man Utd	25	13	9	3	38	21	48
Everton	25	11	8	6	40	27	41
West Brom	25	10	7	8	34	31	37
Stoke	25	8	8	9	30	36	32
West Ham	25	9	5	11	34	43	32
Southampton	25	8	6	11	28	31	30
Burnley	25	9	3	13	27	36	30
Watford	25	8	6	11	29	42	30
Bournemouth	24	7	5	12	35	47	26
Swansea	25	7	3	15	31	54	24
Middlesbrough	25	4	10	11	19	27	22
Leicester	25	5	6	14	24	43	21
Hull	25	5	5	15	22	49	20
Crystal Palace	25	5	4	16	32	46	19
Sunderland	25	5	4	16	24	46	19

GERMAN BUNDESLIGA TABLE

Bayern Munich	20	15	4	1	45	12	49
RB Leipzig	20	13	3	4	36	20	42
Frankfurt	20	10	5	5	25	18	35
Borussia	20	9	7	4	40	23	34
Hoffenheim	20	8	10	2	36	21	34
Hertha Berlin	20	10	3	7	27	23	33
Cologne	19	8	8	3	28	16	32
Leverkusen	20	8	3	9	31	29	27
M'hengladbach	20	7	5	8	22	27	26
Freiburg	19	8	2	9	24	33	26
Schalke 04	20	7	4	9	24	21	25
Mainz	20	7	4	9	29	35	25
FC Augsburg	20	6	6	8	18	24	24
VfL Wolfsburg	20	6	4	10	19	28	22
Hamburg SV	20	5	4	11	19	35	19
Werder Bremen	20	4	4	12	24	42	16
FC Ingolstadt 04	20	4	3	13	17	32	15
SV Darmstadt 98	20	3	3	14	14	39	12

ITALIAN LEAGUE TABLE

Juventus	23	19	0	4	47	16	57
Roma	24	17	2	5	50	21	53
Napoli	24	15	6	3	57	26	51
Lazio	23	13	4	6	41	27	43
Inter Milan	23	13	3	7	37	24	42
Atalanta	23	13	3	7	36	25	42
Florentina	24	11	7	6	41	33	40
AC Milan	23	12	4	7	33	27	40
Torino	23	8	8	7	40	33	32
Sampdoria	23	8	6	9	26	29	30
Udinese	24	8	5	11	27	32	29
Cievo	23	8	5	10	22	30	29
Sassuolo	23	8	3	12	32	37	27
Bologna	23	7	6	10	22	34	27
Cagliari	23	8	3	12	32	48	27
Genoa	24	6	7	11	27	35	25
Empoli	23	5	7	11	14	31	22
Palermo	23	3	5	15	19	42	14
Crotone	24	3	4	17	20	42	13
Pescara	23	1	6	16	19	50	9

SPANISH LA LIGA TABLE

Real Madrid	20	15	4	1	54	18	49
Barcelona	22	14	6	2	61	18	48
Sevilla	21	13	4	4	43	28	43
Real Sociedad	22	13	2	7	36	31	41
Atletico Madrid	21	11	6	4	36	16	39
Villarreal	22	9	9	4	29	15	36
Athletic Bilbao	22	10	5	7	28	26	35
Eibar	21	9	5	7	32	29	32
Espanyol	22	8	8	6	30	29	32
Celta Vigo	20	9	3	8	31	33	30
Las Palmas	21	7	7	7	31	32	28
Alaves	22	6	9	7	21	28	27
Real Betis	21	6	6	9	21	31	24
Malaga	22	5	8	9	29	36	23
Valencia	21	5	5	11	29	40	20
La Coruna	21	4	7	10	26	34	19
Leganes	21	4	6	11	15	35	18
Sporting Gijon	21	3	4	14	22	43	13
Granada	21	2	7	12	17	44	13
Osasuna	22	1	7	14	24	49	10

EVERY TEAM IN WORLD WOULD MISS MANE: KLOPP

LIVERPOOL: Liverpool boss Jurgen Klopp believes every team in the world would suffer without Sadio Mane after the Senegalese star marked his return with both goals in the 2-0 win over Tottenham. Mane, back from a month on international duty at the Africa Cup of Nations, scored in a devastating first half performance at Anfield as Liverpool won their first Premier League match on Sunday.

"You need somebody on the end who scores and he did fantastically well," said Klopp. "He could have scored a third one.

"We missed Sadio in January but every team in the world would have missed him." Mane netted twice in three first-half minutes as Klopp's team ended Spurs' nine-game unbeaten run.

Klopp now hopes an enforced 16-day lay-off will allow his team to recover from their poor start to 2017 although he refused to entertain the possibility of catching runaway league leaders Chelsea who still have a 10-point lead on his team.

It would appear to be an impossible task for the Merseyside club to try and overtake Antonio Conte's side, however, although Klopp refused to discuss it in any detail and rather looked at the forthcoming break his team can enjoy due to their recent exit from the FA Cup.

"What would you think about me if I said 'I think we can get them?'" said Klopp. "I was really ambitious? Crazy?

"Maybe you can imagine, I'm not too interested in this at the moment. "We finally started 2017 tonight so we shouldn't go nuts immediately and talk about the rest, let's take it step by step.

"Chelsea don't look too much like they can struggle over several weeks and if somebody chases them, I don't know if we will be there. "But if they do struggle, there will be somebody there and we will just try to get as many points as we can and see what is possible."

'WHOLE TEAM WAS POOR'

Defeat in the last round of the FA Cup to Championship side Wolves now leaves Liverpool with two weeks without a game until the visit to struggling Leicester for a televised Monday night fixture.

"It is not a shame that we're not playing tomorrow," said Klopp. "I love football but I have no problem with a few days when we can really train. We start 'pre-season'; that's how we really understand it. We will use the time we have and hopefully everybody will see the results." Tottenham manager Mauricio Pochettino admitted that his side failed to cope with Liverpool's early intensity and aggression and conceded that Spurs are currently a way off competing for the title. "We are second in the table, one point above Liverpool but it is true, my feeling now is not good," he said.

"But we need to recover from that

defeat and try and fight. Liverpool now have two weeks to prepare for their next game in the Premier League but we need to be focused now on the Europa League, then the FA Cup, then the Europa League, then Stoke at home (in the league).

"We can't waste time thinking too much about this. The whole team were poor. It is about balance and today it was poor, that is the truth. "We are in a position that is up to us. But if you show like today that you cannot cope with the pressure to play to win the league then it is difficult to challenge and fight for the Premier League. "In the first 45 minutes you saw a team that is not ready to fight for the Premier League." — AFP



ANFIELD: Liverpool's Sadio Mane celebrates after scoring his side's second goal during the English Premier League soccer match between Liverpool and Tottenham Hotspur at Anfield, Liverpool. — AP

PARIS: Teenage striker Kylian Mbappe scored a superb hat-trick as Monaco hammered Metz 5-0 on Saturday to remain three points clear of reigning champions Paris Saint-Germain at the top of Ligue 1. The highly-rated 18-year-old struck with just eight minutes gone at the Stade Louis II before Radamel Falcao netted his 15th league goal of the season three minutes later.

Mbappe's blistering pace and steely composure saw him add a third as Monaco threatened a repeat of their 7-0 rout from the reverse fixture in October. Mbappe completed his treble five minutes into the second half and Falcao rounded out a thumping win as Monaco issued a powerful response to Paris Saint-Germain in the wake of their 3-0 success at Bordeaux on Friday. Monaco head to Bastia next weekend before travelling to Manchester City for the first leg of their Champions League last 16 clash on February 21. "The best preparation for Manchester City is to win matches," said Monaco boss Leonardo Jardim.

"I think we did well in the first half and created lots of chances. In the second half, we looked after the players a bit more." But Monaco suffered a potential blow with Jardim suggesting Brazilian midfielder Gabriel Boschilia could miss the rest of the season with suspected knee ligament damage.

Lyon slumped to a damaging 2-1 defeat at Guingamp despite France striker Alexander Lacazette netting his 20th league goal of the campaign. Lacazette curled in a superb 10th-minute opener at the Stade du Roudourou as Lyon sought to build momentum on the back of Wednesday's 4-0 rout of Nancy. But the visitors were blindsided by two goals in the space of four minutes as Moustapha Diallo levelled on the half-hour mark before Nicolas Benzet's glancing header snapped Guingamp's six-game winless run.

'DOUBT' HURTING LYON

Lyon received a hostile welcome from sections of their own fans at Parc OL in midweek following last Sunday's loss at bitter Rhone rivals Saint-Etienne and their latest setback adds to the enveloping gloom. Bruno Genesio's side are 12 points adrift of the Champions League places after losing four of their last six matches and travel to Dutch outfit AZ Alkmaar in the first leg of the Europa League last 32 on Thursday. "It's symptomatic of teams that are suffering from doubt: they had two big chances and scored twice," Lyon right-back Christophe Jallet told Canal+ Sport. "We're all doing everything to get going again in the right direction, to move towards, but we haven't been rewarded and we can't say we didn't try everything to get back into the match."

He added: "It's true we've lost far too many matches this season to compete for the top three." Dijon claimed a vital 2-0 home win over Caen amid heavy snowfall in eastern France, while Angers picked up three crucial points with a 2-1 victory at Lille. Toulouse thrashed nine-man Bastia 4-1 and Montpellier inflicted a 3-0 defeat on Nancy.

SOCCER

MBAPPE STARS AS LEADERS MONACO CRUSH METZ 5-0



MONACO: Monaco's Colombian forward Radamel Falcao (R) scores a goal despite of Metz' goalkeeper Thomas Didillon (L) during the French Ligue 1 football match between AS Monaco and Metz (FCM) at the Louis II Stadium in Monaco on Saturday. — AFP

On Friday, Edinson Cavani scored twice-taking his tally this term to 25 — with Angel Di Maria also on target as PSG warmed up for Tuesday's Champions League clash with Barcelona in reassuring fashion. Nice are three points behind in third but will be without Mario Balotelli for Sunday's trip to Rennes with the

Italian striker unwell.

All matches in France's top flight this weekend will feature a minute's silence prior to kick-off to honour the 17 people killed in a stadium stampede in Angola. Friday's crush also left 56 people injured and government officials have launched an investigation into the tragedy. — AFP

WENGER PLAYS DOWN TALK OF ARSENAL EXIT

LONDON: Arsene Wenger insists he is not preparing to end his long reign at Arsenal despite Ian Wright's claim the Gunners boss is on the way out.

Wenger's future had been questioned in the wake of defeats against Watford and Chelsea that effectively killed off their Premier League title hopes.

Wenger's side returned to winning ways as Alexis Sanchez's double secured a 2-0 home victory over Hull on Saturday. But after the game the Frenchman was quizzed on his future, with his current contract expiring at the end of the season and a minority of fans turning on the manager for recent results.

Former Arsenal striker Ian Wright had fanned the flames by claiming on Friday that the 67-year-old had told him he was "coming to the end" of his time after 20 years at the helm. "I was with the boss last night, and if I'm going to be totally honest, I get the impression that that's it," Wright told BBC Radio 5 live. "He actually mentioned when we were talking that he's coming to the end. I've never heard him say that." Yet Wenger countered by saying any tiredness stems from his commitment to the job and that Wright must have misunderstood any conversation.

Asked whether he had given Wright the impression he was leaving, Wenger replied: "No, no. Mark (Gonnella, Arsenal communications director) was with me as well on Thursday. "It was questions and answers. I could be tired because I get up early in the morning and I finish late at night, so I am tired, yes. But I didn't give any indication about my future. "There were many people there. We (he and Wright) had a little dinner before but it was not the two of us. There were four or five." Asked if Wright could have misinterpreted any comments, he said: "Yes. You know I appreciate very much that you want me to rest, absolutely. But I am not ready for that yet."

MATHEMATICS

If Arsenal had not won against lowly Hull, it would have ramped up the pressure on Wenger to depart.

Although not at their best, Wenger was pleased to put the recent defeats to bed ahead of a trip to face Bayern Munich in the



Matches on TV

(Local Timings)

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

Bournemouth v Man City 23:00

BeIn SPORTS

SPANISH LEAGUE

SD Eibar v Granada CF 22:45

BeIn SPORTS

ITALIAN CALCIO LEAGUE

SS Lazio v AC Milan 22:45

BeIn SPORTS

Sports

Stuhec emulates
Maze, historic
bronze for Vonn



'Spider' Silva tops
Brunson by
unanimous decision
at UFC 208



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BANGLADESH BATTLE FOR SURVIVAL IN INDIA TEST

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BURNLEY: Chelsea's Pedro, centre, scores his side's first goal during the English Premier League soccer match between Burnley and Chelsea at Turf Moor stadium in Burnley, England, yesterday. — AP

BURNLEY'S BRADY CHECKS CHELSEA CHARGE



Burnley 1



Chelsea 1

BURNLEY: Home debutant Robbie Brady scored a memorable free-kick to earn Burnley a 1-1 draw yesterday that prevented Chelsea moving 12 points clear at the Premier League summit.

Brady cancelled out an early strike from Pedro and while the point stretched Chelsea's lead to 10 points, their advantage will be trimmed to eight points if Manchester City win at Bournemouth today.

Brady's goal continued his recent run of success against Chelsea manager Antonio Conte, with the winger having also scored the winning goal for Ireland against Conte's Italy in the Euro 2016 group stage.

Burnley, whose home record is bettered only by second-place Tottenham Hotspur and Chelsea themselves, looked like they might be swept away following an electrifying start from the league leaders.

But Sean Dyche's team, who had won seven straight games at Turf Moor after losing to Manchester City in mid-November, showed great resilience and deservedly equalised after 24 minutes through Brady.

A foul by Nemanja Matic on Joey Barton on the edge of the area presented Brady, a club-record £13 million (\$16.2 million, 15.3 million euros) signing from Norwich City

last month, with his chance.

He took it in style, curling a magnificent 20-yard free-kick over the wall and into the top-left corner. That cancelled out an equally impressive opener from Chelsea that was started, and finished, by Pedro in the seventh minute. The Spanish winger helped begin the attack deep in his own half with a pass to Eden Hazard who, in turn, fed Victor Moses on the right.

After skipping past Brady's crude challenge, Moses crossed for Pedro, who had covered nearly 70 yards, and his low, angled shot gave Tom Heaton no chance in the Burnley goal.

FURIOUS TEMPO

Chelsea had threatened to simply sweep their hosts away during a positive opening

in which they repeatedly hit Burnley on the break. But after weathering that pressure, the Clarets began to show why they have become so feared on their own turf.

Ashley Barnes was presented with a couple of half-chances before the equaliser and, soon after it, Andre Gray flashed an inviting low cross through the Chelsea six-yard box.

Burnley should even have taken a lead into the interval after Barton found full-back Matt Lowton, who only had Thibaut Courtois to beat but was denied by a solid block from the Chelsea goalkeeper.

The furious tempo of the game continued after the restart, with a mistake by Matic and an error by David Luiz culminating in Gray gathering Barnes's pass and shooting straight at Courtois.

In response, and thanks to a Ben Bee mistake at the other end, Diego Costa had a shot blocked before Cesar Azpilicueta chanced his luck with a long-range shot that just cleared the Burnley crossbar.

Burnley substitute Scott Arfield was also guilty of a potentially costly error when his weak clearance was picked up by Hazard, but the Chelsea man's effort was hurried and well over.

Yet another Chelsea attack ended in similar fashion a few minutes later with substitute Cesc Fabregas slicing a shot hopelessly wide from the edge of the penalty area.

Arfield almost twisted and turned his way through on goal late on, but Luiz's challenge prevented him from giving Burnley six successive home league victories for the first time in 56 years. — AFP

SWANSEA'S MAWSON, OLSSON SHARPEN LEICESTER'S PAIN



Swansea City 2



Leicester City 0

SWANSEA: Defenders Alfie Mawson and Martin Olsson gave Swansea City a 2-0 win over Leicester City yesterday that nudged the flatlining Premier League champions closer to the relegation zone.

Mawson and Olsson netted crisp strikes prior to half-time at the Liberty Stadium to give Swansea manager Paul Clement a fourth win in six games since he succeeded the sacked Bob Bradley.

Swansea's victory, their 100th in the top flight, took them four points clear of the bottom three and left Claudio Ranieri's Leicester just one point and one position clear of danger in 17th place.

The extraordinary feats of last season have been replaced by history of a different kind as Leicester became the first reigning champions to lose five successive top-flight games since Chelsea in 1956. They also became the first team to go six games without scoring at the start

of a calendar year in the English top tier since Stoke City in 1985. Brought back down to earth after their mid-week FA Cup win at Derby County, Leicester could scarcely be in a more sorry state as their Champions League last 16 tie with Sevilla looms on the horizon.

Clement made one change, bringing Nathan Dyer in for Wayne Routledge, but was forced to reverse the switch after Dyer's reunion with his old club was curtailed by an ankle injury sustained in the fifth minute. Dyer, who spent last season on loan at Leicester, duly re-emerged on the bench, the lower half of his left leg encased in a protective boot. With the big guns restored to the Leicester line-up after their 3-1 win over local rivals Derby, the visitors looked to assert themselves.

SORRY PREDICAMENT

But blocked shots from Wilfred Ndidi, Jamie Vardy and Riyad Mahrez were all they had to show for their early endeavours and as the first half wore on, Swansea established control.

After Routledge had seen a volley parried by Kasper Schmeichel and Gylfi Sigurdsson had drilled a shot wide with

his left foot from outside the box, the home side took a 36th-minute lead.

Robert Huth could only help Sigurdsson's free-kick towards the back post, where it was nodded back into the danger zone by Federico Fernandez, and Mawson lashed a vicious volley past Schmeichel.

Swansea landed another blow in first-half stoppage time after a slick one-touch move involving Tom Carroll, Fernando Llorente and Sigurdsson. The latter's through-ball freed Olsson, who dove into the box from wide on the left before battering a shot between Schmeichel and his near post. Ranieri made a double change at half-time, sending on Ben Chilwell and Islam Slimani for Christian Fuchs and Marc Albrighton. Slimani came closest to bringing Leicester back into the game, first seeing a shot blocked by Lukasz Fabianski from Mahrez's deft pass and then just failing to get a touch on Mahrez's right-wing cross.

But Leicester's problems in front of goal were destined to continue, a wild shot from Vardy drawing derisive hoots from the Swansea fans and summing up the champions' sorry predicament. — AFP



SWANSEA: Swansea City's Fernando Llorente, left, and Leicester City's Robert Huth in an aerial challenge for the ball during the English Premier League match Swansea against Leicester at the Liberty Stadium, yesterday. — AP



MEZZAN HOLDING REPORTS 2016 FINANCIAL RESULTS

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NICE: People look at the float “Wind of Change” depicting US President Donald Trump as it parades in the streets of Nice for the 133rd edition of the Nice Carnival. — AFP

IMF’S LAGARDE ‘OPTIMISTIC’ ABOUT US ECONOMY

WARNS IT COULD STILL HERALD TROUBLE FOR REST OF THE WORLD

DUBAI: International Monetary Fund chief Christine Lagarde yesterday voiced optimism for US economic growth under US President Donald Trump but warned it could herald trouble for the rest of the world. “From the little we know, and I will insist on the little we know, because this is really work in progress... but from the little we hear, we have reasons to be optimistic about economic growth in the United States,” Lagarde said at the annual World Government Summit in Dubai.

Lagarde predicted tax reform and more investment in infrastructure were both likely under Trump, whose Thursday teaser of fresh tax cut proposals pushed Wall Street stocks to new records. The Dow, Nasdaq and S&P 500 all closed up 0.6 percent Thursday after the new US president promised a “phenomenal” tax cut plan would be unveiled within two or three weeks. Yet the IMF chief did not mince words in raising concern over the global repercussions of a boon in the US economy.

“Now that’s the good news,” said Lagarde. “The more worrying news, if you will, is that it will have consequences on the rest of the world, and we are seeing it.” She highlighted the strength of the dollar against other currencies, predicting a hike in interest rates regulated by the Federal Reserve. “That’s a tightening that will be difficult on the global economy and for which economies will have to prepare,” said Lagarde.

World Bank keeps forecasts
The IMF in January raised the US growth estimate a

tenth of a point this year to 2.3 percent, and four-tenths of a point to 2.5 percent for 2018. The World Bank meanwhile has not changed its forecasts for the United States, citing the uncertainty of Trump’s policy plans. Both the IMF and World Bank continue to point to uncertainty as a mitigating factor for economic projections in the United States.

The two organisations are expected to announce clearer forecasts at the World Economic Outlook in April. Lagarde, whose organisation has backed taxation in the largely energy-rich and tax-free member countries of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), was also unwavering in her support for the impending regional five percent value-added tax.

“Whether you want to talk about education, whether you want to talk about roads... to have public investment, you need public funding,” said the IMF chief. “Now if that funding is reduced because the price of the barrel has gone down... that money needs to be found somewhere else, and as a result there has to be a degree of taxation.”

The International Monetary Fund in 2016 had recommended six Gulf states impose revenue-raising measures, including excise and value-added taxes, to adjust to lower crude prices which have slowed regional growth. The GCC countries, which include Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, have already agreed to implement selective taxes on tobacco, and soft and energy drinks this year. A broader five percent value-added tax is slated to take effect across the Gulf on January 1, 2018. —AFP



DUBAI: An onlooker at the World Government Summit wears a hat similar to those used in the campaign of US President Donald Trump that instead says “Make Our World Great Again”. — AP

PEUGEOT BUYS INDIAN CAR
AMBASSADOR FOR \$12MN

NEW DELHI: India’s Hindustan Motors has sold its Ambassador car to France’s Peugeot for just \$12 million, capping a spectacular downfall for a vehicle once emblematic of the country’s political class. The CK Birla group, the owners of Hindustan Motors, have sold the car brand for 800 million rupees to the French auto makers, a company spokesman confirmed yesterday.



The logo of French carmaker Peugeot

Hindustan Motors, India’s oldest car maker, stopped production of the Ambassador in 2014 citing debt and lack of demand for the vehicle which was designed on Britain’s long-defunct Morris Oxford. “We have sold it for just 800 million rupees but we had already stopped production at the plant nearly three years back. The plant has been closed since,” the official said.

Last month, the Birla group had signed a separate agreement with Peugeot to set up two joint ventures with production capacity initially estimated at 100,000 vehicles per year by 2020. The PSA Group, which makes Peugeot and Citroen cars, said at the time it had not yet decided which model it will build in India.

The curvy Ambassador once ruled India’s roads and for years was the only car driven by politicians and senior government officials. But the car was muscled out over the years by the entry of more modern vehicles, particularly SUVs increasingly favoured by senior bureaucrats. The car still remains popular with some taxi drivers and politicians and tourists looking for nostalgia. The PSA group was among the first foreign car manufacturers to make a foray into India in the Nineties after the government opened up investment. But after a fall-out with their local partners, the company withdrew from India in 1997. — AFP

ALGERIA BUCKLES UP FOR
HOMEGROWN AUTO DRIVE

ALGIERS: Once one of Africa’s biggest car buyers, Algeria is embarking on an ambitious program aimed at replacing hundreds of thousands of foreign imports with domestically produced models to keep drivers on the road. Facing up to a sharp drop in the price of oil—its main revenue source—the North African nation has launched a “new economic model” which seeks to reduce reliance on crude sales.

One of the ways it hopes to achieve this is by developing its domestic automotive industry, which has been given incentives to produce more models after the government radically slashed imports. As fears grow over US President Donald Trump’s impact on global free trade, Algeria’s move towards homegrown manufacturing is a possible sign of protectionism in the country. Algeria in 2014 was Africa’s second-largest car market in terms of sales, with more than 400,000 vehicles imported annually, but last year it cut import licenses by half.

As a result only 83,000 units were brought in, representing around \$1 billion worth of sales—a sharp fall from the \$7.6 billion Algeria spent on foreign cars in 2012, ministry of commerce figures show. According to economist Abdelatif Rebah, Algeria’s reliance on foreign cars had become “unsustainable and dangerous for our external balance”. “In 15 years, Algeria imported more than four

million vehicles for close to \$25 billion, not counting the cost of importing spare parts,” he told AFP.

According to the national statistics office, vehicle imports doubled between 1995 and 2015, as the economy and population grew. Now, heartened by a similar domestic production drive in neighbouring Morocco—which has a Renault plant in Tangiers producing 200,000 models a year—Algeria is eyeing homegrown car manufacturing.

‘Cannot ensure quality’

The French motor giant opened a multi-million-euro plant in Paris’s former colony in 2014, with an eventual yearly output set to hit 75,000 vehicles. In November, Volkswagen signed an agreement with its Algerian sales partner for the construction of a vehicle assembly plant in Relizane, 320 kilometers southwest of the capital Algiers.

The plant will produce several models, including the Volkswagen Golf, SEAT Ibiza and Skoda Octavia as well as the Caddy. Algeria’s industry ministry says it has another dozen such projects in the planning, but experts have expressed doubts over quality assurance. “Due to decades of deindustrialisation... to benefit imports, the level of technological development in our country cannot currently ensure a sufficient level of quality sub-contracting,” Rebah said. —AFP

MEZZAN HOLDING REPORTS 2016 FINANCIAL RESULTS

DOUBLE DIGIT GROWTH IN Q4 REVENUES AND NET PROFIT

KUWAIT: Mezzan Holding KSC, one of the largest manufacturers and distributors of food, beverage, FMCG and pharmaceutical products in the Gulf, today released the company's 2016 full-year financial results. Full year revenue was KD207.4 million, representing a 5.8% increase on the same period in 2015. The company's net profit for the year was KD17.2 million in line with expectations.

Mezzan Holding Executive Vice Chairman Mohammad Jassim Al Wazzan said, "We are pleased to report that the company has recorded record revenues in 2016 and a strong fourth quarter despite the predominant macro-environment challenges in our markets. In 2016, company had top-line growth in five of the seven markets we operate, including Kuwait, Qatar, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia, our newest market."

In the third quarter, the company entered the largest consumer market in the Gulf with acquisition of Saudi-based Al Safi Foods. The acquired company is currently undergoing a

turn-around involving various business optimization initiatives and the introduction of new SKUs into the Saudi market.

Mezzan Holding CEO Garry Walsh said, "Our diversified business once again proved its resilience and defensive nature in the face of economic challenges. The year was challenging for the consumer sector as a whole. However Mezzan's business mix, diverse products portfolio, geographic spread and strong balance sheet successfully shield the company from adverse market conditions challenges. We are pleased with our results and we believe that Mezzan is well positioned for continued positive performance in 2017 and beyond."

Mezzan Holding performance by business line

Mezzan Holding incorporates 30 subsidiaries and is operationally structured into two primary business lines: the Food Business Line and the Non-Food Business Line. Below is

Q4 2016 Financial Results Highlights:

- Revenue: KD51.2 million, up 12.9%
- Reported Net Profit attributable to equity holders of the Parent Company: KD4.0 million, up 23.1%

2016 Financial Results Highlights:

- Revenue: KD207.4 million, up 5.8%
- Underlying Net Profit: KD17.2 million
- Reported Net Profit attributable to Equity holders of the Parent Company: KD17.2 million, down 11.6% (reflecting a one-off non-recurring gain of KD2.2 million from net insurance proceeds recorded in Q2 2015)
- Underlying Net Profit : KD 17.2 million (flat to last year when excluding a non-recurring gain of KD2.2 million from net insurance proceeds recorded in Q2 2015)

2016 Balance Sheet Highlights:

- Total Assets: KD 211.7 million, up increase 17.4%
- Equity to Parent Company: KD106.4 million, up 9.1%

the company's performance by business line:

- Food Business Line: Up by 7.9%, the Food Business Line generated KD155.3 million

in revenue, or 74.9% of Group revenue. The business line comprises three divisions, and they are Manufacturing and Distribution

(52.6% of Group revenue), which grew by 8.4%, Catering (12.9%), which saw a slight drop in revenues of 1.3%, and Food Services (9.4%), which was up by 20.9%.

- Non-Food Business Line: Slightly down by 0.3%, the Non-Food Business Line generated KD52.0 million during the period, or 25.1% of Group revenue. This Business Line comprises two business divisions, and they are FMCG and Pharmaceuticals (22.3% of Group revenue), which grew by 1.3%, and Industrials (2.7% of Group revenue), which declined by 11.8% in the period.
- Regional Business Highlights: Mezzan Holding operates in seven countries, with over 90% of revenue generated in Kuwait (64.9%), UAE (16.8%) and Qatar (9.5%). In Kuwait, revenues grew by 4.3%, in UAE revenues were slightly down by 0.9%, and in Qatar revenues grew by 9.8%. The Group also saw revenue growth of 42.2% in Jordan, contributing 5.0% to the Group's total revenue for the period.



GRENOBLE: French Prime Minister Bernard Cazeneuve (C), French Minister for Ecology, Sustainable Development and Energy Segolene Royal stand in front of an E-Fan solar plane as they visit the CEA Tech (French Atomic Energy and Alternative Energy Commission). — AFP

AVIATION TAKES BABY STEPS TOWARD SUSTAINABLE FUELS

MONTREAL: The air transportation sector is turning slowly toward sustainable fuels as part of the global fight against climate change. But adoption has been delayed due to a lack of incentives and low oil prices. "It's very urgent to develop these alternative fuels," said Michel Wachenheim of the International Coordinating Council of Aerospace Industries Associations (ICCAIA). "There is no reason to be satisfied with the situation."

Despite an expected increase in airline traffic, the aviation industry is the first commercial sector to commit itself to limiting carbon emissions within 20 years, through a binding mechanism. But to achieve that goal, the industry must look at a variety of options. Even partially replacing jet fuel with sustainable biofuels can make an impact. That is one of the four options favored by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), which convened a panel of experts on Wednesday and Thursday in Montreal to address the dilemma.

Lighter, more fuel-efficient aircraft, optimized flight plans, or turning off jet engines while on the tarmac also would help to cut emissions. But meeting the 20-year commit-

ment will require widespread adoption of alternative fuels that produce less carbon emissions over their life cycle than jet fuel produced from petroleum. The ultimate goal is to make a fuel-equivalent to jet fuel, but those processes still are under development or at an early stage of industrial production. Hydro-treated oils, a process of converting gases into hydrocarbons, or fermentation processes such as the one being done by biotech Amyris with French oil firm Total, produce sustainable biofuels, according to the experts gathered at the ICAO.

Starches and sugars

These fuels are made from biomass such as starches, sugars, oils and lignocellulose in other words, plants. The use of seaweed is still in the research stage. Nate Brown, in charge of the US Federal Aviation Administration's alternative jet fuel initiative, said more work needs to be done before reaching large-scale production.

In addition to coming up with alternative fuels with "equivalent safety-performance," the costs must be comparable to that of conventional fuel, he said. A reliable supply is crucial

for airlines, and proven environmental benefits also are key, he said. With prices for conventional fuel remaining low over the past three years, due to low crude oil prices, energy companies do not have an incentive to invest billions of dollars in new technologies.

But even so, this year 25 airlines will operate more than 5,000 flights using jet fuel mixed with sustainable alternative fuels-up to 50 percent in the case of hydro-treated oils-on a trial basis. Industry officials say there also will be a need for stronger political will world-wide to encourage the use of alternative fuels.

Gerard Ostheimer a scientist with Sustainable Energy For All (Se4all), launched by the United Nations, a higher price per ton of carbon could be one of the levers that would push development of these biofuels. In addition, "We must put in place policies that reward (using) fuels with reduced carbon intensity." At their last triennial assembly, the 191 ICAO member states adopted a global mechanism for offsetting emissions from international aviation and the objective by 2035 of, at worst, maintaining emissions at 2019 or 2020 levels. — AFP

EGYPTIANS DITCH IMPORTS AND BUYS LOCAL AS POUND SINKS

CAIRO: Egyptian chocolate spread maker Swifax has doubled its sales and is struggling to keep up with demand since the pound currency dived in November, forcing shoppers traditionally "obsessed with everything foreign" to ditch pricey imports and buy local. "People started changing their habits," Swifax's commercial director Mohamed El Gammal told Reuters. "We could sell even more ... but we have a problem with our capacity."

The pound's flotation and an ensuing increase in tariffs on more than 300 products shipped from abroad have hit importers hard, but have been a boon for domestic manufacturers such as Swifax. Once shunned in favor of prestigious foreign brands perceived to offer higher quality, Egyptian-made products are much more affordable for customers who are increasingly price conscious as inflation has shot above 28 percent.

The bonanza began when Egypt abandoned its peg of 8.8 pounds to the dollar on Nov. 3. Since then, the currency has roughly halved in value to around 17.75. Sitting in his office next to a glass cabinet crammed with varieties of the sandwich-filler popular with sweet-toothed Egyptians, Gammal said sales have jumped from 2 million pounds (\$112,700) a few months before the flotation to 4 million, as rival imported brands become unaffordable to many.

A 350-gram jar of Swifax's high-end spread, Moltobella, costs 36 pounds while its budget brand costs around 17 pounds. Its main imported competitor sells for about 70 pounds a jar. Floating the pound helped Egypt to secure a \$12 billion IMF loan in return for a reform program that includes tax increases and electricity subsidy cuts, driving up inflation in a country where millions live a pay cheque from hunger.

Egypt also raised customs tariffs on many luxury goods to over 50 percent, plugged customs loopholes, and tightened quality controls in an effort to rein in a trade deficit the central bank blames for depressing the currency. Importers criticized the increases, saying local producers don't have the capacity to fill the gap left by declining sales of foreign goods.

According to Emad Maher, manager of hypermarket chain Samy Salama, switching to local products has increased by 90 percent, mainly because of the price difference. "In some products, you can compare the local and imported and not find much difference (in quality). But Egyptians are obsessed with everything foreign," he said.

At Covertina, another chocolate-maker, business is also booming. Chief Executive Mostafa Sayed Salam said production had risen 19 percent in 2016 from the previous year. "After the flotation of the currency, it became hard for importers to sell the chocolate at the old prices," he said. "My market share has increased from 50 percent to 65-70 percent."

had signed a deal to acquire Caravan Marketing Company, an Egyptian instant coffee maker that had increased its domestic market share due to competitive pricing. With Egypt long dependent on imports, the trend suggests the government's efforts to narrow a big trade deficit and boost domestic industries are starting to work.

Even before the float, imports had been falling due to shortages of foreign currency. Egypt had struggled to attract dollars and revive the economy after the 2011 overthrow of president Hosni Mubarak, with subsequent political turmoil driving away tourists and foreign investors.

Official trade figures for 2016 have yet to be released but a government official told Reuters earlier this month that the deficit had narrowed by 17.4 percent compared with 2015. Imports fell to \$62.93 billion from \$70.28 billion, said the official, but higher exports also helped to shrink the gap. These rose to \$20.26 billion in 2016 from \$18.67 billion.

As the unofficial figures suggest, the weaker pound is also helping Egyptian exporters. Hesham Zahra, chairman of Yasmine cosmetic company, said production had risen 25-35 percent since the flotation boosted sales both at home and abroad. "Today our prices have become competitive in foreign markets, and we can compete with some countries in exports," he said, adding that Yasmine lotion retails for a quarter of the price of some imported brands.

Trade and Industry Minister Tarek Kabil told Reuters in October that Egypt had produced \$4 billion worth of import substitutes since the start of 2016 and aimed to expand domestic industry by 8 percent in three years. Food industries were leading the way, he said, but local products were also compensating for a retreat in imported building materials, chemicals, leather and furniture.

"This is a golden opportunity for Egyptian producers," said Abu Bakr Emam, head of research at financial firm Prime Holding. "Local producers used to be unable to compete but now is the right time to go in to compete against imported goods due to the price advantage after the dollar rises."

Rising prices

Still, the pound's dive is a double-edged sword for local manufacturers who largely depend on imported raw materials. At Swifax, Gammal said the cost of cocoa butter and hazelnut had more than doubled since the flotation. A tonne of hazelnut used to cost 90,000 pounds but now it costs 230,000. This forced the company to dip into funds that had been earmarked for expansion. This will now take longer despite the more pressing need to raise capacity. "In the end we increased production without the expansion by tripling the shifts at our factories which adds a lot of strain on the machines," he said. With Egypt aiming to raise economic growth under the IMF programme to 5.5 percent by the 2018-19 fiscal year from 4.3 percent in 2015-16, the government can ill-afford large numbers of firms to delay investment like Swifax. — Reuters

Narrowing the deficit

Multinationals are taking notice. Nestle, the packaged food giant, said in January it

EXCHANGE RATES

AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

ASIAN COUNTRIES

Japanese Yen	2.704
Indian Rupees	4.582
Pakistani Rupees	2.920
Srilankan Rupees	2.033
Nepali Rupees	2.865
Singapore Dollar	216.290
Hongkong Dollar	39.442
Bangladesh Taka	3.830
Philippine Peso	6.136
Thai Baht	8.751

GCC COUNTRIES

Saudi Riyal	81.668
Qatari Riyal	84.114
ani Riyal	795.348
Bahraini Dinar	813.210
UAE Dirham	83.381

ARAB COUNTRIES

Egyptian Pound - Cash	20.450
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	17.254
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.229
Tunisian Dinar	13.500
Jordanian Dinar	431.150
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.040
Syrian Lira	2.182
Morocco Dirham	30.914

EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES

US Dollar Transfer	306.050
Euro	327.930
Sterling Pound	384.400
Canadian dollar	235.240
Turkish lira	83.520

Swiss Franc	307.280
Australian Dollar	237.040
US Dollar Buying	304.850

GOLD

20 Gram	252.570
10 Gram	129.210
5 Gram	65.450

DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

Rate for Transfer

	Selling Rate
US Dollar	305.450
Canadian Dolla	232.505
Sterling Pound	383.405
Euro	327.735
Swiss Frank	306.320
Bahrain Dinar	809.725
UAE Dirhams	83.555
Qatari Riyals	84.775
Saudi Riyals	82.380
Jordanian Dinar	431.985
Egyptian Pound	16.811
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.030
Indian Rupees	4.540
Pakistani Rupees	2.914
Bangladesh Taka	3.859
Philippines Peso	6.136
Cyprus pound	167.740
Japanese Yen	3.720
Syrian Pound	2.425
Nepalese Rupees	3.835
Malaysian Ringgit	69.705

Chinese Yuan Renminbi	44.840
Thai Bhat	9.710
Turkish Lira	82.065

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL

CURRENCY

	BUY	SELL
British Pound	0.376420	0.386420
Czech Korune	0.004067	0.016067
Danish Krone	0.039822	0.044822
Euro	0.320931	0.329931
Norwegian Krone	0.032709	0.037909
Romanian Leu	0.084819	0.084819
Slovakia	0.009176	0.019176
Swedish Krona	0.030334	0.035334
Swiss Franc	0.299350	0.310350
Turkish Lira	0.076951	0.087251

Australian Dollar	0.227211	0.239211
New Zealand Dollar	0.214615	0.224115

Canadian Dollar	0.228841	0.237841
Georgina Lari	0.138230	0.138230
US Dollars	0.301950	0.306350
US Dollars Mint	0.302450	0.306350

Bangladesh Taka	0.003622	0.004206
Chinese Yuan	0.043212	0.046512
Hong Kong Dollar	0.037375	0.040125
Indian Rupee	0.002680	0.004903

Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002626	0.002806
Kenyan Shilling	0.003013	0.003013
Korean Won	0.000257	0.000272
Malaysian Ringgit	0.065084	0.071084
Nepalese Rupee	0.003085	0.003255
Pakistan Rupee	0.002640	0.002930
Philippine Peso	0.006060	0.006360
Sierra Leone	0.000068	0.000074
Singapore Dollar	0.210430	0.220430
South African Rand	0.016960	0.025460
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001681	0.002261
Taiwan	0.009671	0.009851
Thai Baht	0.008394	0.008944

Bahraini Dinar	0.805232	0.813732
Egyptian Pound	0.010147	0.019400
Iranian Riyal	0.000085	0.000086
Iraqi Dinar	0.000187	0.000247
Jordanian Dinar	0.426002	0.435000
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000148	0.000248
Moroccan Dirhams	0.020142	0.044142
Nigerian Naira	0.001269	0.001904
Omani Riyal	0.788514	0.794194
Qatar Riyal	0.083253	0.084703
Saudi Riyal	0.080527	0.081827
Syrian Pound	0.001298	0.001518
Tunisian Dinar	0.130560	0.138560
Turkish Lira	0.076951	0.087251
UAE Dirhams	0.081902	0.083602
Yemeni Riyal	0.000995	0.001075

FORD BETS \$1BN ON STARTUP FOUNDED BY UBER VETS

SAN FRANCISCO: Ford Motor is spending \$1 billion to take over a budding robotics startup to acquire more expertise needed to reach its ambitious goal of having a fully driverless vehicle on the road by 2021. The big bet announced Friday comes just a few months after the Pittsburgh startup, Argo AI, was created by two alumni of Carnegie Mellon University's robotics program, Bryan Salesky and Peter Rander.

The alliance between Argo and Ford is the latest to combine the spunk and dexterity of a technologically savvy startup with the financial muscle and manufacturing knowhow of a major automaker in the race to develop autonomous vehicles. Last year rival General Motors paid \$581 million to buy Cruise Automation, a 40-person software company that is testing vehicles in San Francisco.

The Argo deal marks the next step in Ford's journey

toward building a vehicle without a steering wheel or brake pedal by 2021 - a vision that CEO Mark Fields laid out last summer. The big-ticket deal for the newly-minted company clearly was aimed at getting Salesky and Rander. Salesky formerly worked on self-driving cars at a high-profile project within Google - now known as Waymo - and Rander did the same kind of engineering at ride-hailing service Uber before the two men teamed to launch Argo late last year.

Core technology

"When talent like that comes up, you don't ignore that ability," said Raj Nair, who doubles as Ford's chief technical officer and product development head. The two will develop the core technology of Ford's autonomous vehicle - the "virtual driver" system, which Nair described as the car's "brains, eyes, ears and senses." The decision to turn to Argo for help is a

tacit acknowledgement that Ford needed more talent to deliver on Fields' 2021 promise, said one expert familiar with Salesky and Rander.

"This is likely a realization that Ford is behind relative to companies like GM, Audi, Volvo, Waymo and Uber, and is trying to catch up," said Raj Rajkumar, a Carnegie Mellon computer engineering professor who leads the school's autonomous vehicle research. Salesky said Argo expects to have 200 workers by the end of the year. Argo employees will be given stock in the subsidiary as part of their compensation packages so they will be enriched if Argo's technology becomes a hot commodity.

The equity should set Argo apart from other companies in recruiting scarce tech workers. "There's a war for talent out there," Fields said. By joining with Ford, Argo gets strong capital backing and expertise on other components needed to run autonomous

cars, as well as product development and manufacturing knowledge, Salesky said. In return for its funding, Argo will design its driverless system exclusively for Ford and then have a chance to license the technology to other automakers in the future.

Competitors such as NVIDIA have developed artificial intelligence that learns about different situations as it's tested on roads, something that is almost essential for an autonomous car to function in heavy traffic on city streets. Ford isn't just racing General Motors and other automakers to gain robotics experience. Uber bought autonomous trucking startup Otto for an estimated \$680 million last summer primarily to get Otto's engineers on its team working on driverless vehicles. Otto co-founder Anthony Levandowski, another former Google engineer, is now overseeing Uber's testing of driverless cars in Pittsburgh and Arizona. — AP



BREMEN: This file photo taken on August 31, 2010 shows employees of German logistics company BLG Logistics Group AG controlling rows of German Volkswagen cars at the car terminal at the harbor of Bremerhaven. —AFP

DESPITE DIESEL SCANDAL, NEW VOLKS MODELS COMING TO US

POISED TO OFFER NEW OR REVAMPED DIESEL VEHICLES

DETROIT: Despite uproar created by the diesel emissions cheating scandal at Volkswagen, Ford and General Motors are poised to offer new or revamped diesel vehicles to their American customers. It is a bold move, since only 255 diesel cars were sold in the US market in January, compared to the 5,000 to 10,000 a month rate for most of 2015 — before the VW scandal broke.

GM sold just 1,400 Chevrolet Colorado and GMC Canyon compact pickup trucks with small diesel engines in 2016. That represented less than one percent of the trucks GM sold in this segment. But even as automakers turn increasingly to electric and hybrid engines to meet demand for cleaner cars, and more importantly to meet government efficiency standards, diesel remains an option.

Diesel still produces better mileage than gasoline engines, so it can bolster the fleet-wide fuel economy average, which is critical to meeting US regulatory requirements. Ford is planning to launch a diesel version of its popular F-150 pickup truck, while GM has two diesel SUV models in the works, and even Mazda is adding a diesel SUV.

Demand challenge

GM and Ford sell large diesel engines in heavy-duty pick-up trucks widely used in construction, oil drilling and on farms and ranches in the United States, but American consumers have been skittish about buying diesel models for daily use because they cost more and the fuel is more expensive. Stephanie Brinley, an analyst with IHS Automotive said selling diesel

to American consumers was difficult even before the Volkswagen scandal made headlines. "There just isn't a lot of demand," she said. VW has had to pay more than \$20 billion in fines and buybacks since it admitted in 2015 to outfitting 11 million diesel cars worldwide with software designed to cheat emissions testing, a scandal that has shook the company to its core. Fiat Chrysler also now faces potentially heavy fines because of similar concerns over the diesel Jeep utility vehicles and Ram pickup trucks. But Joseph Phillippi, owner of AutoTrends Consulting, said the new diesel-powered vehicles will find buyers looking for power and better miles per gallon. "I don't see any reason why diesel can't mount a comeback of sorts," he told AFP. "Diesel fans looking for torque and mpg, not overly concerned about prior sins, will still want what diesel can offer."

Old favorites in diesel

Ford is preparing to offer a 3.0-liter diesel engine as an option in the popular F-150 pickup truck when the 2018 version rolls out next fall. Todd Eckert, marketing manager for the F-150, said the automaker has a long-history of innovation with this vehicle. "It's all about continuous improvement," Eckert said.

The pickup's diesel engine will be built at the Ford factory in Dagenham, England and will make the truck more efficient, said Jerry Farrell, the chief engineer for the F-150. Exact fuel economy numbers for the new model are not available yet. General Motors plans to begin offering a diesel engine in the new ver-

sions of the Chevrolet Equinox and GMC Terrain, both compact sport utility vehicles due out this summer.

Customers will be able to choose from three engine options, including a 1.5- and 2.0-liter turbo-matched with GM's first nine-speed automatic transmission-and the European-built 1.6-liter turbo-diesel, which is expected to achieve 40 mpg when the numbers are finished, said Dan Nicholson, vice president of GM's Global Propulsion Systems.

"With three choices, customers can select an engine that offers more of the attributes that are important to them: efficiency, performance and capability," Nicholson said. And Mazda will become the first Asian automaker to offer a diesel to US customers, when it introduces the CX-5 SUV with the SkyActive 2.2-liter clean diesel, beginning in the second half of 2017.

"We're confident this engine offers a smart new option for North American drivers who want both performance and fuel economy," Akira Marumoto, Mazda's executive vice president, said recently. It provides a torque-rich driving experience, and will make the CX-5 one of the most fuel-efficient vehicles in its class, Marumoto said. The engine also will use proprietary technologies that reduce diesel knock sound for a quieter ride, he said. Mazda was preparing to bring a diesel engine to North America more than three years ago but has delayed the introduction several times because the company's engineers were not satisfied with the engine's performance, Mazda's director of communications Jeremy Barnes said. —AFP

MEXICO GETS TRUMP'S TRADE IRE, JAPAN AND GERMANY GETS PASS

WASHINGTON: When President Donald Trump rages about unfair trading practices, he usually directs his ire at China and Mexico. By comparison, Japan and Germany get off easy. The focus on China is understandable: The US trade deficit in goods with China (\$347 billion last year) is five times bigger than any other. The US trade gap with Mexico (\$63.2 billion), though, is smaller than the ones with Japan (\$68.9 billion) and Germany (\$64.9 billion).

Still, when it comes to Trump's rhetoric, "the volume on Mexico is three times as high," says Gary Hufbauer, senior fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics. Another sign of the difference in relations: Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is on a friendly trip to the United States, with Trump welcoming him to the White House with a warm embrace. By contrast, Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto last month acrimoniously canceled a planned meeting with the new American president. Why does Mexico bear the brunt of Trump's wrath, while Germany and Japan usually get a pass?

The politics of immigration

Trade tension with Mexico is easily conflated with anger over illegal Mexican immigration, a hot-button topic with Trump's core supporters. Many voters believe Mexicans are taking American jobs, both as a result of trade policy and of illegal immigration. In their view, the North American Free Trade Agreement - a US pact with Mexico and Canada - pits US workers against low-wage labor inside Mexico. Mexicans also have crossed the border illegally and taken jobs inside the United States at low pay. Trump has promised to renegotiate or withdraw from NAFTA and has threatened to tax imports from Mexico. He also has vowed to build a border wall to keep illegal immigrants out of America.

Made in the USA

Three decades ago, Japan figured out how to calm America's anger over surging Japanese imports: move factories to the United States and hire Americans. So Honda now builds Accords and Acuras in Ohio, Toyota makes Camrys in Kentucky,

Nissan cranks out Pathfinders and other vehicles in Tennessee. The Germans, too, put up American factories. Volkswagen manufactures Passats in Tennessee, BMW makes sedans in South Carolina, and Siemens builds turbines in North Carolina.

Overall, Japan had invested \$373 billion in the United States by 2014, Germany \$224 billion and Mexico just \$18 billion, according to the Organization for International Investment, a trade group that represents foreign companies in the United States. The US investment and hiring shields Japan and Germany from criticism. "As soon as you start wailing on Honda, Toyota or Nissan, you'll have a governor standing up, saying, 'Hey, these are great companies,'" Peterson's Hufbauer says.

Charm offensive

Japan, in particular, seems eager to get on Trump's good side. The charm offensive started less than a month after the election, when Japanese tech billionaire Masayoshi Son promised to invest \$50 billion and create 50,000 jobs in the United States.

The Japanese government's Facebook page has been featuring posts on Japanese who have contributed to American life - the designer behind the interior of New York subway cars, the pediatric cardiologist caring for Miami babies with heart problems, an oncologist using a new cancer treatment in Houston. The Japanese are also using golf diplomacy on the links-loving Trump: Abe presented the president with a \$4,500 Honma driver when they met last November in New York. In a news conference Friday, Abe flattered Trump by noting that the American president was the superior golfer.

Japan and Germany don't get off the hook entirely. Trump upset Japan by pulling the United States out of a 12-country trade agreement called the Trans-Pacific Partnership. And he has accused Japan of manipulating its currency to gain a price advantage for its exporters. Last month, Peter Navarro, the White House's director of trade and industrial policy, complained to the Financial Times newspaper that Germany was exploiting an undervalued euro to boost its exports. —AP



WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe participate in a joint news conference in the East Room of the White House. — AP

SWISS VOTERS SET TO REJECT CORPORATE TAX OVERHAUL PLAN

ZURICH: Swiss voters have clearly rejected plans to overhaul the corporate tax system, in a setback for government efforts to abolish low tax rates for thousands of multinational firms while encouraging them to stay, projections by broadcaster SRF showed. Most Swiss recognize the country needs tax reform to avoid being blacklisted as a low-tax parish. But new measures proposed to help companies offset the loss of their special status breaks had created deep divisions.

"It is so clear that you can already say the measure will fail," political analyst Claude Longchamp of the gfs.bern research and polling institute told SRF around half an hour after polls closed. SRF said voters appeared to have rejected the tax plans by about 60 percent to 40 percent. Switzerland has been in the European Union's firing line for years because cantons (states) have a special tax status for foreign companies that means some pay virtually no tax other than an effective federal tax of 7.8 percent.

The country agreed with Brussels in 2014 to abolish this status because it allowed some foreign firms to pay far lower tax on overseas earnings - an attractive perk for around 24,000 multinationals looking to lower their tax bills. To offset the introduction of higher tax rates the government also proposed giving

companies tax breaks on research and development (R&D) in Switzerland, profits from patents developed there and deductions for excess company equity.

In addition, many cantons say they would also reduce corporate tax rates for all companies to reduce the fiscal burden and dissuade multinationals from leaving. After parliament approved the measures last year, critics gathered the 50,000 signatures needed to trigger Sunday's referendum, which can overturn the parliamentary vote.

The No campaign was led by a coalition including the Social Democrats, Greens, trade unions and church leaders who feared the public would bear the brunt of reduced company tax revenue through cuts in public services or higher personal taxes. Those backing the government say the reforms struck a balance between abolishing the tax breaks criticized by Brussels and new measures that will keep Switzerland competitive.

The stakes are high for Switzerland, already coming to terms with the end its long-cherished tradition of banking secrecy. If multinationals pull out, the economy could suffer. The changes also come at a time US President Donald Trump is considering slashing corporate taxes and Britain has hinted it could cut its rates when it leaves the EU. —Reuters

HAMBURG AIRPORT HALTS FLIGHTS, EVACUATES IN BAD AIR SCARE



HAMBURG: Travelers wait outside the Hamburg, northern Germany, airport yesterday after several people were injured by an unknown toxic that likely spread through the airports' air conditioning system. —AP

BERLIN: German firefighters yesterday evacuated hundreds of passengers at Hamburg Airport after about 50 people were injured by an unknown hazardous material that likely spread through the airport's air conditioning system. All flights were halted for several hours due to the evacuation, but air traffic started running again around 2 pm, airport spokeswoman Karen Stein said.

More than 50 people - both passengers and staff - had complained about breathing problems, burning eyes and nausea. Firefighters were examining them to find out whether they had to be taken to the hospital, the German news agency DPA reported. Those who were evacuated from the airport but not injured had to wait outside the terminals in freezing temperatures. Firefighters designated special areas outside the airport building where physicians were examining those injured by the unknown substance. The cause for the incident was not known, Stein said, "but we're working closely together with the authorities to find out more." —AP

US STOCK INDEXES CLIMB INTO RECORD HEIGHTS

NEW YORK: Wall Street capped a week of milestones Friday with a rally that pushed the major stock indexes to all-time highs for the second day in a row. Small-company stocks did better than larger ones, nudging the Russell 2000 index to a record high for the first time since December. Miners and other raw materials companies led the gainers. Rising crude oil prices also gave energy companies a big boost. Consumer goods stocks were essentially flat.

Strong company earnings and investor optimism over the Trump administration's promises of tax cuts, less government regulation and other policies helped fuel the mar-

ket's gains much of the week. News that OPEC is largely adhering to a recent pact to cut crude oil production has also helped lift markets. The daily market moves have been mostly small, but big enough to push indexes to new heights.

"We had a drought for a very, very long time last year where we went almost a year and a half without hitting a new high, which was the longest time ever," said Randy Frederick, vice president of trading & derivatives at Charles Schwab. "Now we're back to what I would say is more of a typical move, where you get record highs consistently."

The Dow Jones industrial average rose

96.97 points, or 0.5 percent, to 20,269.37. The Standard & Poor's 500 index gained 8.23 points, or 0.4 percent, to 2,316.10. The Nasdaq composite index added 18.95 points, or 0.3 percent, to 5,734.13.

All told, the Nasdaq closed at a record high four times this week, as well as last Friday. The Russell 2000 picked up 10.32 points, or 0.8 percent, to 1,388.84.

Trading got off to a good start early Friday, as investors sized up the latest batch of company earnings. Some 70 percent of the companies in the S&P 500 have reported quarterly results as of Friday. About 40 percent of those turned in earnings and revenue that beat Wall

Street's forecasts, according to S&P Global Market Intelligence.

Earnings on track

Earnings are on track to mark the second-consecutive quarter of growth after a five-quarter losing streak. Beyond earnings, investors are also eyeing Washington D.C. for signs the Trump administration will deliver on the promised business-friendly policy proposals that helped drive a market rally last fall, including slashing government regulations and taxes.

"The market has been pretty generous ever since the election in moving in anticipation of what might come," Frederick said. "The question is at what point does the market expect to see things actually happen versus just promises of action. That's the tricky part." Investors bid up shares in companies that turned in better earnings or outlooks than Wall Street was expecting, including footwear company Skechers, video game publisher Activision Blizzard and real estate investment company CBRE Group.

Skechers gained 4.50, or 19.3 percent, to \$27.78, while CBRE Group climbed \$2.43, or 7.7 percent, to \$34. Activision Blizzard was the biggest gainer in the S&P 500. The maker of "Call of Duty," "Candy Crush" and other video games jumped \$7.50, or 18.9 percent, to \$47.23. Other companies' quarterly report cards failed to impress traders. Yelp skidded 13.6 percent after the online reviews company's revenue forecasts disappointed Wall Street. The stock slid \$5.66 to \$35.83.

Cerner slumped 4.4 percent after the health care information technology company lowered its earnings and revenue guidance for the year. The stock was the biggest decliner in the S&P 500. It fell

\$2.38 to \$51.50. Soaring copper prices gave gold and copper miner Freeport-McMoRan a lift. It rose 41 cents, or 2.7 percent, to \$15.80. Investors also welcomed Sears' huge cost-savings initiative. The troubled department store chain said Friday that it will slash at least \$1 billion a year in costs by selling stores, cutting jobs or selling some of its well-known brands. The stock leaped \$1.42, or 25.6 percent, to \$6.96.

In deal news, Mead Johnson Nutrition Co. rose 5.6 percent after the baby formula maker agreed to be bought by British household products company Reckitt Benckiser for \$90 a share, or \$16.6 billion. Mead Johnson shares climbed \$4.67 to \$87.72. Benchmark US crude rose 86 cents, or 1.6 percent, to close at \$53.86 a barrel in New York.

The contract rose 66 cents on Thursday. Brent crude, the benchmark for international oil prices, gained \$1.07, or 1.9 percent, to close at \$56.70 a barrel in London. Natural gas futures declined 11 cents, or 3.4 percent, to \$3.03 per 1,000 cubic feet.

Major stock indexes in Europe closed mostly higher. Britain's FTSE 100 added 0.4 percent, while Germany's DAX rose 0.2 percent. France's CAC 40 was flat. Greece's stock market gained 2.5 percent as its creditors met to find a way to ease concerns about the future of its bailout program. In Asia, investors welcomed strong January trade data from China. Hong Kong's Hang Seng rose 0.2 percent, while South Korea's Kospi added 0.5 percent. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 jumped 1 percent. Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 index surged 2.5 percent as the yen weakened against the dollar, lifting shares of exporters.

Bond prices fell. The 10-year Treasury yield rose to 2.41 percent from 2.40 percent late Thursday.

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report

Sunday 12 February 2017

Index	Change	Closing	Last Closing	High	Low
Price index	▲ 54.55	6,637.30	6,582.75	6,637.30	6,534.18
Weighted Index	▲ 0.13	420.41	420.28	421.40	417.68
KSX 15	▼ -5.78	958.29	962.07	963.37	954.94

Security	Trades						
	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
MARIN	63	58	200	12	2	63	— 0.0
IPG	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	400	— 0.0
NAPESCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	820	— 0.0
ENERGYH	44.5	43.0	112,000	4,905	24	44.5	▲ 0.5
GPI	52	48.5	6,024,739	304,570	128	52	▲ 2.0
ABAR	97	97	95	9	1	97	▲ 3.0
Oil & Gas			6,137,034	309,496	155	849.22	▲ 8.48
KFOUC	335	320	184,929	59,958	28	320	▼ -15.0
BPCC	590	580	234,024	135,807	9	580	— 0.0
ALKOUT	700	700	100	70	1	700	▲ 10.0
ALQURAIN	310	305	1,044,678	322,884	54	310	— 0.0
Basic Materials			1,463,731	518,719	92	1292.79	▼ -8.65

KCEM	495	475	1,249,401	616,201	26	495	▲ 10.0
CABLE	560	550	128,892	70,891	27	560	▲ 10.0
SHIP	228	218	125,170	27,592	11	228	— 0.0
PCEM	1,060	1,060	5,090	5,385	2	1,060	— 0.0
PAPER	330	310	8,812	2,733	2	310	▼ -20.0
MRC	76	76	86,078	5,022	5	76	— 0.0
ACICO	300	295	263,440	78,246	17	300	— 0.0
GGMC	350	350	1	0	1	350	▲ 25.0
HCC	170	170	80	14	1	170	— 0.0
KBMMC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	180	— 0.0
NICBM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	220	— 0.0
EQUIPMENT	66	60	9,780,038	626,087	217	65	▲ 3.0
NCCI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	50	— 0.0
GYPSSUM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	95	— 0.0
SALBOOKH	75	70	2,340,700	168,633	104	75	▲ 2.0
AGLTY	660	650	12,192,124	7,943,964	310	650	▼ -50.0
EDU	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	206	— 0.0
CLEANING	53	50	1,389,530	71,575	38	52	— 0.0
KGL	61	59	553,689	33,032	24	61	▲ 2.0
KPCPC	198	198	50	10	1	198	▲ 2.0
HUMANSOFT	3,020	3,000	595,977	1,698,865	25	3,020	▲ 20.0
NAFAIS	200	200	4,250	850	1	200	▲ 2.0
GFC	38.0	34.0	41,369	1,557	3	38.0	▲ 6.5
MAYADEEN	31.5	30.0	5,212,502	180,944	89	31.5	▲ 1.0
CGC	500	500	380	190	2	500	— 0.0
MTCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	56	— 0.0
UPAC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	820	— 0.0
ALAFCO	255	250	57,000	14,253	2	255	▲ 5.0
MUBARRAD	75	71	588,358	42,882	36	75	▲ 2.0
LOGISTICS	73	71	913,371	65,548	34	73	— 0.0
SCHEM	88	88	43,500	3,828	1	88	▼ -1.0
QCEM	91	87	1,355,156	120,727	50	90	▲ 3.0
GIIC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	83	— 0.0
FCEM	90	88	823,108	72,756	27	90	▲ 3.0
RKCW	100	100	6,000	600	1	100	▲ 1.0
SPEC	94	91	940,352	85,943	33	93	— 0.0
Industrials			38,654,418	11,918,135	1,090	1484.44	▲ 5.74

KSH	188	180	35,000	6,508	4	180	— 0.0
NSH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	47.0	— 0.0
PAPCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	95	— 0.0
CATTL	244	224	250,736	63,281	12	244	▲ 10.0
DANAH	86	84	2,922,784	246,423	100	86	— 0.0
FOOD	2,820	2,820	12,525	32,816	2	2,820	▼ -20.0
Consumer Goods			3,230,045	351,027	118	1142.58	▲ 3.13
MHC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	250	— 0
ATC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	920	— 0
YIACO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	300	— 0
Health Care			0	0	0	1235.49	— 0.00

KCIN	1,160	1,120	85	96	3	1,120	▼ -40
KHOT	236	236	8,263	1,950	2	236	▼ -29
SULTAN	80	74	1,086,084	82,327	89	80	▲ 1
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	124	120	38,411	4,757	10	124	▲ 4
MUNTAZAHAT	87	86	686,243	59,653	16	87	▲ 1
JAZERA	670	660	10,025	6,617	3	660	▲ 10
SOOR	122	120	125,742	15,119	14	120	— 0
FUTUREKID	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	124	— 0
ALRAI	180	174	684,100	121,548	43	180	▲ 4
ZIMAH	67	64	3,599,227	235,182	61	66	▲ 3
Mezzan	940	920	303,820	281,518	25	930	▼ -20
Consumer Services			6,541,800	808,766	266	973.16	▼ -0.31

ZAIN	490	480	6,588,211	3,182,773	204	485	▼ -5
OOREDOO	1,280	1,220	2,100	2,605	3	1,280	▲ 20
HITSTELEC	59	55	14,096,289	807,402	209	59	▲ 5
VIVA	870	870	26,318	22,897	34	870	— 0
Telecommunications			20,712,918	4,015,676	450	686.90	▲ 12.22

NBK	730	720	1,690,900	1,217,458	29	720	— 0
GBK	248	246	332,220	81,846	11	246	▼ -2
CBK	500	500	8,500	4,250	1	500	— 0
ABK	310	305	23,811	7,262	3	310	— 0
ALMUTAHED	445	435	81,419	35,477	22	440	▲ 5
KIB	218	214	1,698,064	409,925	69	216	▼ -2
BURG	320	320	1,107,738	354,476	55	320	— 0
KFIN	610	600	1,548,937	938,179	74	600	— 0
BOURBYAN	415	410	310,439	127,314	25	410	— 0
AUB	224	218	1,811,440	400,735	24	222	▲ 2
ITHMR	58	54	12,208,476	679,571	247	56	— 0
WARBANK	250	246	5,958,082	1,484,556	198	248	▲ 2
Banks			26,976,026	5,741,050	758	940.13	▲ 1.22

KINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	275	— 0
GINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	620	— 0.0
AINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	470	— 0.0
WINS	100	99	6,071	602	3	99	▼ -1.0
KUWAITIRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	186	— 0.0
FTI	80	74	158,770	11,861	24	74	▼ -5.0
WETHAQ	53	53	80,000	3,180	2	53	▼ -2.0
BKIKWT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	355	— 0.0
Insurance			224,841	16,643	29	1116.46	▼ -18.51

Security	Trades						
	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
SOKOUK	49.5	46.5	12141394	590,849	197	49.5	▲ 2.5
KRF	76	73	3,067,722	228,745	49	76	▲ 1.0
URC	104	99	3,271	340	4	104	▲ 5.0
NRE	112	104	21,552,941	2,322,823	391	108	▼ -6.0
SRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	390	— 0.0
TAM	470	470	90	42	1	470	— 0.0
AREEC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	180	— 0.0
MASSALEH	55	55	100	6	1	55	— 0.0
ARABREC	42.5	39.5	7,030,943	287,493	169	42.0	▲ 1.5
ERESCO	46.5	45.5	600,255	27,587	13	46.5	▲ 0.5
MABANEE	880	830	408,548	350,593	34	850	▲ 20.0
INJAZAT	84	81	132,937	10,818	4	82	▼ -1.0
INVESTORS	30.5	28.5	30,189,976	888,643	282	30.0	▲ 1.0



CHEVROLET & CADILLAC ALGHANIM - AFTERSALES GROUP CELEBRATES 2016 ACHIEVEMENTS, HONORS EMPLOYEES

KUWAIT: Chevrolet & Cadillac Alghanim - Aftersales Group, held its annual appreciation event on Monday, January 30th 2017, at Alghanim Service Center in Shuwaikh, bringing together its employees and members of Alghanim Industries senior management. The aim of the gathering was to assure the level of commitment and excellent performance of the company's aftersales operations, as well as awarding the employees for their exceptional service and devotion.

Acknowledged for exceeding expectations across all functions and divisions in 2016, the Aftersales team has once again set remarkable new standards in achieving customer satisfaction in the Automotive Service and Parts division. Members of the Alghanim Industries' senior management were there in person, honoring and awarding the employees for their nonstop dedication and service. Meanwhile, the family of Chevrolet & Cadillac Alghanim - Aftersales Group would like to thank its customers for their abiding loyalty and support as the company vows to continue honoring their trust and exceed their expectations in 2017 and beyond.

2016 was a year of exceptional success, which is evident by the abundance of aftersales, awards Chevrolet & Cadillac Alghanim - Aftersales Group had received during the

year. In competition with other General Motors dealers in the Middle East, Aftersales Group won 1st position in the Service Advisor Skills Competition and the Technician Skills Competition, 2nd position (1st among GCC dealers) in the Part Skills Competition, as well as plenty of gold awards including the Top Technician Award, Chevrolet & Cadillac Service Manager Award, the Parts Manager Award and 21 Gold Awards.

Passion and devotion

All the exceptional performers were awarded by the senior management and complimented for the great efforts of the team and all the support functions to ensure that the company tenders the best service to Chevrolet & Cadillac customers at all times with passion and devotion in line with I-CARE program which inspires all employees to go the extra mile and exceed customer's expectations through memorable initiatives.

On par with Aftersales Group's unforgettable appreciation event is the service facility of Chevrolet & Cadillac Alghanim which continues to elevate its customer relations and car sales and services to new levels. The service facility aims to offer a completely satisfying experience from the moment customers steps in until the day they drive off to a



thrilling destination. Performed by professionally trained service advisors, customers can expect a professional, detailed checkup that includes a thorough inspection on all aspects related to car safety such as wipers, brakes, engine and oil, all at no additional

cost for customers. Once the checkup has been performed, customers will receive an exhaustive report detailing the condition of the car, the required maintenance and pricing. Not to mention the customer-friendly service contracts that avail to customers a

variety of flexible payment options and plans, as well as plenty of service benefits and perks all year long.

It's also worth mentioning that Yusuf A Alghanim & Sons Service Facility in Shuwaikh is considered the biggest and most advanced automotive service center in the world, with 73,000 sqm of built up area, servicing 1,000 vehicles every day. Throughout the facility, advanced technology is harnessed to provide customers high-quality and efficient service, including a team of highly trained technicians whose goal is to provide necessary advice and support as well as reliable and cost-effective operation of customers' vehicles.

The facility also includes a state-of-the-art paint and body shop that provides factory finish gloss and quality when it comes to refinishing customers' vehicles. Supported by body-and-paint specialists and modern equipment, the shop offers a variety of services that includes paint-less dent removal, custom paint and customization, sunroof installations, upholstery repairs and replacement, and many more. Chevrolet & Cadillac Alghanim - Aftersales Group encourages customers to visit any of its strategically located service centers as soon as possible as to avoid any potential malfunction that may occur on the road.

AL TIJARI ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF AL NAJMA ACCOUNT

KUWAIT: Commercial Bank of Kuwait held the Al Najma Account daily draw on 12th February 2017. The draw was held under the supervision of the Ministry of Commerce & Industry represented by Mr. Abdulaziz Ashkanani.

The winners of the Al Najma Daily Draw are:

Hussain Hasan Haidar Jamal KD 7000/-
Sana Naeem Naem Akthar KD 7000/-
Jenan Hassan Mohammed Hassan KD 7000/-

Mahmoud Mohamad AlMahdi Abdullah KD 7000/-
Abdullah Saqer Rashid Abdullah 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.

NREC SIGNS \$101M LOAN FACILITY WITH AGILITY INVESTMENT HOLDING

KUWAIT: National Real Estate Company (NREC), a leading real estate developer and investor with \$2bn of assets in the Middle East and North Africa, has signed a \$USD101.5million (KD 31 million) five year convertible loan with Agility Investment Holding Limited, a subsidiary of Agility. The loan facility has the option of converting into NREC shares prior to the maturity date.

The cash inflow will be used to strengthen NREC's liquidity and underpin the company's strategy of investing in its core markets. This includes supporting the completion of existing projects that are in early stages of delivery, and exploring new growth opportunities at a time when capital values are becoming more attractive.

NREC has a portfolio of iconic real estate developments across the Middle East and North Africa. The company is currently developing Reem Mall - a landmark US\$1 billion retail and leisure destination in Abu Dhabi; and Grand Heights - a luxury residential development of 3.8 million square meters in Egypt.

The new loan facility will allow the company to finance projects and will benefit NREC shareholders as the company delivers on its commitments and assesses new growth opportunities. Commenting on the loan facility Sam Sidiqi, NREC's Group CEO said: "This initiative builds on the NREC's consistent and positive financial results during the last four years, and allows us to invest in a new chapter of growth."



KAMCO SPONSORS 'MAKER FAIR' EXHIBITION

KAMCO Investment Company announced its sponsorship of the "Maker fair" exhibition which opened on Thursday 9th February and continued till the 11th at Mishrif fair grounds. The event was held under the

patronage of HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and in the presence of Commerce and Industry Minister, Youth Minister Khalid Al-Roudhan, as part of the company strategy to support small and medium

projects, as well as gifted youth. Kamco participated in the officiating committee, which was formed on the sidelines of the exhibition to select the best skills among participants and exhibited projects.

HOW TO INVEST WITH \$5, \$50 OR \$100

NEW YORK: Investing isn't just for the rich. It is true that if you have lots of cash, you'll have lots of options on where to put it. But if you are just getting started and have just a minimal amount of money to work with - anywhere from \$5 to \$1,000 - you may have more choices than you might think. A few things to consider:

Should you be investing at all?

It's important to ask yourself first, should you be investing at this point in your life? There may be other things that take precedent, said Nick Holeman, a certified financial planner at Betterment. He suggests making sure first that you've paid off any high-interest debts, which he considers anything over 5 percent. A moderate portfolio can earn you roughly 6 to 9 percent, but that comes with a lot of ups and downs along the way. Paying off high-rate interest debt is a guaranteed way to improve your financial well-being. Take advantage of an employer's 401(k) matching contributions before looking to outside investments. The match alone greatly increases your contributions at the start. No other investment can offer that. Also, your contributions are tax-deductible and grow in a tax-sheltered account.

Set your intention

If you are in a position to invest freely, determine why you are doing it. There's no wrong answer. Maybe you want to speed up your savings for a house or perhaps you just want to try your hand at the stock market. It's important to be honest with yourself because it will help you set a timeline and risk threshold, said Ted Beck, CEO of the National Endowment for Financial Education.

He also suggests thinking about how much time you are willing to spend on homework. Some investments, a single stock, for example, require more research and upkeep than something like a mutual fund. If you want to understand some further basics on investing principles, consider checking out NEFE's "Money Basics" free educational course on investing.

Who to invest with

In most cases you are going to need a vehicle through which to make your investments. While you used to need a large chunk of cash to even open an account or work with a financial adviser, times have changed. Now there are many people vying for your business. Traditional firms such as Fidelity, Charles Schwab and Vanguard have some lower-priced

investment options these days for new investors. There are also many online firms targeting the lower-dollar amount crowd such as Betterment, Wealthfront, Stash and Acorn.

Betterment doesn't have a minimum balance requirement and Wealthfront has a \$500 minimum deposit. But both firms, known as robo-advisers, help determine what investments work best for you and manage them at a low cost.

There are also apps like Stash and Acorn, which allow you to invest and manage small amounts of money from your smartphone with similar support. There are perks to each: Stash charges a subscription fee of \$1 a month with no commission or trading fees (and new investors get their first three months free.) Acorn sets itself apart by investing your spare change, rounding up your purchases to make a series of micro-investments over time. So that \$3.25 latte on your debit card becomes a \$4 expense with 75 cents headed to an investment account. The important thing is to find a service you feel comfortable with, offers the investments you want and at a low cost.

What to invest in

Stocks, bonds, mutual funds: it's really up to you.

You have options at every price point, but experts will generally warn you away from starting with an individual stock as it eats up most of your small investment and leaves you with a lack of diversification. There are ways around that. Some firms will allow fractional share purchases, so you can create a more diversified portfolio. Or you can consider a Direct Stock Purchase Plan, known as DSPP, which allows you to buy a stock directly from a company or transfer agent, thereby avoiding commissions. Not all companies offer them.

Don't forget low-cost index funds, which track market benchmarks such as the S&P 500, or other mutual funds that offer mixes of investments. Exchange traded funds, or ETFs, are also popular. They trade like a stock but represent a basket of assets and often come with lower fees than a mutual fund. Whatever you choose, Holeman, of Betterment, suggests starting out slow. It can be gut-wrenching to watch the normal ups and downs for an investment, so try investing conservatively for a bit to get used to the process. And remember your biggest gains at this point come from regular contributions. The investment gains are just the icing on the cake. — AP

NISSAN REWARDS TOP EMPLOYEES AT ANNUAL REGIONAL SKILLS CONTEST

DUBAI: Nissan Middle East honored its top sales and service employees from across the region at its annual Regional

Skills Contest event held yesterday at IMG World in Dubai. The award ceremony comes as part of Nissan's ongoing

strategy to be the leader in providing the best customer service in the region and see over 2,500 Nissan

employees participating. The Japanese auto maker invests heavily in customer care and focuses on providing the highest standards of sales and after-sales service.

During the ceremony, Samir Cherfan explained how customer service lies at the very heart of Nissan operations. "Here in the Middle East, just as in all of Nissan's global markets, we focus on delivering the highest levels of customer service, giving customers an experience that goes beyond their expectations. In practice, this involves a major commitment to training Nissan staff and making sure that every aspect of our service is monitored and benchmarked. This helps to ensure that we provide an experience that is not only at par with our customer's expectations, but one that promotes loyalty to the Nissan brand."

The Nissan Regional Skills Contest, now in its 20th year, rewards employees that have shown exemplary performance over the course of the year. The Regional Skills Contest comprises four competitions for technicians, service advisors, sales and parts, with the objective of realizing their capabilities and advancing their skills. The awards span every aspect of the business - from knowledge of Nissan genuine parts to service advice to sales acumen to technical expertise.

Samir Cherfan was highly appreciative of the contest participants: "I have been greatly impressed and hugely encouraged by the skills and the commitment I have seen from the competition participants. At Nissan, we invest

in our own people in order to create a highly skilled and motivated workforce, capable of delivering a superlative experience for our customers. Based on what I have seen this year, I know we are making great progress towards our goal of providing the best customer experience in the automotive industry. I congratulate the category winners and pay tribute to all the participants for their excellence and efforts."

The oldest and most coveted category is Nissan Service Technical Excellence Competency Award (NIS-TEC), now in its 20th year. This year, the accolade was awarded to Ramesh Rajan from Al Babbain Co in Kuwait. "What a great thrill and honor to win this award," said Ramesh. "What's so gratifying is that it is other Nissan technical personnel who evaluate and judge my work. Naturally I'm pleased for the recognition, but much of the credit goes to Nissan and my team for putting me through such a comprehensive training program and supporting me everyday."

The first place under the Nissan Service Advisor Excellency Competency Award (NISAC) category was won by Atif Khan from Arabian Automobiles Co in Dubai and the winner of the Nissan Sales Executive Excellence Competency Award (NISEC) category went to Nergis Oncu from Nissan Otomotiv AS in Turkey. In addition, Jethin Alapatt Jose from Al Babbain Co in Kuwait was presented with the first place for the Nissan Parts Executive Excellence Competency Award (NIPCE).



NBK MOST VALUABLE BANKING BRAND IN KUWAIT WITH A VALUE OF US\$1.59BN

KUWAIT: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) was recognized for the 3rd time in a row as the most valuable banking brand in Kuwait in 2017 according to Brand Finance, the renowned brand valuation agency. NBK ranks among the Top Tier of the Most 500 Valuable Banking Brands in the world. According to Brand Finance, NBK's Brand value reached USD 1.59 billion, up 15% year-on-year. Also, NBK's brand rating is ranked AA, among the top in the region. This recognition reflects customers and shareholders' trust in NBK as well as the bank's strong reputation locally and regionally.

David Haigh, Brand Finance CEO, said: "NBK continues to demonstrate strong and consistent growth. For the third year in a row it is Kuwait's most valuable banking brand with a value of US\$1.59bn. Brand strength has also improved, reflecting NBK's commitment to its customers and to reinforcing brand equity. With profits remaining high and revenues growing, 2017 looks bright." After joining the 'billion dollar brands club', NBK has the potential to become

one of the world's top 100 banking brands too. In its home country, NBK is unrivalled. It has overtaken its competitors to become the nation's premier banking brand." Brand Finance's valuation assesses the dollar value of the reputation, image and intellectual property of the brand. It considers a number of relevant attributes



such as financial performance, revenue forecasts, growth rates, brand strength index, sustainability and analysts' insights, amongst others.

NBK continues to collectively enjoy the highest ratings from the three international rating agencies; Moody's, Fitch Ratings and Standard and Poor's. The Bank's ratings are supported by its high capitalization, prudent lending policies, and its disciplined approach to risk management, in addition to its highly recognized and very stable management team. In 2016, NBK was also named among Global Finance's list of the 50 safest banks in the world for the eleventh consecutive time.

NBK has the widest banking presence with more than 170 branches worldwide. NBK's international presence spans many of the world's leading financial centers including London, Paris, Geneva, New York and Singapore, as well as China (Shanghai). Meanwhile, regional coverage extends to Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Egypt, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Turkey.

SIXTH ANNUAL GCC FINANCIAL FORUM TO HOST PROMINENT GLOBAL AND REGIONAL SPEAKERS

MANAMA: Euromoney Conferences and the Bahrain Economic Development Board (EDB), yesterday announced a stellar line-up of leading international and regional industry experts to speak at the sixth annual GCC Financial Forum. The forum will reconvene in Bahrain's capital, Manama, on 27-28 February 2017. More than 600 high-level delegates will participate and discuss how the GCC region will fund its future.

Euromoney Conferences and the Bahrain Economic Development Board are honored to announce that His Excellency Shaikh Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Khalifa, Bahrain's Minister of Finance, will address the forum for the very first time. Once again delegates will have the unique opportunity to participate in an open 'town-hall' session with His Excellency Rasheed Mohammed Al Maraj, Governor of the Central Bank of Bahrain (CBB) - in what has now become one of the well-established highlights of the annual forum.

The illustrious line-up of speakers will include Francis Fukuyama, the world-renowned political commentator, futurist and author of The End of History and the Last Man, as well as Lord Adair Turner, chairman of the Institute for New Economic Thinking and former head of the UK's financial regulator, the FSA.

The forum audience will also hear from two of the regions' leading bank chief executives: Adel A. El Labban, chief executive of Ahli United Bank and Bassel Gamal, group chief executive of Qatar Islamic Bank (QIB). On the second day, keynote interviews will be held with Mahmood Hashim Al Kooheji, chief executive officer of Muntalakat, and Chris Skinner, a well-known fintech commentator and author.

Commenting on the announcement, Victoria Behn, Head of Middle East and Africa at Euromoney Conferences said: 'As GCC countries seek to reduce their dependence on oil revenues and to diversify their economies, the region's leaders are setting a new trajectory for the region's future development. At the height of this pivotal phase, we are proud to host such a diverse and high-caliber line-up of speakers who will share their experience and expertise. We believe the presentations, keynote interviews and panel discussions will provide our participants with valuable insights and ideas to enable them to find real solutions to the current challenges they face.' For further information and to view the 2017 agenda, please visit the Euromoney Conferences website: www.euromoney-conferences.com/gcc.



Francia Fukuyama



Khalid Al Rumaihi speaking at last year's event



Lord Adair Turner

conferences.com/gcc. Euromoney Conferences invites interested participants to join the debate and to voice their opinions on the conference themes on Twitter, using the hashtag #emGCC.

BOURSA KUWAIT CONCLUDES CONSULTATION ON TRADING RULES IPTM2

KUWAIT: Boursa Kuwait concluded its market-wide public consultation on the trading rules (IPTM2) draft which was posted on the company's website. The consultation ran from end of January until 9 February 2017. Boursa Kuwait launched the consultation exercise to collate all input received from stakeholders in order to incorporate it into the final version of the trading rules (IPTM2). This transparent approach allows stakeholders to engage directly with Boursa Kuwait by providing invaluable comments and perspectives that will further enhance the final document.

Khaled Abdulrazzaq AlKhaled, Boursa Kuwait Vice Chairman and CEO, addressed all participants in the consultation and said: "We would like to express our deepest gratitude for your

engagement and commitment to provide your opinions and views on the trading rules. This has enabled us to gauge sentiments on how far



this draft meets market needs and to also emphasize on accuracy when producing the final document.

"We are confident of all the feedback we gathered and we shall ensure that transparency and engagement remains at the center of our operations. We thank all those who participated for their trust and belief in Boursa Kuwait's vision." Boursa Kuwait was created by the Kuwaiti Government to bring positive change to the stock market by developing a wide pool of internal resources and expertise to create a modern stock exchange that operates to world class standards. This entails the development of investment tools, restructuring the market to increase its competitiveness, working to increase liquidity and attract investments.

BURGAN BANK NAMES 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. Muneera Abdullatif Muhammed Al Enzi
2. Anfal Jassem Ahmad Al Amer
3. Rana Mousa Othman Eissa
4. Mohammad Abdullah Ali
5. Ahmad Sameeh Ahmad Subaiti

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 becoming 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.



ABK ANNOUNCES FIRST WINNER OF 'UPDATE YOUR CIVIL ID' WEEKLY DRAWS

KUWAIT: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) held the first weekly 'Update your Civil ID' February promotion draws on Monday, 6th February, 2017 at the Bank's Head Office in the presence of a representative from the Ministry of Commerce. The promotion includes a draw for each week of February, with one person per draw winning an Apple iPhone7. The lucky winner for the first 'Update Your Civil ID' draw was Mohammad Mneef AlEnzi.

To enter, customers just need to insert their Civil IDs into an ATM at any ABK branch during February 2017 and update

their information. In addition to allowing customers to update their Civil ID details, ABK's ATMs also offer a range of other services including withdrawing and depositing money, requesting account balances and mini-statements, changing a PIN number and transferring funds to other ABK accounts. The next draw will be held today, where one new lucky winner will be announced. The campaign will end on 28th February, 2017. All winners will be contacted personally and a winners announcement will be made through the media.

GULF BANK NAMES WINNERS OF AL DANAH DAILY DRAWS

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank held its Al Danah daily draws yesterday announced the names of its winners for the week of 5 February - 9 February 2017. The Al Danah daily draws include draws each and every working day for two prizes of KD 1,000 per winner.

The winners were:

(Sunday 5/2): Ali Abdhussain Zadah, Faysal Abdullah Shaya Al-Shemmari
(Monday 6/2): Eid Mahdi Mutlaq Al-Aazmi, Abdulmohsen Ali Habeeb Al-Jadi
(Tuesday 7/2): Waleed Ali Ahmed Al-Najar, Abdulaziz Sami Ahmed Al-Mekhezeem
(Wednesday 8/2): Nabeel Ealia Mejdalani, Abdulmajeed Esmaeel Neamat Alla
(Thursday 9/2): Waleed Khaled Saleh Al-Seed, Badreya Ali Ahmad Al-Khodari
Gulf Bank's Al Danah 2017 draw lineup includes daily draws (2 winners per working day and each receive KD 1,000). Al Danah's 1st Quarterly draw for the prize of KD 2,000,000 will be held on 30 March, the 2nd

Quarterly draw for the prize of KD250,000 will be held on 29 June and the 3rd Quarterly Draw for the prize of KD 500,000 will be held on 28 September. The final Al Danah draw for 1 Million Kuwaiti Dinars will be held on 11 January, 2018 whereby the Al Danah Millionaire will be announced.

Al Danah also offers a number of unique services including: the Al Danah Deposit Only ATM card which helps account holders deposit their money at their convenience; as well as the Al Danah calculator to help customers calculate their chances of becoming an Al Danah winner. Gulf Bank's Al Danah account is

open to Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti residents of Kuwait. Customers who open an account and/or deposit more will enter the draw within two days. To take part in the Al Danah 2017 upcoming quarterly and yearly draws, customers must have an Al Danah account containing at least KD 200; customers can visit one of Gulf Bank's 56 branches, transfer on line, or call the Customer Contact Center on 1805805 for assistance and guidance.

HUAWEI TO BOOST ICT SKILLS OF KUWAITI YOUTH

KUWAIT: Huawei Technologies Kuwait announced last Monday the signing of a historic Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Ministry of State for Youth Affairs to advance the ICT skills of Kuwaiti youth as both parties share the common goal of helping the young generation succeed in a competitive environment. The MoU was signed by H.E. Sheikhha Al-Zain Sabah Al-Naser Al-Sabah, Under Secretary of the Ministry of State for Youth Affairs of Kuwait, and Mohammad Diab, Managing Director - Sales and Business Development at Huawei Technologies, Kuwait, during a formal ceremony at the Ministry of State for Youth Affairs on Feb 6, 2017.

The agreement paves the way for closer collaboration between Huawei Technologies Kuwait, a Chinese, multinational telecommunications equip-

ment and services provider and the fastest growing smartphone company in the world, and the Kuwaiti Government to boost ICT skills of students and open up new career opportunities for them. As part of the MOU, the Ministry of State for Youth Affairs and Huawei Technologies Kuwait will coordinate efforts around two of Huawei's flagship CSR programs, 'Seeds for the Future' and the local Information and Communications Technology Training Center launched in Kuwait in Oct 2016.

Both programs reflect Huawei Technologies Kuwait's long-term commitment to the country, where it has seen remarkable growth in the last years. It will be the very first time that local talents partake in Huawei Technologies Kuwait's fully sponsored 'Seeds for the Future' program, first launched in 2008 and now rolled out international-

ly. The Ministry of State for Youth Affairs and Huawei Technologies Kuwait will jointly identify 15 exceptional young Kuwaiti talents from universities across the country to attend a two-week study trip to China, every year.

During the trip, the students immerse in the Chinese culture and language, learn first-hand about the latest cutting edge technologies and exchange knowledge in Huawei's own technology labs in Shenzhen's Headquarters. The Information and Communications Technology Training Center in Kuwait serves as a knowledge hub that provides free training programs to Kuwaiti students during a two-week period. By providing hands-on knowledge and professional Huawei Technologies Kuwait trainers, the newly established center aims at enabling youth to seek employment in the pri-

ivate sector, also in alignment with the government's vision.

Commenting on the MOU, Mohammad Diab said: 'Helping shape the future of youth is too important a responsibility for any partner to handle alone. That is why we are delighted to join efforts with the Ministry of State for Youth Affairs as a champion of the progress of the Kuwaiti youth. We are certain that this MoU will further enhance the collaborative ties that already exist between Huawei Technologies Kuwait and the Government of Kuwait and serve as an impetus for skills-building, knowledge transfers and career development.' As part of its global responsibility program, Huawei remains committed to creating opportunities for Kuwaiti youth, and ultimately contributing to building a better connected world.

KASPERSKY LAB ANNOUNCES AVAILABILITY OF KASPERSKYOS

KasperskyOS is a specialized operating system designed for embedded systems with strict cybersecurity requirements. By design, KasperskyOS significantly reduces the chances of undocumented functionality and thus mitigates the risk of cyberattacks. A massive undertaking that has taken Kaspersky Lab's best talent 15 years to create, KasperskyOS is now commercially available to OEMs, ODMs, systems integrators and software developers around the world. Key implementations of the operating system are tailored for the telecoms and automotive industries as well as critical infrastructure.

KasperskyOS introduces a secure-by-design environment for the ever-growing and increasingly attacked embedded systems and IoT devices. In a modern con-



nected world where rich IoT devices are being used by consumers, utilized in critical infrastructure, control many aspects of our everyday life, the demand for strong security approach is higher than ever. Based on a new, developed entirely in-house microkernel, the new Kaspersky Lab's solution utilizes well-established principles of security-driven development such as Separation Kernel, Reference Monitor, Multiple Independent Levels of Security and the Flux Advanced Security Kernel architecture.

KasperskyOS was designed with specific industries in mind and thus not only solves security issues, but also addresses organizational and business challenges related to secure application development for embedded systems. Eugene Kaspersky, Chairman and CEO of Kaspersky Lab, comments: "We understood from the very beginning that designing our own operating system would be a huge undertaking - a project that would require vast resources for many years before it could be commercialized."

Today we see clear demand for strengthened security in critical infrastructure, telecoms and the finance industry, as well as in both consumer and industrial IoT devices. In the beginning it was a risky investment that no other security vendor had the courage to conduct. But today, thanks to our efforts, we have a product that provides the maximum possible level of immunity against cyberattacks - a product

based on principles that can be verified independently".

The deployment flexibility

KasperskyOS is not a general-purpose operating system. It is designed for, and meets the requirements of, embedded devices and is aimed at three key industries: telecommunication, automotive and industrial. In addition, Kaspersky Lab is also developing deployment packages for the financial industry (security of POS-terminals and thin client PS) and the security enhancement of critical operations for general-purpose Linux-based systems and endpoints in particular. Ease of deployment is achieved with three packages implementing certain features of KasperskyOS.

KasperskyOS itself offers maximum security, although its requirements bring an extra challenge to a customer's development process. It can be used as base on which to build devices like network routers, IP cameras or IoT controllers. It addresses the needs of the telecom industry, critical infrastructure applications and the emerging development of the Internet of Things.

Kaspersky Secure Hypervisor at a slightly reduced cost, Kaspersky Secure Hypervisor makes it possible to execute applications with strict control over how they communicate with each other. It addresses the needs of telecoms, the automotive industry and can also be used for general security purposes, up to the secure operation of endpoints. Kaspersky Security System brings enforced security to conventional operating systems as well as other embedded and real-time OS with minimal development overheads.

Andrey Nikishin, Head of Future Technologies Business Development, comments: "There is no such thing as 100% security, but KasperskyOS guarantees our customers the first 99%. Technically speaking, in a really complex environment, attempts to inject a certain code in our system cannot be successful. Our advantage is that, since any malicious operation is undocumented by the security policy, being an integral part of any application, the payload will never be executed. KasperskyOS is therefore immune from the typical cyberthreat agenda of today."

Availability

KasperskyOS is available for OEMs, ODMs, systems integrators and software developers around the world. Successful projects have already been conducted with Russia's system integrator Kraftway (secure network router), SYSGO (strengthened security for PikeOS real-time operating system with Kaspersky Security System) and European systems integrator BE.services (embedding KasperskyOS technology in specialized Programmable Logic Controllers).

As a unique project, that is tailored for every customer, the pricing of KasperskyOS varies depending on requirements. More information about KasperskyOS, Kaspersky Secure Hypervisor and Kaspersky Security System, as well as contact information for potential customers is available on a dedicated website. Technical background information is available in this detailed article at Securelist.com.

SOMETIMES IT'S BEST TO AVOID CUPID'S ARROW

Valentine's Day is fast-approaching and the story goes that if Cupid hits you with his golden arrow you'll fall madly in love. And who doesn't want to fall madly in love? But there are other actors taking aim at you on Valentine's Day whose arrows you need to avoid as the outcomes aren't nearly as desirable. Think back to early Feb 2016, when many online florists experienced a surge in traffic that wasn't due simply to a rush to buy flowers. Dozens of florists were hit by targeted DDoS attacks during their busiest time of the year, causing problems for some and knocking others offline who were asked to pay a ransom before they could resume operations.

It's fairly typical for bad actors to escalate extortion-based campaigns during seasonal events when the stakes for targets are high. Looking to profit with minimal investment, attackers exploit known vulnerabilities as they attempt to breach systems. For example, the 2016 Valentine's Day DDoS attacks used Shellshock, a critical vulnerability that's present in Linux, UNIX and Mac OS X that had been discovered more than a year earlier. Of course, online florists are not alone when it comes to being targeted by cyber criminals.

Different times of the year and major news events can trigger a surge in attacks aimed at particular industries and geographies.

Organizations need to understand their threat model and apply security processes as appropriate. For example, here are 10 things to do to mitigate the risk of extortion-based attacks. Address vulnerabilities. Patching and proper configuration is an important part of your defense strategy. Failing to patch and misconfiguration opens the door wide for adversaries. Gaining awareness of the most commonly exploited vulnerabilities helps to prioritize patching and reconfiguration procedures.



Alastair Paterson, CEO and Co-Founder of Digital Shadows

Educate users. Provide awareness and training on the threat of extortion-based attacks, how they may be delivered, how to avoid becoming a victim, and how to report suspected phishing attempts. This training also should include the risks associated with password reuse. Regularly backup data. Use cloud-based or physical backups and verify their integrity. Ensure that backups are remote from the main corporate network and machines they are backing up. Separate data. Categorize data based on organizational value and then physical or logical separation of networks can be created for different business functions.

Manage the use of privileged accounts. Ensure the principal of least privilege is implemented not just for data but also for file, directory and network share permissions. Manage passwords. Implement an enterprise password management solution - not only for secure storage and sharing but also strong password creation and diversity. Ensure that you have an emergency password reset process in place. Make sure that all of the users' accounts are included, not just Microsoft Active Directory accounts.

Authenticate users. Implement multi-factor authentication for external facing corporate services like Microsoft Outlook Web Access, and Secure Sockets Layer Virtual

Private Networks, as well as for software-as-a-service offerings like Google Applications, Office365 and Salesforce. Develop a response playbook. Developing a response playbook in the midst of an attack that has taken your critical services offline is a less than ideal situation. Establish internal processes for mitigation, recovery and external communication. Be proactive so that you can fully vet the playbook with all affected stakeholders.

Build out your threat model. Understand the threat actors targeting your industry and geography and monitor which tools they are using. This will allow you to prioritize security spending based on threats specific to you and keep abreast of their latest tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs). Prioritize the services that must be available and confirm executive buy-in for protection/mitigations.

Gain this buy-in by communicating the losses incurred for downtime. How much will one hour of downtime cost you? How does that line up against the cost of protection? Threat actors will continue to take advantage of events to launch attacks, but you can avoid their arrows this Valentine's Day. By being aware of how their methods are evolving and your digital risk, you can take steps to proactively protect your data, infrastructure, employees and customers.

Scientific and Technical Awards



BEVERLY HILLS: Cheryl Boone Isaacs, President of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences stands with the winners of the Scientific and Technical Awards presented by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences at the Beverly Wilshire Hotel in Beverly Hills. —AFP

FROM PROTESTS TO PUSSY HATS, TRUMP RESISTANCE BREWS ONLINE

NEW YORK: The revolution may not be televised - but it apparently will be tweeted. And Facebooked. And Instagrammed. Not long after President Donald Trump temporarily barred most people from seven majority Muslim countries from entering the US, social activist Dex Torricke-Barton took to Facebook. "I'm thinking of organizing a rally," he posted. Within a few hours, more than 1,000 people expressed interest.

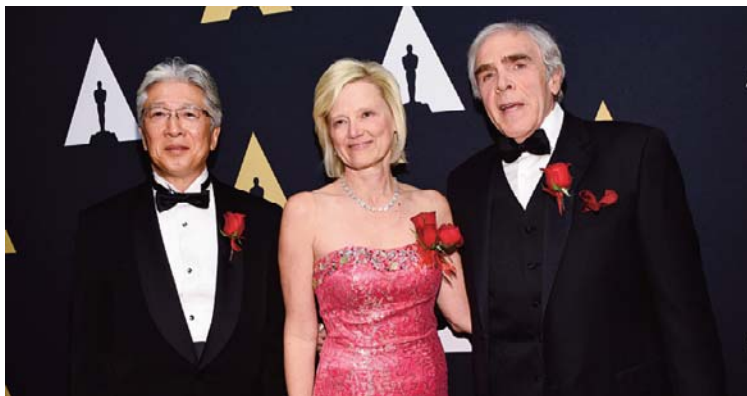
The resulting protest a week later, in front of San Francisco's City Hall, drew thousands more. Torricke-Barton is far from alone. From organizing protests on the fly to raising money for refugee and immigrant rights groups, people have been using social media to fuel the resistance against Trump in ways their organizing predecessors from the 1960s could have hardly imagined.

Roots of protest

In Queens, New York, for instance, a group of 27 women met up to write postcards to their state and local representatives during a "Postcard-Writing Happy Hour" organized through Facebook. And on Ravelry, the social

network for knitters and crocheters, members have been trading advice and knitting patterns for the pink "pussy hats" that emerged as a symbol during the Women's March on Washington and similar protests elsewhere after Trump's inauguration. "This is an incredible project because it's mixed between digital and physical," says Jayna Zweiman, one of the founders of the Pussyhat Project. "We harnessed social media for good."

In 1969, activists planned massive marches around the US to protests the war in Vietnam. The protests, called the Moratorium, drew millions of people around the world. But "it took months, a lot of effort, a national office of the organization to get it off the ground," says Christopher Huff, a Beacon College professor focused on social movements of the 1960s. "The women's march was achieved at a much larger scale at a fraction of the time." This immediacy is both an asset and a disadvantage. While online networks help people rally quickly around a cause, Huff says, they don't necessarily help people grasp the "long-term effort" required to sustain a movement.—AP



(L-R) Toshihiki Ohnishi, Kim Snyder and Bob Harvey attend the Scientific and Technical Awards in Beverly Hills, California.



(L-R) Jeff Cruts, Todd Minobe, Scott Oshita and Mark Rappaport attend the Scientific and Technical Awards in Beverly Hills, California.



(L-R) Leslie Mann, Cheryl Boone Isaacs, John Cho and Dawn Hudson attend the Scientific and Technical Awards in Beverly Hills, California.

‘CATASTROPHIC’ FIRE CONDITIONS SCORCH AUSTRALIA

SYDNEY: Eastern Australia endured severe “off the scale” fire conditions yesterday amid a record-breaking heatwave that sparked dire warnings from authorities. While bushfires are common in Australia’s arid summer, climate change has pushed up land and sea temperatures and led to more extremely hot days and severe fire seasons. “The conditions for Sunday are the worst possible conditions when it comes to fire danger ratings,” New South Wales (NSW) state Rural Fire Service Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons told reporters Friday.

“They are catastrophic, they are labelled catastrophic for a reason, they are rare, they are infrequent, and to put it simply, they are off the old conventional scale. “It’s not another summer’s day. It’s not another bad fire weather day. This is as bad as it gets in these circumstances,” Fitzsimmons said yesterday afternoon several homes may have been lost in bushfires across the state.

Some 2,500 firefighters were battling more than 80 blazes in NSW, with 32 “not contained”, the Rural Fire Service said. The organization added that a person from a fire at Boggabri, a small town in

northwestern NSW some 470 km from Sydney, was flown to the harbor city after suffering burns. Further north in Queensland, the Bureau of Meteorology said yesterday numerous February temperature records were being broken across the state as the mercury soared above 40 degrees Celsius. Temperature records were also breached across NSW on Saturday, the weather bureau said. Cooler conditions were forecast to come through later yesterday.

Australia has warmed by approximately 1.0 C since 1910, according to the biannual State of the Climate report from the Bureau of Meteorology and national science body CSIRO released in October. The number of days each year that post temperatures of more than 35C was increasing in recent decades except in northern Australia, the report said. Meanwhile, rainfall has reduced by 19 percent between May to July in southwestern Australia since 1970. “Black Saturday”, the worst firestorm in recent years, devastated the southern state of Victoria in 2009, razing thousands of homes and killing 173 people. — AFP



This screen-grab from video footage taken from a New South Wales (NSW) Rural Fire Service aircraft yesterday shows a bushfire near Leadville in New South Wales. — AFP



This photo taken on Feb 7, 2017 shows stranded rafts and pontoons near the shores of the Jablanicko artificial lake near the Bosnian town of Konjic. — AFP

RACE FOR ELECTRICITY EMPTIES BOSNIA LAKE

KONJIC, Bosnia and Herzegovina: Bosnia’s fisheries watchdog gazes over an expanse of sand and mud, a space once occupied by a large thriving lake but recently emptied in the race for electricity production. “I have nothing to do here anymore,” said Emir Alebic by the greyish valley that was once the site of the artificially formed, 30-km long Jablanica lake on the Neretva river in southern Bosnia. The water level should soon begin to rise again, with snow on the surrounding mountains melting and rains starting to fall after a prolonged period of drought.

But fishermen and environmental groups say the damage has been done, with stocks of “more than two million” fish, such as perch and trout, “devastated” by the sudden drop in water about 40 days ago. They blame the national power firm Elektroprivreda BiH, which manages the Jablanica dam and the hydroelectric power station about 30 km west of the lake. “This is an ecological catastrophe,” said Hrabren Kapic, head of a local fishing association, the valley below him littered with dozens of stranded boats. He admitted that the lake’s water level had dropped in previous years — “but never like this”.

Ecosystem in crisis

The power firm said the drop in the lake’s level was caused by “periods of exceptional

drought” between September and January as well as very low temperatures last month which increased electricity consumption. “Despite these circumstances, the emptying of the lake was done in line with the rules and with a single objective, to meet the system’s needs,” it said in a statement. But conservationists remain fearful for the future of the lake, for which about 700 fishing permits were issued last year.

“An entire ecosystem was brought into question,” said Amir Variscic from Bosnian environmental group Zeleni-Neretva. According to local NGOs, some fish have been trapped and remained buried in swampy areas, while others have migrated towards the dam. They fear the fish will not return as the microorganisms they eat have also suffered from the near disappearance of the water. According to Variscic, the lake’s level drops every year by around a third, but this time it has almost dried up.

He accused the national power company of an “exacerbated desire” to “transform each litre of water into a kilowatt, in a period of exceptionally high electricity prices in the market due to a bad hydrological situation in the region”. Bosnia, a poor Balkan country whose industry has still not recovered from its devastating 1990s civil war, has one source of wealth — its rivers. The country is one of the few exporters of electricity

in southeastern Europe, bringing 165 million euros (\$176 million) into the state’s coffers last year. But officials say only 30 percent of Bosnia’s hydroelectric potential is being used.

‘Extreme situation’

Following complaints from fishing groups, the authorities have begun an on-site investigation. And Elektroprivreda BiH ordered its own report, asking a biology professor at Sarajevo University, Samir Djug, to look into possible damage. Djug warned of an “extreme situation” due to “extreme dryness” but said water life was adaptable and that the fish “will return if they are alive”. “This situation could have negative effects on biodiversity, especially fish, but also other animals.”

Zoran Mateljak, who represents the World Wildlife Fund in Bosnia, says the threats go well beyond Jablanica. He is worried about plans to build other hydroelectric facilities including “hundreds of mini power plants” across the country. He is particularly concerned about a huge project slated in the southeast, which he says would endanger the Hutovo Blato nature reserve, home to about 160 bird species and a winter shelter for many migratory birds. “It would mean total disaster” for the park, he said. — AFP

DR CONGO’S STREET FOOD MUSHROOMS AMID CRISIS

KINSHASA: In crisis-hit Democratic Republic of Congo, people in the capital increasingly turn to street hawkers to feed themselves and their families cheaply, but the makeshift option is often not a hygienic one. From civil servants and students, to construction workers and parents with their children, hungry Kinshasa residents depend on so-called malewas, or street food sellers, whose numbers have grown as the economy has worsened. “Here, I eat my fill for under 2,000 Congolese francs (\$1.1),” said Jose Bangamba, a 29-year-old taxi driver.

Leaning over a plate of chicken in gravy, which cost him just 1,500 francs, Bangamba also tucked into a side dish of fufu, a traditional recipe made from cassava flour that cost 400 francs. “In a normal restaurant, this meal would have cost me at least 10 times more. How can I possibly afford that?” he said. DR Congo has been mired in political and economic unrest for years. A fall in commodity prices that hit the country’s mining industry, leading to mass job losses, sparked a crisis in mid-2015.

The slump in production left the government without a much-needed source of revenue. The situation has been further compounded by high inflation after a fall in the Congolese currency. Since December, the political crisis has also worsened, with President Joseph Kabila refusing to step down despite his mandate coming to an end. Though the vast central African nation is rich in mineral wealth and water, it has long been one of the continent’s poorest nations and rising unrest has only deepened the economic malaise.

Making ends meet

For the past year and a half, malewas have become massively popular in Kinshasa, home to 10 million people. And it isn’t just those looking for a cheap meal who are turning to malewas; it is also housewives like Marie Aloka Hioma, who have started

selling hot food in front of their Kinshasa homes. Better known as Mama Marie, the 48-year-old mother of eight said she set up her malewa six years ago “to pay my children’s school fees”.

Customers for her malewa stand in line from 5:00 am every day, waiting to be served from pots of fish, chicken, meat and pondou, a local dish made from cassava leaves and vegetables. Mama Marie, who serves all the customers herself, does not know how many people come in a day. “A hundred or so, I guess,” she says, standing under a parasol by her makeshift food stand, stuffing the cash she makes into a handbag slung over her shoulder. For the past seven years, Mama Annie has been running a similar business just a couple of streets away. Most of her profit, she says, goes “to my children, to buy them shoes” and clothes.

‘Public health problem’

Papi Bula Mbemba, a 49-year-old regular who works for a pest control company, comes to Mama Annie’s every day. “You get the best prices here. Malewas really do offer the people of Kinshasa the solution they need,” he said. But these cheap meals often come at the cost of hygiene. Bangamba, the taxi driver, says some malewa owners use unwashed plates and glasses. Customers also run the risk of diseases such as typhoid, diarrhoea and even cholera as malewas are often located near rubbish dumps and polluted water tanks.

“Worsening living conditions force the population to eat what they can afford,” said Benjamin Kewngani Mavard, director of DR Congo’s public hygiene service. Warning of a “growing public health problem”, Kewngani conceded it would be “impossible” to shut down all the malewas. “We have to improve them,” he said, adding that authorities would seek to raise street food vendors’ hygiene awareness. — AFP



NAPPYTAW, Myanmar: In this Saturday photo, a bird flies by flowers of an orange silk cotton tree, which is popular in central Myanmar for its edible flowers. Myanmar’s summer season starts in March and ends in early June. — AP

N ZEALAND BEACHED WHALE CRISIS ‘OVER’, SAY RESCUERS

FAREWELL SPIT, New Zealand: Whale rescuers were cautiously optimistic yesterday that the current wave of mass beachings in New Zealand was over, after hundreds of the creatures died after being stranded ashore. The crisis began early Friday when a pod of 416 whales were found stranded on the 26-km Farewell Spit, with hundreds more following them over the weekend. The shallow, sweeping spit is believed to interfere with the whales’ navigation systems and is a regular scene of mass strandings.

As low tide approached early yesterday evening, around 300 pilot whales were heading out of Golden Bay in the northwest of the South Island and swimming towards the deep-water safety of Cook Strait. “It’s good news. The pod is swimming well away,” Department of Conservation regional conservation manager Andrew Lamason told AFP. “They’re the exact words,” he added, when asked if he was cautiously optimistic the crisis was over. “We’ve pulled our boats out of the water.”

The news came as a relief for the hundreds of exhausted volunteers, who had spent three days comforting the stranded animals and keeping them cool while waiting to refloat them on the high tide. Late Saturday afternoon, when rescuers believed the situation to be under control, about 240 whales moved around a small flotilla of boats and a human chain of rescuers standing in the

water trying to herd them away. They beached themselves about three kilometres from the Friday stranding.

By yesterday morning most had managed to refloat themselves and at high tide volunteer workers were able to get the remaining

animals back into the water where boats were used to guide them towards the other survivors. Many volunteers gathered on the



FAREWELL SPIT, New Zealand: This picture taken on Saturday shows volunteers caring for pilot whales during a mass stranding. — AFP

shoreline broke down in tears on hearing the latest strandings appeared to be over. Louisa Hawkes, from the environmental group Project Jonah which has been assisting with the rescue, told them it was only natural they would feel emotionally drained. “The stranding might be winding down but the emotions are still quite close to the surface. There have been some really hard moments,” she said.

Lamason estimated 666 whales beached themselves “but that will get the conspiracy theorists going”, he added, referring to the figure which is the reputed Biblical reference to the devil. There were references on social media in New Zealand suggesting the strandings and a 5.2-magnitude earthquake early Sunday near Kaikoura, which was severely damaged by a 7.8 earthquake in November, may have been linked.

Similar questions were raised in 2011 when 107 pilot whales beached themselves on Stewart Island off the coast of the New Zealand mainland, just two days before 185 people were killed in the Christchurch earthquake. However, scientists have dismissed this theory. “There’s no strong evidence that strandings are linked to earthquake events. For marine mammals these events are mostly inconsequential to them,” Auckland University marine biologist Rochelle Constantine told the New Zealand Herald. “I think these whales just make a mistake.” — AFP



CLEVELAND CLINIC: A STATE-OF-THE-ART FACILITY IN THE REGION

By Abdellatif Sharaa

When a person falls ill, his/her concern is how and where the treatment will be, and by whom. The scene of doctors and nurses moving around and tubes and wires being inserted and removed may complicate conditions. But this is now changing with modern technology and highly developed approaches by man and machine.

I recently had the opportunity to visit Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi, and felt that the facility is a source of comfort and a place of relaxation for anyone who seeks recovery from a medical condition. The hospital has an atmosphere and an environment that creates a sense of satisfaction in the minds of patients and their family members. The human element's approach sends messages of confidence, making the patient feel that he is really in good hands, which makes it much easier to recover.

The magnificently-designed facility surrounded by landscaped areas has welcomed more than 12,000 patients since its opening in 2014 from 60 different countries, Chief Executive Officer, Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi, Tomislav Mihaljevic, MD said. "All members of the hospital team and every cutting-edge technology in the facility revolve around the patient," he said.

Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi is associated with Mubadala's network of world class healthcare providers and is linked with the prestigious US-based Cleveland Clinic. The clinic by far is not a "general hospital" - rather it is a "multispecialty facility". I was impressed with Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi's philosophy of naming its treatment centers as institutes that provide education and training for local physicians for heart, vascular, neurological and digestive diseases and ophthalmology, respiratory and critical care.

Cleveland Clinic is known to be the number one heart care facility in the world, and the

number two facility overall. The building has five medical floors with a capacity of 364 beds, which can later be increased to 490 beds. It has three diagnostic and treatment levels, with 13 floors of critical inpatient units. The rooms in the VIP section provide an opportunity for patients' relatives to spend time with them and sleep in an adjacent room to give the patient peace of mind and make him as comfortable as possible.

Excellence

"We are the first truly American hospital outside the United States of America, as patients used to travel to the US for treatment, but we have brought clinical care excellence to their doorstep," Mihaljevic said. He added that they were here to complement the existing healthcare system as well as to cultivate a sustainable change in healthcare. He said a patient's case is evaluated by a number of doctors of various specialties. "What is unique about Cleveland Clinic is the way we care for our patients. We recognize that many diseases today need a group approach and you have to have more than one doctor to take care of it."

Cleveland Clinic introduced robotic heart surgeries, and actually when we visited the hospital, Dr Mihaljevic performed a heart valve repair procedure using the robot, before he was able to speak with us. Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi has a total of 3,000 employees both clinical and administrative with 255 physicians. Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi has had over 261,500 outpatient visits and witnessed over 12,000 surgeries and procedures. It has also received more than 5,000 international patients from 60 countries as it continues to grow.

A press release published in Jan 2017 said Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi and Healthpoint, both part of Mubadala's network of world-class healthcare providers, performed two landmark surgeries in the field of pediatric eye care for the first time in Abu Dhabi, marking

the beginning of a new era in ophthalmologic healthcare for the children of the nation. The influx of leading ophthalmology experts at Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi's Eye Institute, together with Healthpoint's specialization and expertise in pediatric care, has enabled surgical treatment of a complex case of infantile glaucoma, a clinical first in Abu Dhabi, as well as surgical correction of complex case of misaligned eyes (strabismus).

The first surgical procedure involved glaucoma valve implantation in the affected eye of a 7-month-old Emirati patient suffering from an advanced secondary form of infantile glaucoma. The second procedure involved combined horizontal and vertical extra-ocular muscle surgery in both eyes of a 4-year-old Emirati patient with misaligned eyes since infancy.

Glaucoma

Glaucoma is damage to the optic nerve from increased eye pressure. Complex infantile forms are relatively more common on the Arabian Peninsula than in other regions of the world, due to a higher incidence of genetic mutation. The incidence of primary infantile glaucoma is estimated to be one in 10,000 to 20,000 in Western countries, while in the Gulf region it is approximately four times higher at one in 2,500. Infantile forms that are not successfully treated during infancy result in permanent irreversible eye damage and blindness.

Strabismus, or misaligned eyes, occurs in up to 4 percent of the population. The more common form is horizontal, which is also more straightforward to treat. Combined horizontal and vertical forms are less common and require a more advanced surgical approach. If not treated during childhood, binocular vision (the ability to focus with both eyes together) does not develop normally.

Both surgical procedures were performed by Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi's Dr Arif Khan,



Staff Physician, Pediatric Ophthalmology, Eye Institute, in partnership with Healthpoint's team of pediatric experts, including pediatric general practitioners and anesthesiologists who provide specialized postoperative care for children. The combined care from both facilities permitted successful treatment as well as smooth recovery for both patients.

"Young Emirati children with complex glaucoma or strabismus have in the past been sent overseas for their care; however, they now can receive state-of-the art treatment in the comfort of their home environment. In fact, we are increasingly treating children referred from surrounding countries for ophthalmic care. At Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi we are excited to offer the specialized expertise and advanced technology to treat complex cases in very young children and to collaborate with Healthpoint when surgery is required," said Dr Rakesh Sun, Chief of Staff and Chief of Thoracic & Cardiovascular Surgery at Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi.

Pediatrics

"Pediatrics is a key specialism at Healthpoint and we have the facilities,

resources and services needed to serve children's treatment needs without the need for them to travel overseas. We are constantly working toward filling the gaps in the market and expanding our pediatric capabilities. We are happy to grow our service offering by sharing our specialist facilities and collaborating with Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi to provide new treatment options to patients," said Dr Nader Darwich, Medical Director, Healthpoint.

"Modern healthcare demands new, multi-specialty solutions and innovative thinking. The positive results of these two surgeries are a testament to the comprehensive care offered by Mubadala's network of healthcare providers for the people of the UAE and signifies a leap forward toward the UAE's vision of providing exceptional healthcare to our residents," commented Suhail Al-Ansari, Executive Director of Mubadala Healthcare, Vice Chairman of Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi and Chairman of Healthpoint. "It is a dawn of a new age in the field of pediatric eye care, where expert collaboration across our network between eye and children specialists is allowing the treatment of complex conditions such as pediatric glaucoma within the country, become a reality within one seamless patient experience that is leading to improved outcomes.

One thing I cannot let go without mentioning is the food at the hospital. The hospital kitchen is manned by highly experienced chefs who have spent years in the business, and offer healthy dishes and diets to both patients and staff. The kitchen operates 24 hours a day to care for patients' desired food. Valetin Bischoff, Manager, Production Quality, emphasized that "Cleveland Hospital Abu Dhabi's kitchen has no deep frying devices, while salt and sugar are used sparingly". He added that the "hospital's dedicated food services team offers an innovative service that customizes each patient's meal plan according to their individual health needs".

I can vouch that the food we were served at lunch was simply delicious!



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Kuwait Times
248 33 199

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LET LOVE FLOURISH AT JUMEIRAH MESSILAH BEACH HOTEL & SPA



Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel & Spa, Kuwait's idyllic resort, invites couples to celebrate this Valentine's Day with some of the most enchanting personalized dinner experiences in its various dining outlets.

In Olio restaurant, Italian Chef Rosario presents the Evening in Venice menu with its enticing dishes such as the romantic heart-shaped risotto. The Steakhouse Pepper offers unforgettable fine cuts from buttery peppered beef tenderloin to lamb croquettes and a white chocolate sphere of passion fruit for dessert. At Salt Seafood & International restaurant, inspired cuisine of seafood bisques, honey-glazed salmon and oven-baked shrimp will stir any sweetheart's appetite within intimate ambiance. In Garden Cafe, Valentine's Day themed buffet presents tempting offerings and an atmosphere made to charm your significant other.

Couples seeking a candlelit dinner out can enjoy a dreamy dinner by the Sea in the private seaside Gazebo with its picture-perfect setting. For a private hideaway, couples can opt to enjoy heart-to-heart time in the Secret Garden. The cozy outdoor venue captures the mood perfectly amidst lush greenery and live violin music while enjoying a sumptuous five-course set menu or customized live barbecue.

The luxurious sanctuary of relaxation Talise Spa, also has it covered for Valentine's occasion. The Spa recently introduced a new line of NEOM Organics treatments from London guaranteed to make couples feel loved and pampered with a range of stimulating oil scents. A different kind of indulgence can be experienced with the new Spa Suite menu in the Himalayan and Oriental suites ideal for couples.



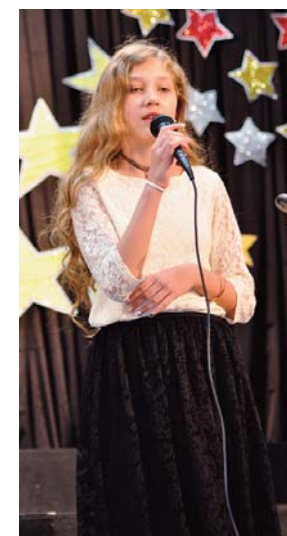
KPBD TO CARRY OUT NEXT BLOOD DRIVE



Kuwait Pakistani Blood Donors (KPBD), an NGO based in State of Kuwait carried out their 1st successful blood donation drive on 9 June 2016 in co-ordination with Central Blood Bank of Kuwait. The event was highly acknowledged by the community as well as Central Blood Bank as it was targeted at not only bringing awareness in society but also to donate blood in a move to contribute our blood in continuous building of this nation who has been second home to expatriates and for also for those whose generations have lived here.

The success of previous event has encouraged KPBD to make another mark by conducting its 2nd blood donation

drive. In a move to facilitate the community, the event which is scheduled for 17th Feb 2017 will be carried out at the premises of Pakistan English School, Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh in co-ordination with Central Blood Bank of Kuwait who has generously agreed to setup complete facility in order to conduct this event. KPBD has dedicated this event to support cancer patients, in particular those who are suffering from blood cancer to let them know that the community is supporting them not only morally but also through their blood. KPBD is looking up to all communities in Kuwait to come forward on 17th Feb 2017 and donate blood as their contribution towards humanity.



KUWAIT NATIONAL ENGLISH SCHOOL CHOIR CONCERT

The Primary and Secondary Departments of Kuwait National English School held its annual Choir Concert on 4th February 2017, which was once again a resounding success. The one and a half hour program gave the assemblage of proud parents, fellow pupils and public a chance to sample some of the work undertaken over the past months by our talented pupils and the Music Department. Parents were entertained with solo items on the drums as well as recitals on the piano and violin by talented pupils from both departments. The event ended with the entire choir singing a medley of songs. The proud parents and audience thoroughly enjoyed the mornings Choir performances.



INDIAN EMBASSY PARTICIPATES IN HALA FESTIVAL

Hala Festival was inaugurated on 10 February 2017 with much zeal and enthusiasm at Salem Al-Mubarak Street, Salmiya. Hala Festival is being annually organized in Kuwait since February 1999, mainly to promote tourism and culture. The Festival offers

arts, sports, live carnival shows, entertainment events and display of vintage vehicles & motor-bikes during the month. Kuwaiti Ministries, Government institutions and some Embassies had put up their stalls during the event.

Indian Embassy also participated in the

Opening Ceremony. The Indian stall was exquisitely decorated with "Incredible India" posters and tourism material. India's Bohra Band (Burhani Guards) held the audience spellbound by their performances the whole day. Children from the Bohra community

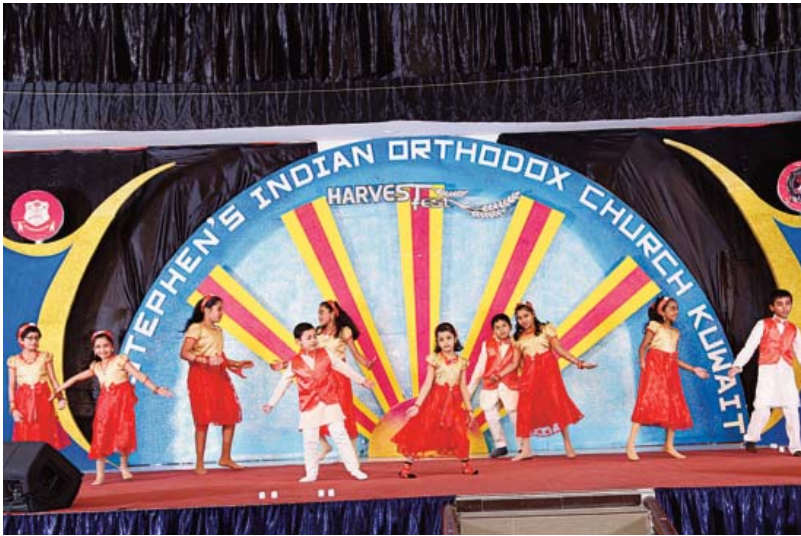
spread the message of importance of cleanliness in our daily lives by cleaning the surroundings during the event. The Opening Ceremony witnessed, inter alia, a parade in which children from various Kuwaiti schools, some Kuwaiti Ministries and government

agencies, Embassies etc. participated. India's Bohra Band (Burhani Guards) also took part in the parade. Many visitors, especially children took the opportunity to take photographs posing in front of the Embassy stall and highly enjoyed the event.



IWG BEGINS NATIONAL AND LIBERATION DAY CELEBRATIONS

The International Women Group (IWG) advisor, Narjis Al-Shatti said that as per its programs to mark celebrations of the National and Liberation Days of Kuwait, IWG organized a workshop on cooking Kuwaiti dishes in collaboration with Kuwaiti chef, Soad Al-Derbas. Many traditional Kuwaiti dishes were made like the famous Machbous with truffles.



ST STEPHENS INDIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH CELEBRATES HARVEST FESTIVAL 2017



The Harvest festival of St Stephens Indian Orthodox Church was held on 3rd February at Integrated Indian School, Abbasiya. The Public meeting was graced by His Grace Dr Yuhanon Mar Milithios, Metropolitan of Thrissur Diocese as chief guest. In his inaugural speech, he said that Harvest festival plays an important role in unifying people and bringing them together, especially in an era where, God and faith are privatized by religious monopolies. He also added that a society can be happy and content only if there is sharing and unity among the people along with God's blessings. The meeting was presided by the Vicar, Rev Fr Sanju John and the key note address was delivered by Thomas Chandy, MLA of Kuttan and constituency. Garshom International Award winner, Shri Manoj Mavelikkara was honored in the function.

Felicitation was done by KP Koshy, Administrator of NECK, Rev Fr Jacob Thomas- Associate Vicar of St Gregorios Maha Edavaka, Rev Georgy Abraham, Orthodox Sabha Managing

Committee members Shaji Abraham and Sabu T George, Parish Trustee VY Thomas, Secretary Jinu Thomas, Harvest festival general convener James George and Mathews Ommen. To commemorate the occasion, a Souvenir was released by His Grace Dr Yuhanon Mar Milithios.

The event started at 9:30 am with a variety of programs showcasing the spiritual, cultural and traditional values of Kerala, by yesterday the school students and members of other spiritual organizations. Food stalls serving home-made delicacies as well as fast food, Kid's corner, game stalls and various other entertainments were a part of the fest. The afternoon session was filled with 'Symphony 2017', a music concert led by popular play back singer Unni Menon who was supported by famous singer/violinist Roopa Revathy. Key board player Vineesh Calicut and the talented singer of Kuwait Binoy KJ were also a part of the show. The full day program was well organized and was enjoyed by thousands from all walks of life.



ANIMAL
PLANET HD

00:50 Gator Boys
01:45 Great Animal Escapes
06:49 Swimming With Monsters:
Steve Backshall
07:36 Going Ape
08:00 Going Ape
08:25 Groomer Has It
09:15 Deadliest Snakes Of South
Africa
10:10 Great Animal Escapes
10:35 Great Animal Escapes
11:05 Tanked
12:55 Groomer Has It
12:55 Bondi Vet
13:50 Deadliest Snakes Of South
Africa
14:45 Gator Boys
15:40 Great Animal Escapes
16:05 Great Animal Escapes
16:35 Tanked
17:30 River Monsters
18:25 Dr. Jeff: Rocky Mountain Vet
19:20 Dr. Dee: Alaska Vet
20:15 Tanked
21:10 Call Of The Wildman
21:35 Call Of The Wildman
22:05 Dr. Jeff: Rocky Mountain Vet
23:00 Dr. Dee: Alaska Vet
23:55 Gator Boys

crime
& investigation
network

00:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
01:00 The Haunting Of...
02:00 Stalked By A Ghost
03:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
04:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
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
10:30 It Takes A Killer
11:00 Crimes That Shook Australia
15:00 Evil Up Close
16:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
17:00 It Takes A Killer
17:30 It Takes A Killer
18:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
19:00 The First 48
20:00 The First 48
21:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
22:00 Evil Up Close
23:00 Homicide Hunter

Discovery
Family

00:05 Destroyed In Seconds
00:30 Nextworld
01:20 Science Of The Movies
02:10 Dirty Jobs
03:00 Dirty Jobs
03:50 Ultimate Survival
04:40 Ultimate Survival
05:40 Ultimate Survival
06:20 How It's Made
06:40 How It's Made
07:00 Kids vs Film
07:25 Bear Grylls Survival School
07:50 Too Cute! Pint-Sized
08:40 How It's Made
09:05 How It's Made
09:30 Science Of The Movies
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 Mythbusters

18:30 How Do They Do It?
19:20 Running Wild With Bear
Grylls
20:10 Auction Hunters
21:00 Gold Rush
21:50 Everest Rescue
22:40 Killing Fields

EHD

00:00 Famously Single
01:00 Famously Single
02:00 Live From The Red Carpet
04:00 Botched
04:30 Botched
05:30 Botched
06:00 Keeping Up With The
Kardashians
06:55 E! News
07:25 Keeping Up With The
Kardashians
10:10 E! News
10:40 Celebrity Style Story
11:10 Mariah's World
12:10 Mariah's World
13:05 Live From The Red Carpet
15:00 E! News
15:30 Celebrity Style Story
16:00 Rob & Chyna
17:00 Live From The Red Carpet
19:00 Live From The Red Carpet
21:00 So Cosmo
22:00 Hollywood & Football
23:00 E! News
23:15 Live From The Red Carpet

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
16:25 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 Hunting Hitler
23:30 American Pickers

food
network

00:00 Private Chef
01:00 Patricia Heaton Parties

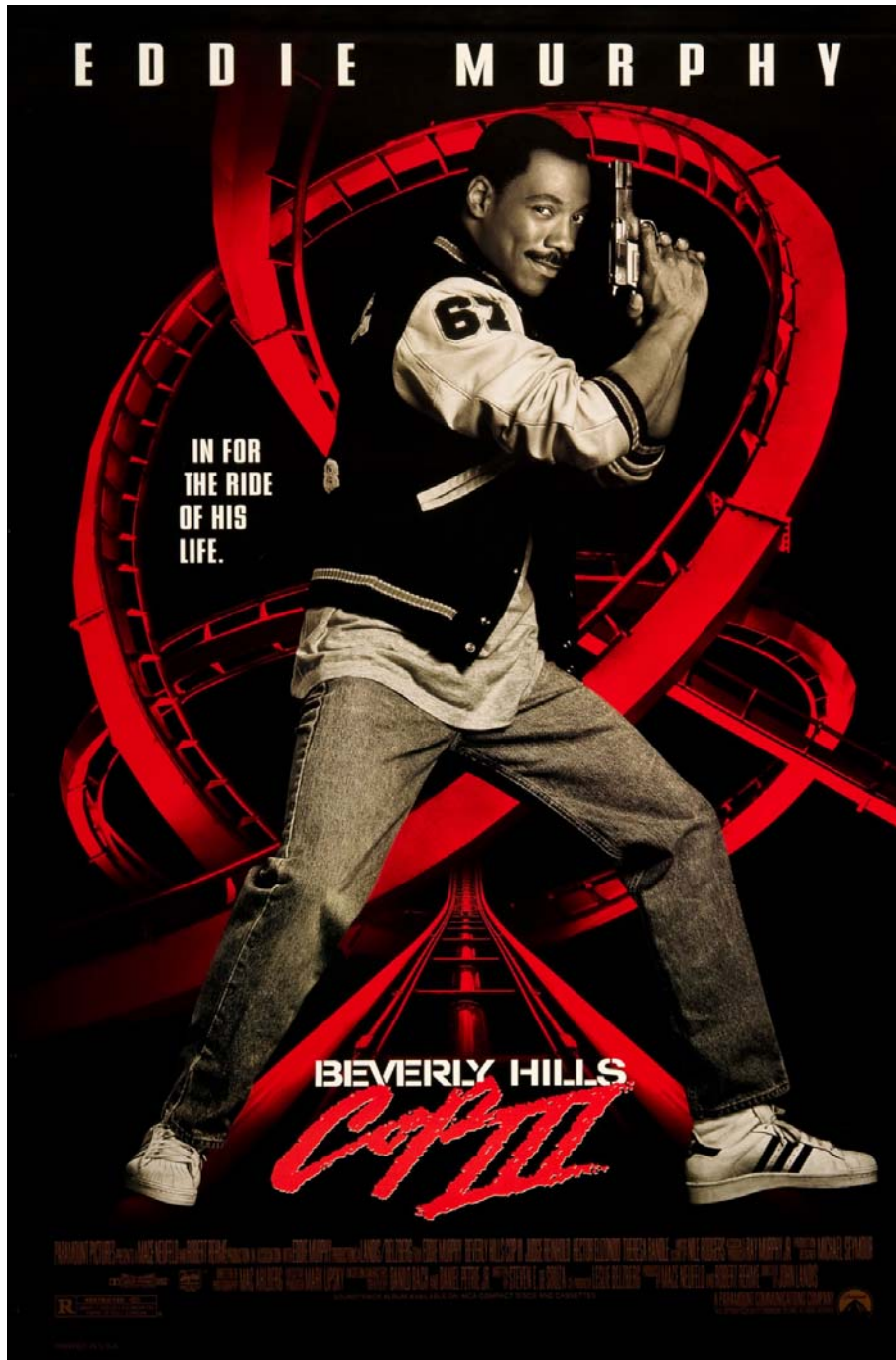
Disney
CHANNEL HD

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
07:50 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 Bunk'd
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
23:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A
Teenage Witch

00:20 Henry Hugglemonster
00:35 The Hive
00:45 Loopidoo
01:00 Henry Hugglemonster
01:15 Calimero
01:30 Art Attack
01:55 Zou
02:05 Loopidoo
02:20 Henry Hugglemonster
02:35 Calimero
02:50 Zou
03:05 Art Attack
03:30 The Hive
03:40 Loopidoo
03:55 Henry Hugglemonster
04:10 Art Attack
04:35 Loopidoo

Disney
JUNIOR

00:20 Henry Hugglemonster
00:35 The Hive
00:45 Loopidoo
01:00 Henry Hugglemonster
01:15 Calimero
01:30 Art Attack
01:55 Zou
02:05 Loopidoo
02:20 Henry Hugglemonster
02:35 Calimero
02:50 Zou
03:05 Art Attack
03:30 The Hive
03:40 Loopidoo
03:55 Henry Hugglemonster
04:10 Art Attack
04:35 Loopidoo



BEVERLY HILLS COP 3 ON OSN MOVIES ACTION HD

20:00 PJ Masks
21:00 Unbungaleivable
21:05 Goldie & Bear
21:35 Miles From Tomorrow
22:00 My Friends Tigger & Pooh

Disney
XD

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

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 Blood Relatives
11:20 Nightmare Next Door
12:10 A Crime To Remember
13:00 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
13:50 I Almost Got Away With It
14:40 On The Case With Paula
Zahn
15:30 Blood Relatives
16:20 Nightmare Next Door
17:10 Evil Online
18:00 I Was Murdered
18:50 I Almost Got Away With It
19:40 True Crime With Aphrodite
Jones
20:30 Blood Relatives
21:20 Nightmare Next Door
22:10 Deadline: Crime With Tamron
Hall
23:00 Obsession: Dark Desires
23:50 How (Not) To Kill Your
Husband

NAT GEO
WILD HD

00:20 World's Deadliest
01:10 Wild Case Files
02:00 Croc Inside Out
02:50 Maneater Manhunt
03:45 The Invaders
04:40 Dr. Oakley: Yukon Vet
05:35 Croc Inside Out
06:30 Maneater Manhunt
07:25 The Invaders
08:20 Dr. Oakley: Yukon Vet
09:15 World's Weirdest Extreme
Body Parts
10:10 Grizzly Empire
11:05 World's Deadliest
12:00 Wild Caribbean's Deadly
Underworld
12:55 Thunder Beasts
13:50 Maneater Manhunt
14:45 Botswana
15:40 Dr. Oakley: Yukon Vet
16:35 Freaks & Creeps
17:30 Giant Panda: The Last
Refuge
18:25 Botswana
19:20 Salmon Wars
20:10 Dr. Oakley: Yukon Vet
21:00 Freaks & Creeps
21:50 Giant Panda: The Last
Refuge

itv
CHOICE HD

00:10 The Chase
01:00 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 Love And Marriage: A 20th
Century Romance
06:15 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 Love And Marriage: A 20th
Century Romance
11:00 The Chase
11:50 Couples Come Dine With Me
12:45 Emmerdale
13:15 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
20:10 Couples Come Dine With Me
21:00 Vera
22:50 Emmerdale
23:15 Coronation Street

NAT GEO
people HD

00:10 Chocolate Covered
Testing The Menu With Nic
Watt
01:00 My Sri Lanka With Peter
Kuruvita
01:25 Carnival Eats
02:15 Chocolate Covered
03:05 Home Strange Home
03:55 The Wine Show
04:45 Valentine Warner Eats
Scandinavia
05:35 Poh & Co
06:00 Chocolate Covered
06:50 My Sri Lanka With Peter
Kuruvita
07:15 Carnival Eats
08:05 Chocolate Covered
08:55 Home Strange Home
09:45 The Wine Show
10:35 Valentine Warner Eats
Scandinavia
11:00 Valentine Warner Eats
Scandinavia
11:25 Poh & Co
11:50 Chocolate Covered
12:40 Testing The Menu With Nic
Watt
13:05 Carnival Eats
14:00 Chocolate Covered
14:30 Glamour Puds
14:55 Home Strange Home
15:50 The Wine Show
16:45 Valentine Warner Eats
Scandinavia
17:15 Valentine Warner Eats
Scandinavia
17:40 Poh & Co
18:10 Chocolate Covered
18:35 Glamour Puds
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
22:30 Glamour Puds

ID

00:40 Blood Relatives
01:30 A Haunting
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 Blood Relatives
06:24 Blood Relatives
07:12 Blood Relatives
08:00 Who On Earth Did I Marry?

ICE CUBE CEDRIC THE ENTERTAINER
BARBERSHOP
THE NEXT CUT

BARBERSHOP: THE NEXT CUT ON OSN MOVIES HD

15:20 Science Of The Movies
16:10 Kids vs Film
16:35 Bear Grylls Survival School
17:00 Baby Animals
17:25 Baby Animals
17:50 Pick A Puppy
18:15 Pick A Puppy
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
22:20 Pick A Puppy
22:50 Pick A Puppy
23:15 Destroyed In Seconds
23:45 Destroyed In Seconds

Discovery
CHANNEL HD

00:20 Misfit Garage
01:10 Storage Hunters UK
02:00 Guy Martin: Fastest Man On
Two Wheels
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 Misfit Garage
07:40 Fast N' Loud
08:30 Running Wild With Bear
Grylls
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
14:20 Alaska: The Last Frontier
15:10 Running Wild With Bear
Grylls
16:00 Deadliest Catch
16:50 Fast N' Loud
17:40 Misfit Garage

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
09:00 Anna Olson: Bake
The Kitchen
10:00 The Kitchen
11:00 The Pioneer Woman
12:00 Siba's Table
13:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
14:00 Chopped
15:00 The Kitchen
16:00 Anna Olson: Bake
The Kitchen
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
science

00:40 Alien Encounters
01:30 Alien Encounters
03:10 Mythbusters
08:00 How Do They Do It?
08:26 Da Vinci's Machines
09:14 Mythbusters
10:02 Alien Encounters
10:50 How Do They Do It?
11:14 Food Factory
11:38 Mythbusters
12:26 Da Vinci's Machines
13:14 Mythbusters
14:02 How Do They Do It?
14:50 Food Factory
15:40 Alien Encounters
15:58 Mythbusters
16:26 Da Vinci's Machines
17:14 Mythbusters
18:12 Alien Encounters
18:50 Da Vinci's Machines
19:40 Mythbusters
20:30 NASA's Unexplained Files

OSN MOVIES HD

ACTION

00:00 REC 4: Apocalypse
02:00 Rivers Nine
04:00 Beverly Hills Cop 3
06:00 The Mark: Redemption
08:00 Apocalypse Pompeii
10:00 Swelter
12:00 Beverly Hills Cop 3
14:00 Close Range
16:00 The Machine
18:00 Legendary: Tomb Of The
Dragon
19:45 Constantine
22:00 Ironclad: Battle For Blood

OSN FIRST HD

00:00 American Horror Story:
Roanoke
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 Drop Dead Diva
10:00 The Art Of More
11:00 Criminal Minds: Beyond
Borders
12:00 This Is Us
13:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
14:00 Drop Dead Diva
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

OSN FIRST HD

COMEDY

00:00 The Goldbergs
00:30 Baby Daddy
01:00 Baby Daddy
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
08:00 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 Baby Daddy
16:00 Baby Daddy
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 Baby Daddy
21:30 Baby Daddy
22:00 You're The Worst
22:30 You're The Worst
23:00 The Big C
23:30 The Goldbergs

OSN MOVIES HD

FESTIVAL

02:00 We Are Many
04:00 Walking On Sunshine
06:00 Arlington Road
08:00 Neil Young: Heart Of Gold
09:45 Ordinary People
12:00 The Sting
14:15 Days Of Heaven
16:00 Brooklyn
18:00 American Sniper
20:15 Steve Jobs
22:30 The Danish Girl

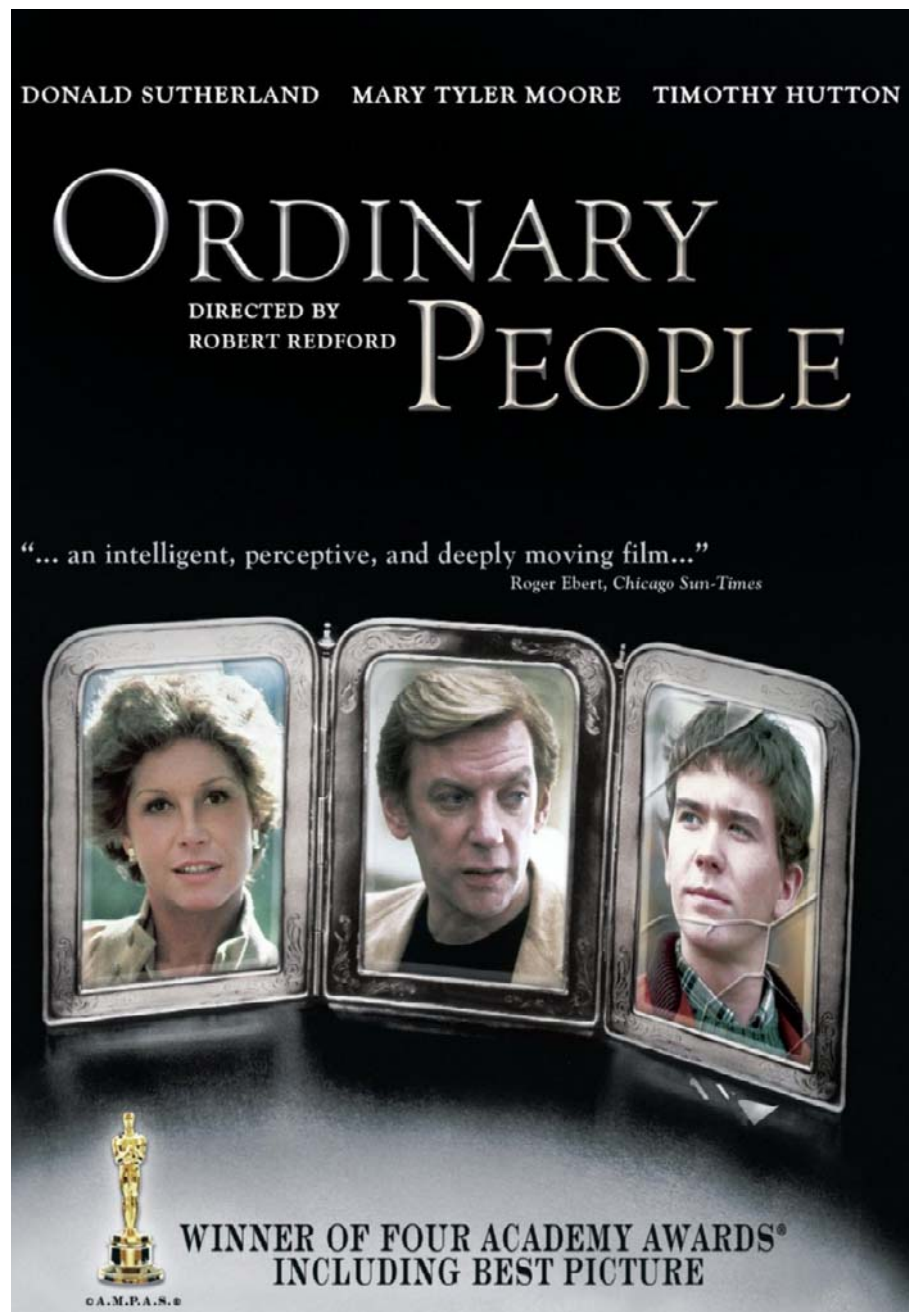
OSN MOVIES HD

KIDS

01:00 The Other Side Of The Door
03:00 A Royal Night Out
05:00 90 Minutes In Heaven
07:00 The Duff
09:00 Pan
11:00 Concussion
13:00 Woodlawn
15:00 Barbershop: The Next Cut
17:00 Alvin And The Chipmunks:
The Road Chip
19:00 Bravetown
21:00 Run All Night
23:00 By The Sea

TLC
HD

00:20 How The Rich Get Hitched
01:10 Alaskan Women Looking For
Love
02:00 My Big Fat Fabulous Life
02:25 Say Yes To The Dress
02:50 Love, Lust Or Run
03:15 Cake Boss
03:35 Billion Dollar Hotel
04:20 Little People, Big World
05:10 Toddlers & Tiaras
06:00 Obsessive Compulsive
Cleaners
06:50 Too Ugly For Love?
07:40 Little People, Big World
08:40 Kate Plus 8
10:10 Love, Lust Or Run
10:35 Cake Boss
11:00 My Big Fat Fabulous Life
11:25 Say Yes To The Dress
11:50 Obsessive Compulsive
Cleaners



ORDINARY PEOPLE ON OSN MOVIES FESTIVAL

CLASSIFIEDS

Kuwait Times

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2017



Kuwait Times

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Kuwait CINEMA			
KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (09/02/2017 TO 15/02/2017)			
SHARQIA-1			
RINGS	12:45 PM	RINGS	11:30 AM
RAEES- HINDI	3:15 PM	THE LEGO BATMAN MOVIE	1:30 PM
KAABIL- HINDI	6:00 PM	THE LEGO BATMAN MOVIE	3:45 PM
AL MOKHAYAM (Kuwaiti Film)	8:45 PM	THE LEGO BATMAN MOVIE	6:00 PM
AL MOKHAYAM (Kuwaiti Film)	10:45 PM	RINGS	8:15 PM
SPLIT	12:45 AM	RINGS	10:30 PM
		RINGS	12:45 AM
SHARQIA-2		FANAR-3	
SPLIT	12:15 PM	KAABIL- HINDI	12:30 PM
THE LEGO BATMAN MOVIE	2:45 PM	AL MOKHAYAM (Kuwaiti Film)	1:30 PM
THE LEGO BATMAN MOVIE	5:00 PM	DANGAL -Hindi	3:30 PM
THE LEGO BATMAN MOVIE	7:15 PM	KAABIL- HINDI	6:45 PM
KUNG-FU YOGA	9:30 PM	JOLLY LLB 2 -Hindi	9:30 PM
SPLIT	11:45 PM	AL MOKHAYAM (Kuwaiti Film)	12:15 AM
SHARQIA-3		FANAR-4	
JOHN WICK: CHAPTER 2	12:15 PM	JOHN WICK: CHAPTER 2	11:30 AM
JOHN WICK: CHAPTER 2	2:45 PM	JOHN WICK: CHAPTER 2	2:00 PM
RINGS	5:15 PM	JOHN WICK: CHAPTER 2	4:30 PM
JOHN WICK: CHAPTER 2	7:30 PM	JOHN WICK: CHAPTER 2	7:00 PM
RINGS	10:00 PM	JOHN WICK: CHAPTER 2	9:30 PM
JOHN WICK: CHAPTER 2	12:05 AM	JOHN WICK: CHAPTER 2	12:05 AM
MUHALAB-1		FANAR-5	
RINGS	11:45 AM	THE SPACE BETWEEN US	11:45 AM
THE LEGO BATMAN MOVIE	2:00 PM	THE SPACE BETWEEN US	2:00 PM
THE LEGO BATMAN MOVIE	4:15 PM	HEARTBEATS	4:15 PM
THE LEGO BATMAN MOVIE	6:30 PM	THE SPACE BETWEEN US	6:30 PM
RINGS	8:45 PM	RAEES- HINDI	8:45 PM
RINGS	10:45 PM	HEARTBEATS	11:30 PM
RINGS	12:45 AM		
MUHALAB-2		MARINA-1	
SPLIT	1:30 PM	RINGS	11:30 AM
RAEES- HINDI	3:45 PM	SPLIT	1:30 PM
KAABIL- HINDI	6:45 PM	RINGS	3:45 PM
SPLIT	9:45 PM	RINGS	6:00 PM
SPLIT	12:15 AM	KUNG-FU YOGA	8:15 PM
		SPLIT	10:30 PM
		SPLIT	12:45 AM
MUHALAB-3		MARINA-2	
JOHN WICK: CHAPTER 2	12:00 PM	RINGS	1:00 PM
JOHN WICK: CHAPTER 2	2:30 PM	THE LEGO BATMAN MOVIE	1:00 PM
JOHN WICK: CHAPTER 2	5:00 PM	SAT-MON	
JOHN WICK: CHAPTER 2	7:30 PM	THE LEGO BATMAN MOVIE	3:15 PM
JOHN WICK: CHAPTER 2	10:00 PM	THE LEGO BATMAN MOVIE	5:30 PM
JOHN WICK: CHAPTER 2	12:30 AM	THE LEGO BATMAN MOVIE	7:45 PM
		RINGS	10:00 PM
FANAR-1		RINGS	12:15 AM
SPLIT	12:00 PM		
SPLIT	2:30 PM	MARINA-3	
AL MOKHAYAM	5:00 PM	JOHN WICK: CHAPTER 2	12:00 PM
KUNG-FU YOGA	7:00 PM	JOHN WICK: CHAPTER 2	2:30 PM
SPLIT	9:15 PM	JOHN WICK: CHAPTER 2	5:00 PM
SPLIT	11:45 PM	JOHN WICK: CHAPTER 2	7:30 PM
FANAR-2			

FOR SALE

For sale 2008 model GMC ENVOY, good condition, full option, no accident, 186000 km. Contact: 97470947. (C 5270) 12-2-2017

CHANGE OF NAME

I Shikha Rana Sham D/o Shamlal Rana holder of Indian Passport No. M6712765 & Civil ID No. 290062302045 has changed my name to Sabah Shahazad Khan hereinafter in all my dealings and documents. I will be known by name of Sabah Shahazad Khan. (C 5269) 9-2-2017

FOR LOCAL HIRE ONLY

A leading Industrial Company has the following vacancies:

1. Sales Engineer.
(Should have previous experience in selling welding machines)

2. Service Technician.
(Should have previous experience in servicing welding machines & power tools)

3. Welder.

Please send your CV to Email:
hrwelding2017@gmail.com

Visual Basic 6 Developers

- Development experience in VB6/MS SQL Server
- Minimum 5 years experience
- Analyzes customer requirement, Develop & Implement
- Sales, Purchase & Accounting knowledge
- Transferable residence

Send your CV to
info@microsysctc.com

New Engineering Design Office Require

- Architect
- Structure Design Engineer
- Civil Engineer • Draftsman
- Supervisor

5 years Minimum Experience

Send CV on Whatsup: 98866972

Leading Shipping Freight Forwarding & Logistic Company in Kuwait Invites Competent Male Professionals for the Following Post:

Sales Coordinator

Specialized in liner service, freight forwarding. The ideal candidate must be pro- active, self motivated team player and target driven.

Qualifications:

- Not less than 5 years experience in shipping logistics & fright forwarding.
- Good communications skills.
- Fluent in English (talking & writing).
- Computer skills.
- Transferable residence.

Successful candidates are subject to fixed salary and incentives with career development both in Kuwait and other GCC country.

Interested candidates are requested to send their CV at shippingkw27@gmail.com Starting the post at the subject line or fax it at 22458892 with covering letter providing the post applied.



Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page (www.kuwait-airport.com.kw)

DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Monday 13/2/2017				Departure Flights on Monday 13/2/2017			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
KAC	776	Riyadh	00:20	MSR	611	Cairo	14:00
JZR	267	Beirut	00:30	FDB	076	Dubai	14:05
JZR	539	Cairo	00:40	UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
KAC	102	London	00:55	KAC	693	Muscat	14:30
THY	772	Istanbul	00:55	KNE	382	Taif	14:50
FDK	803	Damascus	01:00	FEG	932	Alexandria	14:55
KAC	742	Dammam	01:00	KAC	673	Dubai	15:00
RJA	642	Amman	01:05	FDB	060	Dubai	15:10
QTR	1086	Doha	01:15	KAC	785	Jeddah	15:15
THY	764	Istanbul	01:50	PAL	669	Dubai/Manila	15:20
DLH	635	Doha	01:55	GFA	222	Bahrain	15:25
PGT	858	Istanbul	02:00	QTR	1079	Doha	15:40
UAE	853	Dubai	02:30	SVL	501	Jeddah	15:45
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:30	KNE	530	Jeddah	15:55
OMA	643	Muscat	02:55	KAC	619	Doha	16:00
KKK	6506	Istanbul	02:55	ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20
FDB	069	Dubai	03:05	KAC	357	Kochi	16:20
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:10	ABY	128	Sharjah	16:30
MSR	612	Cairo	03:10	OMA	646	Muscat	16:35
CEB	0018	Manila	03:15	SAW	706	Damascus	16:55
KAC	358	Kochi	03:30	JZR	266	Beirut	17:05
QTR	1076	Doha	03:30	JZR	240	Amman	17:15
KAC	784	Jeddah	03:55	FDB	052	Dubai	17:25
KAC	418	Manila	04:25	QTR	1073	Doha	17:40
FEG	933	Sohag	05:00	KAC	343	Chennai	17:40
JZR	503	Luxor	05:10	KAC	363	Colombo	17:40
KAC	354	BLR	05:20	UAE	858	Dubai	17:45
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:20	JZR	538	Cairo	17:45
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:45	RJA	641	Amman	17:55
THY	770	Istanbul	05:55	KAC	331	Trivandrum	18:00
KAC	384	Delhi	06:05	SVL	511	Riyadh	18:15
KAC	364	Colombo	06:05	KAC	353	BLR	18:15
KAC	206	Islamabad	06:20	GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
BAW	157	London	06:40	JZR	184	Dubai	18:40
PAL	668	Manila/Dubai	07:00	FDB	064	Dubai	19:05
FDB	5061	Dubai	07:15	JZR	124	Bahrain	19:15
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50	UAE	876	Dubai	19:30
KAC	302	Mumbai	08:20	QTR	1081	Doha	19:50
UAE	855	Dubai	08:40	ABY	124	Sharjah	20:05
KAC	382	Delhi	08:45	GFA	218	Bahrain	20:15
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:05	KAC	383	Delhi	20:30
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:05	FDB	058	Dubai	20:35
KAC	352	Kochi	09:10	KAC	775	Riyadh	20:45
QTR	1070	Doha	09:30	KNE	232	Riyadh	20:55
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	KAC	1543	Cairo	21:00
IRA	667	Esfahan	10:00	OMA	648	Muscat	21:10
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	KAC	205	Islamabad	21:25
SYR	341	Damascus	11:00	KAC	345	Ahmedabad	21:30
KAC	774	Riyadh	11:05	QTR	1089	Doha	21:35
AXB	889	Mangalore/Bahrain	11:10	DLH	634	Doha	21:35
JZR	165	Dubai	11:30	DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50
FDK	801	Damascus	11:45	ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	22:10
MEA	404	Beirut	11:55	MEA	403	Beirut	22:25
KAC	744	Dammam	12:10	JZR	528	Asyut	22:25
MSC	401	Alexandria	12:30	ALK	230	Colombo	22:25
FEG	953	Asyut	12:35	FDB	5054	Dubai	22:30
JZR	561	Sohag	12:40	GFA	220	Bahrain	22:30
FDB	075	Dubai	12:50	KAC	301	Mumbai	22:45
UAE	871	Dubai	12:50	UAE	860	Dubai	22:55
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:05
				QTR	1083	Doha	23:20

CROSSWORD 1520

1	2	3		4	5	6	7	8	9	10		11	12	13	14
15				16								17			
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78					79					80			81		
82					83								84		

ACROSS

1. The United Nations agency concerned with international maritime activities.
4. A happening that is distinctive in a series of related events.
11. A small cake leavened with yeast.
15. Of southern Europe.
16. A genus of Cichlidae.
17. (Babylonian) God of storms and wind.
18. A unit of force equal to the force exerted by gravity.
19. Pertaining to one of the small sacs (as in a compound gland).
21. English scholastic philosopher and assumed author of Occam's Razor (1285-1349).
23. (Greek mythology) One of the three Graces.
25. A woolen cap of Scottish origin.
26. A bluish-white lustrous metallic element.
28. Fabric dyed with splotches of green and brown and black and tan.
30. Having strength or power greater than average or expected.
34. An unpredictable outcome that is unfortunate.
38. Of or relating to or characteristic of Thailand of its people.
39. Employed in accomplishing something.
42. Behave in a certain manner.
43. An involuntary spasm of ineffectual vomiting.
45. (of a young animal) Abandoned by its mother and raised by hand.
47. A river that rises in northeastern Turkey (near the source of the Euphrates) and flows generally eastward through Armenia to the Caspian Sea.
48. (informal) Of the highest quality.
49. Not accepting reservations.
51. A unit of surface area equal to 100 square meters.
52. A member of a North American people formerly living in the Colorado river valley in Arizona.
55. Fine-toothed power saw with a narrow blade.
58. French mathematician who founded number theory.
61. Small genus of aquatic or semiaquatic plants.
62. (botany) Of or relating to the alix.
65. A native or inhabitant of Nubia.
67. A member of the Siouan people of the northern Mississippi valley.
69. The state of being salient.
73. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
74. The segment of the public that is easily influenced by mass media (chiefly British).
77. A bar or bars of rolled steel making a track along which vehicles can roll.
78. A long projecting or anterior elongation of an animal's head.
79. Lead someone in the wrong direction.
81. (used as a combining form) Recent or new.
82. A flat wing-shaped process or winglike part of an organism.
83. A great raja.
84. An abnormally large amount of this fetoprotein in the fetus can signal an abnormality of the neural tube (as spina bifida or anencephaly).

DOWN

1. The villain in William Shakespeare's tragedy who tricked Othello into murdering his wife.
2. One thousandth of a second.
3. An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the

sale of petroleum.

4. A soft cotton or worsted fabric with an open mesh.
5. A form of entertainment that enacts a story by a sequence of images giving the illusion of continuous movement.
6. (anatomy) Of or relating to the ilium.
7. North American woodland herb similar to and used as substitute for the Chinese ginseng.
8. A translucent mineral consisting of hydrated silica of variable color.
9. English theoretical physicist who applied relativity theory to quantum mechanics and predicted the existence of antimatter and the positron (1902-1984).
10. (Akkadian) God of wisdom.
11. The cry made by sheep.
12. A nearly horizontal passage from the surface into a mine.
13. A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.
14. (Old Testament) In Judeo-Christian mythology.
20. Tall perennial herb of tropical Asia with dark green leaves.
22. (geology) Before the appearance of life.
24. A metrical unit with unstressed-stressed syllables.
27. Sexually transmitted urethritis (usually caused by chlamydia).
29. A law passed by US Congress to prevent employees from being injured or contracting diseases in the course of their employment.
31. A case or sheath especially a pollen sac or moss capsule.
32. Nocturnal badger-like carnivore of wooded regions of Africa and southern Asia.
33. A man who is the lover of a girl or young woman.
35. Cause to suffer.
36. Evergreen Indian shrub with vivid yellow flowers whose bark is used in tanning.
37. 100 pesewas equal 1 cedi.
40. A firm open-weave fabric used for a curtain in the theater.
41. A doctor's degree in dental surgery.
44. A specific instance of feeling hopeful.
46. 30 to 300 gigahertz.
50. 1 species.
53. A rounded thickly curled hairdo.
54. A department of Greece in the central Peloponnese.
56. A barrier consisting of a horizontal bar and supports.
57. Infections of the skin or nails caused by fungi and appearing as itching circular patches.
59. An associate degree in nursing.
60. Oriental moth that produces brownish silk.
63. A brief description given for purposes of identification.
64. Jordan's port.
66. An oil port in southern Iraq.
68. Russian physicist (1895-1971).
70. (Babylonian) A goddess of the watery deep and daughter of Ea.
71. A musical notation written on a staff indicating the pitch of the notes following it.
72. A program under which employees regularly accumulate shares and may ultimately assume control of the company.
75. A hormone secreted by the anterior pituitary gland that controls the degree of pigmentation in melanocytes.
76. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
80. A person who announces and plays popular recorded music.

Yesterday's Solution

S	T	H		B	A	H	A	M	I	A	N		A	S	K
H	A	O		A	G	E	R	A	S	I	A		G	C	A
A	B	A		C	A	L	A	M	A	R	I		H	A	M
D	I	R	A	C		L	W		I		A	K	A	B	A
				S	I	P		A	B	A	N	D	O	N	
P	A	E	L	L	A		K	U	H	N		C		P	S
A	B	R	E	A	C	T		S		E	T	H	N	I	C
L	U	G	E	R			A	D	H	D			I	A	E
E	S	O	P				K	E	B	A	B		A	I	R
L	E	T				S	A	L	A	L		D		F	I
Y	R			S	E	A			I	B	E	R	I	A	
				A	H	A	B			Y	A	H	V	E	
L	O	R	I	C	A	T	A			A	A	C	H	E	N
U	B	Y	K	H			S	L	E	E	P		I	O	W
B	I	A	S			K	A	S	B	A	H		A	L	E
E	T	N	A			B	R	O	N	T	E		L	Y	R

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

More people have been added to your list of friends now and you will enjoy the places they take you. You tend to lean toward rational conversations when you stop long enough to visit. Scientific subjects make for fun conversation today. You have fun flexing your mental muscles! Your personal life, ambitions and dreams are in focus. Your judgment in buying and selling are excellent. It is too bad that there are no stocks to manipulate. However, you could go garage-sale hopping or shop for white sale items at a nearby mall. Make sure there are not too many things on the schedule today so that you accomplish what you want. A difficult relationship will enjoy a healing this day, especially with some personal attention from you.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

An emphasis on close relationships and a preoccupation with ideas of fairness and harmony are part of the mental cycle you have just begun. Facing and correcting any problems or misunderstandings surrounding a love relationship or family tensions can be successful. Taking care of young children can be challenging but your attitude is a grateful one and you are pleased to find the creative talents that come forth. You may even consider that little children are much like the little flowers that need nurturing and care until they grow and have a show of beauty-blossom. A fun competition with friends may find you leaving them all behind in the dust. Your stamina has improved over the years and you are gaining in good health.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

This is a very public time and although it is a day that many people have at home, you are in a career that depends on your attendance this day. You enjoy working on this day of the week because you see lots of people that have chosen this day to shop. You have quite a following and enjoy chatting with the people you have come to know. You will discover that later this afternoon good luck brings you the needed resources for those special projects you have wanted to initiate. This doesn't always mean money so don't get too excited . . . It could be that helping hands are waiting for your guidance. If you are at home this evening, begin now to plot your path to accomplishing those repair jobs or building projects you have been putting off lately.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Sometimes the best action is no action. Another person may make negative comments but you will consider the source, do your best to smile and move forward. Most of the people you are around today have errands to run, places to go, and a great deal on their mind. You will be wise in taking advantage of this time to busy yourself with your own work, hobby or creative endeavors. Others value you for your independence and unique qualities and you will be pleased at the amount of work, fun or relaxing you can do in one afternoon. A young person needs your praise for the work he or she has accomplished and you are good to encourage. The evening will bring about a peaceful time to communicate and laugh with your loved ones.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Gathering and exchanging information becomes a more important part of your life, a very educational experience. Neighbors or siblings have a big impact on your goals and make a big impression. A friend needs some help and you, along with a few others, are willing to do some extra work in order to bring about what is needed. You might take on an extra job or sell something that is no longer something that you use. Your success with this endeavor will come soon and everyone will be cheering; however, it will take some time. It is good to know that there is such a close bond between friends and this is a time you will always remember with much pride. Today is also a good time to set the pace for new patterns.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Your focus is usually on your ability to create. If you repress this, you can understandably become frustrated. No frustrations allowed for now . . . Do whatever you can to keep your creative mind active. A little doodle here and there will help you get back on track. A little exercise will also help you mind return to that creative state. Consolidate and organize your affairs. After your plans are on paper, you can take little steps toward a positive end. Frustrations are short-lived when there is a plan. Shopping for an unexpected special occasion and still arranging for plenty of time to eat dinner may take a little balancing act but you can do it. Moving furniture around, painting a room, preparing a space for your art could be on the agenda.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Moods & Emotions 3

Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining 13 letters spell an additional word.

E	A	R	R	O	G	A	N	T	S	T	E	R	G	E	R
C	M	B	M	T	D	D	L	B	S	U	L	A	X	R	Y
I	O	R	I	A	R	U	E	U	D	U	O	U	A	G	R
T	U	I	L	T	F	A	O	R	F	U	B	V	D	R	R
N	R	G	N	Y	T	L	N	T	A	E	B	E	R	I	O
A	N	S	O	D	A	E	E	Q	R	C	T	I	S	E	W
R	F	J	M	E	I	R	R	A	U	E	S	A	O	F	N
F	U	C	J	E	F	F	N	E	S	I	R	P	R	U	S
L	L	O	G	G	E	T	F	N	Y	L	L	O	J	G	S
U	E	N	R	A	P	P	R	E	C	I	A	T	I	V	E
F	N	F	U	R	O	T	M	O	R	O	S	E	R	Y	H
N	V	I	M	T	H	L	U	F	E	E	L	G	A	R	A
R	I	D	P	U	Z	Z	L	E	D	A	N	G	E	R	P
O	O	E	Y	O	S	U	O	I	R	U	C	T	F	O	P
C	U	N	M	L	A	C	H	E	R	F	U	L	S	Y	
S	S	T	S	U	G	S	I	D	S	S	E	N	D	A	S

ANGER
APPRECIATIVE
ARROGANT
BITTER
CALM
CHEERFUL
CONFIDENT
CURIOUS
DISGUST
DUBIOUS

EDGY
ENVOIOUS
EXUBERANT
FEAR
FRANTIC
FRETFUL
GLAD
GLEEFUL
GRATEFUL
GRIEF

GRUMPY
HAPPY
HOPE
INDIFFERENT
JEALOUS
JOLLY
JOYFUL
MOROSE
MOURNFUL
NERVOUS

OUTRAGE
PUZZLED
REGRET
SADNESS
SCARED
SCORNFUL
SORRY
SURPRISE
TRANQUIL
WORRY



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Expressive is the mood for this day. Close relationships take on emotional depth, power and importance. After completing any chores or responsibilities, you may want to busy yourself through your art. A creative project has been on your mind and this is a good time to compose music, or paint or sculpture an interesting subject. Affairs of the heart are fondly remembered. Set aside your art or other projects later for an evening out with your loved one. You are magnanimous as you find yourself visiting and chatting. Your first impression ratio is rated at one hundred percent. You will meet a new friend. A sense of support and harmony results in pleasant memories. Quick answers, great wit and a surplus of insights are yours.



Scorpio (October 23-November 19)

Your family, home and those who give you nourishment have become more secure this year. You are able to dispense with some of the unessential and develop what is most basic in your environment. Continue to get rid of the stuff that does not benefit you-move forward. Give old magazines and paperback books to the library. You can always go to the library and find the book you want to read if you decide to read a particular book again or see a particular article. If possible, make one room in your home or apartment into a study, reading, art or computer room. This will be the room where you will be most creative or productive. Whether this means time to meditate or time to read, sew, create art, etc., schedule in regular times for your own enjoyment.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 19)

You may find yourself more talkative and easygoing than usual. An intriguing dialogue with an older person may take place. If your plans depend on other people, confirm, check and recheck your plans with them in order to make sure all are cooperative and accepting. Your attire and your attitude go together to make a good first impression at a social this afternoon. This social could involve some political interactions. Everything works together to show your remarkable skills. You will have a grasp for abstract and spiritual ideas as well as the ability to present or communicate these to others. People value you for your ability to make practical decisions. You have a natural sense of what the public wants at this time.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Your inner resources and emotions are accented. You may be moved to appreciate and discover the beauty in your life and in those around you. There is a lot of encouragement from the people around you today. Your particular way of putting things together or making things work is the mark of perfection and you easily display this, especially when someone needs a helping hand. You may find yourself repairing and improving several things around your house or a friend's house this afternoon. By taking on greater responsibilities, you become an inspiration to others. There is still time today for a family outing or for some quality interactions with loved ones. Fun times and family gatherings are the glue that keeps your relationships strong.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

It would be good if you could take a step back from your usual activities and just observe others and listen to what is said. This may mean you have friends or family that love to share their thoughts and plans. Someone may organize a surprise party or spur-of-the-moment party. Perhaps getting out-of-doors to enjoy a little fresh air before noon finds you playing with the dog, listening to the kids or just enjoying the morning. You have the ability to heal others as well as yourself and this quiet morning time is good for meditations. While you are meditating, make an effort to put together an artistic goal or two. You have such fine talents that often you do not realize how your art positively influences others. Enjoy the day.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

This is a wonderful time to be with others. Lucky opportunities and good fortune come your way later today-if you look and reach out to grab them-perhaps the brass ring. Avoid power struggles in the home this afternoon and take things as they come; do not anticipate. An elderly relative may need your support this afternoon and this may be a good place to focus your attention. You can demonstrate your understanding and sensitivity to this person now. A strong urge for the social life may find you active later today. It would be enjoyable to spend time with old friends you have not seen in a while-you can become caught up with news from the old neighborhood. Being bright, witty and sociable is on the agenda all day.

Yesterday's Solution

Moods & Emotions 2

Y	S	I	N	A	I	R	O	H	P	U	E		G	E	M
D	U	N	C	E	R	T	A	I	N	I	M	N	K	I	A
U	P	R	I	D	E	R	T	A	H	T		A	I	I	U
N	Y	R	E	E	L	J	S	A	K	R	H	R	L	S	
H	R	K	S	T	S	A	O	C	N	A	S	A	S	E	
A	I	T	L	A	D	T	O	V	N	E	C	I	D		
P	A	P	E	U	T	H	H	T	O	Q	O	D	D	S	
P	P	M	H	T	S	I	N	G	C	U	E	Y	E	O	
Y	S	E	R	O	A	T	E	S	S	I	S	R	E	S	
H	E	T	R	F	T	R	U	E	F	L	E	U	E	U	
T	D	N	R	N	Y	O	T	I	N	E	L	G	E		
A	O	O	O	I	I	R	R	N	I	E	L	D	L	E	
P	U	C	R	X	A	R	A	L	O	E	D	R	U	R	
M	B		A	N	G	E	G	Y	W	N	C	E	D	M	
E	T		A	E	C	I	L	T	U	G	R	O	U	C	Y

AMUSED
ANNOYED
ANTSY
ANXIOUS
CARING
CONTEMPT
CONTENT
CONTRITE
DELIGHT
DESPAIR

DISLIKE
DOUBT
EMPATHY
ENVY
EUPHORIA
GLUM
GREED
GROUCHY
GUILT
HATRED

HORROR
INFATUATED
JOYOUS
LEERY
PRIDE
RAGE
SAD
SATISFIED
SERENITY
SHAME

SHOCK
SULKY
SULLEN
TERRIFIED
TRANQUIL
UNCERTAIN
UNHAPPY
WARY

The hidden word is: DISCOURAGED

Daily SuDoku

			7	1	8		3
	4			3			
1		7	5			4	
	5	2					
		9			4		
					5	7	
	9			5	2		1
			7			8	
8		6	3	2			

Yesterday's Solution

5	4	8	1	9	7	2	3	6
9	1	6	5	3	2	7	8	4
7	3	2	6	4	8	9	1	5
3	9	4	8	5	6	1	2	7
6	8	1	7	2	3	4	5	9
2	5	7	9	1	4	3	6	8
1	2	9	4	8	5	6	7	3
8	7	3	2	6	9	5	4	1
4	6	5	3	7	1	8	9	2

For labor-related inquiries
and complaints:
Call MSAL hotline 128

Hospitals

Sabah Hospital	24812000
Amiri Hospital	22450005
Maternity Hospital	24843100
Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital	25312700
Chest Hospital	24849400
Farwaniya Hospital	24892010
Adan Hospital	23940620
Ibn Sina Hospital	24840300
Al-Razi Hospital	24846000
Physiotherapy Hospital	24874330/9

Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khaldiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401
Jabriya	25316254
Maidan Hawally	25623444
Bayan	25388462
Mishref	25381200
W Hawally	22630786
Sabah	24810221
Jahra	24770319
New Jahra	24575755
West Jahra	24772608
South Jahra	24775066
North Jahra	24775992
North Jleeb	24311795
Ardhiya	24884079
Firdous	24892674
Omariya	24719048
N Khaitan	24710044
Fintas	23900322



PHARMACIES ON 24 HRS DUTY

GOVERNORATE	PHARMACY	ADDRESS	PHONE
Ahmadi	Sama Safwan Abu Halaifa Danat Al-Sultan	Fahaeel Makka St Abu Halaifa-Coastal Rd Mahboula Block 1, Coastal Rd	23915883 23715414 23726558
Jahra	Modern Jahra Madina Munawara	Jahra-Block 3 Lot 1 Jahra-Block 92	24575518 24566622
Capital	Ahlam Khaldiya Coop	Fahad Al-Salem St Khaldiya Coop	22436184 24833967
Farwaniya	New Shifa Ferdous Coop Modern Safwan	Farwaniya Block 40 Ferdous Coop Old Kheitan Block 11	24734000 24881201 24726638
Hawally	Tariq Hana Ikhlās Hawally & Rawdha Ghadeer Kindy Ibn Al-Nafis Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Salmiya-Amman St Hawally-Beirut St Hawally & Rawdha Coop Jabriya-Block 1A Jabriya-Block 3B Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	25726265 25647075 22625999 22564549 25340559 25326554 25721264 25380581 25628241

STATE OF KUWAIT DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



Tel: (+965) 161 Ext: 2627 - 2630
Fax: (+965) 24348714
www.met.gov.kw



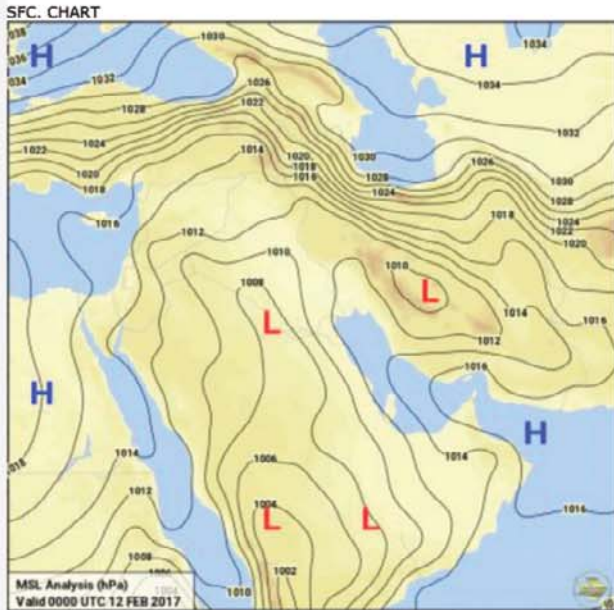
Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

Issued 12/02/2017-07:00 LT UTC +3hr

Max Temperature 23 °C

By Day : Partly cloudy to cloudy with light to moderate freshening gradually south easterly wind, with speed of 15 - 45 km/h causing raising dust over open areas with a chance for rain that might be thundery at times later on.

By Night : Partly cloudy to cloudy with moderate to fresh south easterly wind, with speed of 25 - 50 km/h causing raising dust with a chance for rain that might be thundery at times



Four-Day Forecast

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
Expected Weather	clouds to decrease + scattered rain	sunny	clouds to increase + scattered rain later on	partly cloudy+Thunder rain
Min Temp °C	15	10	10	15
Max Temp °C	25	21	22	21
Wind Direction	southerly changing to north westerly	north easterly to light variable	south easterly	southerly changing to north westerly
Wind Speed km/h	25 - 50	06 - 22	20 - 45	20 - 45

All times are local time (GMT+3) unless otherwise stated

Weather Watches



Thunder Rain

Kuwait Forecast

Station	MIN °C REC	Max °C EXP
KUWAIT CITY	14	22
KUWAIT AIRPORT	11	23
ABDAILY	11	23
BUBYAN	14	21
JAHRA	13	23
FAILAKA ISLAND	12	22
SALMIYAH	14	20
AHMADI	15	19
JAL ALIYAH	11	22
QAROH ISLAND	15	17
UMM AL-MARADEM	14	17
NUWAISIB	12	22
WAFRA	09	23
MANAGISH	12	22
SALMY	08	20
MUTRIBA	10	23

Recorded Yesterday at Kuwait Airport

Max Temp (°C)	22
Min Temp (°C)	10
Max Rel Hum (%)	69
Min Rel Hum (%)	23
Max Wind Speed (km/h) and Direction	28 N
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR	0 mm

	Sunrise	06:30
	Sunset	17:35

Prayer Times

Fajr	05:10
Sunrise	06:30
Zuhr	12:02
Asr	15:11
Sunset	17:35
Isha	18:53

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	Plastic Surgeons	Paediatricians	Endocrinologist
Dr. Abidallah Al-Mansoor 25622444	Dr. Mohammad Al-Khalaf 22547272	Dr. Khaled Hamadi 25665898	Dr. Abd Al-Naser Al-Othman 25339330
Dr. Samy Al-Rabeea 25752222	Dr. Abdal-Redha Lari 22617700	Dr. Abd Al-Aziz Al-Rashed 25340300	Dr. Ahmad Al-Ansari 25658888
Dr. Masoma Habeeb 25321171	Dr. Abdel Quttainah 25625030/60	Dr. Zahra Qabazard 25710444	Dr. Kamal Al-Shomr 25329924
Dr. Mubarak Al-Ajmy 25739999	Family Doctor	Dr. Sohail Qamar 22621099	Physiotherapists & VD
Dr. Mohsen Abel 25757700	Dr Divya Damodar 23729596/23729581	Dr. Snaa Maarroof 25713514	Dr. Deyaa Shehab 25722291
Dr. Adnan Hasan Alwayl 25732223	Psychiatrists	Dr. Pradip Gupare 23713100	Dr. Musaed Faraj Khamees 22666288
Dr. Abdallah Al-Baghly 25732223	Dr. Esam Al-Ansari 22635047	Dr. Zacharias Mathew 24334282	Rheumatologists:
Ear, Nose & Throat (ENT)	Dr. Eisa M. Al-Balhan 22613623/0	Dermatology	Dr. Adel Al-Awadi 25330060
Dr. Ahmed Fouad Mouner 24555050 Ext 510	Gynaecologists & Obstetricians	Dr. Mohammed Salam Bern University 23845955	Dr. Khaled Al-Jarallah 25722290
Dr. Abdallah Al-Ali 25644660	DrAdrian arbe 23729596/23729581	Dentists	Internist, Chest & Heart
Dr. Abd Al-Hameed Al-Taweel 25646478	Dr. Verginia s.Marin 2572-6666 ext 8321	Dr Anil Thomas 3729596/3729581	DR.Mohammes Akkad 24555050 Ext 210
Dr. Sanad Al-Fathalah 25311996	Dr. Fozeya Ali Al-Qatan 22655539	Dr. Shamah Al-Matar 22641071/2	Dr. Mohammad Zubaid MB, ChB, FRCP, PACC
Dr. Mohammad Al-Daaoory 25731988	Dr. Majeda Khalefa Aliytami 25343406	Dr. Anesah Al-Rasheed 22562226	Assistant Professor Of Medicine
Dr. Ismail Al-Fodary 22620166	Dr. Ahmad Al-Khooly 25739272	Dr. Abidallah Al-Amer 22561444	Head, Division of Cardiology
Dr. Mahmoud Al-Booz 25651426	Dr. Salem soso 22618787	Dr. Faysal Al-Fozan 22619557	Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital 25339667
General Practitioners	General Surgeons	Dr. Abdallateef Al-Katrash 22525888	Consultant Cardiologist
Dr. Mohammed Y Majidi 24555050 Ext 123	Dr. Amer Zawaz Al-Amer 22610044	Dr. Abdallah Al-Duweisan 25653755	Dr. Farida Al-Habib 2611555-2622555
Dr. Yousef Al-Omar 24719312	Dr. Mohammad Yousef Basher 25327148	Dr. Bader Al-Ansari 25620111	Inaya German Medical Center
Dr. Tarek Al-Mikhaizeem 23926920	Internists, Chest & Heart	Neurologists	Te: 2575077
Dr. Kathem Maarafi 25730465	Dr. Adnan Ebil 22639939	Dr. Sohal Najem Al-Shemeri 25633324	Fax: 25723123
Dr. Abdallah Ahmad Eyadad 25655528	Dr. Mousa Khadada 22666300	Dr. Jasem Mola Hassan 25345875	
Dr. Nabeel Al-Ayoobi 24577781	Dr. Latefa Al-Duweisan 25728004	Gastrologists	
Dr. Dina Abidallah Al-Refae 25333501	Dr. Nadem Al-Ghabra 25355515	Dr. Sami Aman 22636464	
Urologists	Dr. Mobarak Aldoub 24726446	Dr. Mohammad Al-Shamaly 25322030	
Dr. Ali Naser Al-Serfy 22641534	Dr Nasser Behbehani 25654300/3	Dr. Foad Abidallah Al-Ali 22633135	
Dr. Fawzi Taher Abul 22639955			
Dr. Khaleel Abidallah Al-Awadi 22616660			
Dr. Adel Al-Hunayan FRCS (C) 25313120			
Dr. Leons Joseph 66703427			

Psychologists
/Psychotherapists

Soor Center
Tel: 2290-1677
Fax: 2290 1688

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www.soorcenter.com

Kaizen center
25716707

Noor Clinic
23845955

William Schuilenberg, RPC 2290-1677
Zaina Al Zabin, M.Sc. 2290-1677



Actress Anya Taylor-Joy poses for photographers upon arrival at the British Academy Film Awards.

Stars and royalty hit the red carpet for UK Academy Awards

Hollywood stars will mingle with British royalty yesterday at the British Academy Film Awards, where "La La Land" is favored to dance away with multiple trophies. Prince William and his wife Kate are expected on the red carpet at London's Royal Albert Hall, along with nominees including Meryl Streep, Casey Affleck and Nicole Kidman. "La La Land," an effervescent musical starring Ryan Gosling and Emma Stone, has 11 nominations, including best picture, best actor and best actress. The UK awards are often seen as an indicator of who will win at Hollywood's Academy Awards, held two weeks later. "La La Land" is a firm Oscars favorite, with 14 nominations. It has already won seven Golden Globes.



Actress Amy Adams poses for photographers upon arrival at the British Academy Film Awards Nominees Party at Kensington Palace in London. — AP photos

the wrenching New England drama "Manchester By The Sea" and the Miami-set coming-of-age story "Moonlight."

The BAFTAs differ from their US counterpart in having a separate category for best British film. Nominees in that category include "I, Daniel Blake"; the raucous road trip "American Honey"; the courtroom drama "Denial"; the wizarding adventure "Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them"; the documentary "Notes on Blindness"; and the Iran-set horror film "Under the Shadow." Gosling's rivals in the best actor race are Andrew Garfield for "Hacksaw Ridge"; Casey Affleck for "Manchester by the Sea"; Jake Gyllenhaal for "Nocturnal Animals"; and Viggo Mortensen for "Captain Fantastic."

Best-actress contenders are Stone; Amy Adams for "Arrival"; Emily Blunt for "The Girl on the Train"; Meryl Streep for "Florence Foster Jenkins"; and Natalie Portman for "Jackie." Prince William, who is also president of Britain's film academy, is to present the British academy's lifetime-achievement honor to veteran comedian Mel Brooks during Sunday's ceremony. —AP



Actress Emma Stone poses for photographers upon arrival at the British Academy Film Awards Nominees Party.



File photo shows Katy Perry performs during the final day of the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia. — AP/AFP photos



Judy Collins performs during the annual Clive Davis pre-Grammy gala.

UMG pre-Grammy showcase features Katy Perry, Motown doc

Universal Music Group's annual pre-Grammy showcase included Katy Perry celebrating her 10-year anniversary with Capitol Records and the debut of trailers for new documentaries about Motown Records and INXS singer Michael Hutchence. Chart-topping rappers Desiigner, Rae Sremmurd, Big Sean, MGK and others performed at the multi-hour event Saturday, full of music industry players, press and artists.

Perry, who released a new single Friday, told the audience that she was constantly dropped from record labels, but she found a home at Capitol a decade ago. "None of the other people wanted to believe in my vision. They always wanted me to be like a duplicate or something like they had heard. They wanted me to be like (Avril Lavigne's) 'Complicated' or (Kelly Clarkson's) 'Since U Been Gone,' and I was like, 'That's cool, but let me do my own thing,'" said 32-year-old Perry, whose No.1 hits include "Teenage Dream," "Firework" and "Roar."



Singer Jennifer Hudson performs on stage.

Capitol Records is one of the many subsidiaries of Universal Music Group, which includes labels like Def Jam, Republic, MCA Nashville and Interscope. Acts on those record labels include Lady Gaga, Rihanna, Justin Bieber, Sam Smith and more.

Motown founder Berry Gordy, who earned a standing ovation, and Motown Records president Ethiopia Habtemariam announced the trailer for "The Story of Motown," about the magic of Motown and its history in pop culture. It will be released next year. Another documentary, titled "Mystify," focuses on the life of the late INXS singer who died in 1997. It featured an audio interview with Bono and does not have a release date. Both documentaries are being produced by Polygram Entertainment, which UMG re-launched Saturday. The company will develop films and TV projects, working closely with UMG labels.

Pianist Lang Lang kicked off the midday event at The Theatre at Ace Hotel with a performance, and he later joined Jessie J for a rendition of Prince's "Purple Rain," as purple lights shined onto the stage. Other performers include current three-time Grammy nominee BJ the Chicago Kid, One Direction member Niall Horan, Amine, Aurora, Jordan Smith, Bea Miller, Bishop Briggs and The Record Company. The 2017 Grammy Awards will air live Sunday on CBS from the Staples Center in Los Angeles. — AP



Singer Joe Jonas (right) and JinJoo Lee (left) of DNCE perform during the annual Clive Davis pre-Grammy gala at the Beverly Hilton Hotel.



Musician Mike Posner (right) performs during the annual Clive Davis pre-Grammy gala.



Singer Maren Morris performs on stage.



Singers Michael Bivins, Ronnie DeVoe and Ricky Bell of Bell Biv DeVoe perform on stage.



Singer Maxwell performs on stage.



Singer Mary J Blige performs on stage.



Meryl Streep attends the Human Rights Campaign Greater New York Gala at Waldorf Astoria Hotel on Saturday in New York. — AP

In emotional speech, Streep renews harsh criticism of Trump

In an emotional speech by turns tearful, defiant and humorous, Meryl Streep doubled down on her harsh criticism of President Donald Trump, and spoke of having become a target since she first took him on in her Golden Globes speech in January. Addressing a cheering audience at a fundraising gala for the Human Rights Campaign, a national LGBT group, Streep referred to Trump's tweet after her Globes speech, in which he called the celebrated actress "overrated."

"Yes, I am the most overrated, over-decorated and currently, I am the most over-berated actress ... of my generation," she said to laughs. She noted that she wished she could simply stay home "and load the dishwasher" rather than take a podium to speak out - but that "the weight of all these honors" she's received in her career compelled her to speak out. "It's terrifying to put the target on your forehead," she said. "And it sets you up for all sorts of attacks and armies of brownshirts and bots and worse, and the only way you can do it is if you feel you have to. You have to! You don't have an option. You have to."

Streep did not elaborate on the type of attacks she may have been subjected to since her Globes speech, or from whom. The Associated Press reached out to her publicist for details. The term "brownshirts" was first used to describe an early Nazi militia. Streep was receiving the group's National Ally for Equality Award, and was the huge draw of the evening. Introduced by filmmaker Ken Burns, she took the stage to a thunderous ovation. After a humorous defense of her remarks in her Globes speech that football and martial arts weren't arts, which had drawn some criticism - she clarified that she indeed likes football, too - the actress praised the organization for defending LGBT rights, and spoke about two teachers - one transgender, one gay - who had influenced her childhood in suburban New Jersey.

Catastrophic instinct

She then spoke about how early cultures had always put men at the top, but at some point in the 20th century, women, people of color and other minorities began achieving their deserved rights. Progress was fast, and so now, "We shouldn't be surprised that fundamentalists, of all stripes, everywhere, are exercised and fuming," she said. Turning to Trump, she said: "But if we live through this precarious moment - if his catastrophic instinct to retaliate doesn't lead us to nuclear winter - we will have much to thank this president for. Because he will have woken us up to how fragile freedom really is."

The country has now learned, she said, "how the authority of the executive, in the hands of a self-dealer, can be wielded against the people, and the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. The whip of the executive can, through a Twitter feed, lash and intimidate, punish and humiliate, delegitimize the press and all of the imagined enemies with spasmodic regularity and easily provoked predictability." At the end, Streep made a passionate call for religious liberty - the right, as she said, "to live our lives with God or without Her."

"All of us have the human right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," she said. "If you think people were mad," she closed, "when they thought the government was coming after their guns, wait until you see when they try to take away our happiness." Streep, 67, received a record 20th Oscar nomination in January. — AP

Robust government spending drives tourism growth in Kuwait

Rotana Hotels 2017 GCC Roadshow: Centro Hotel to open in 2020



A group photo is taken during the event. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Continued government spending on infrastructure has driven Kuwait to steady growth and a good start in 2017, Guy Hutchinson, Rotana's Chief Operating Officer, told reporters on the sidelines of the Rotana Hotels 2017 GCC Roadshow. Rotana, one of the leading hotel management companies in the Middle East, Africa, South Asia and Eastern Europe, said it expects the trend of intra-regional travel to pick up further pace this year, bringing positive momentum to the hospitality industry in Kuwait and the wider region.

"The tourism sector in Kuwait will benefit from continued government spending on infrastructure," he said. However, hospitality sector growth across the region will remain moderate through much of 2017 due to persisting economic and geopolitical challenges, with occupancy rates likely to hover around 2016 numbers, Hutchinson added. Rotana - currently in the midst of an aggressive regional expansion - is set to add a second property in Kuwait by 2020 with the opening of Centro, opposite Jumeirah Hotel. This will be the first Rotana hotel to open in the country under the 'Centro by Rotana' brand - the company's lifestyle affordable hotel brand. Once complete, the new hotel will add 209 rooms to the company's existing inventory of 198 rooms in Kuwait, bringing the total tally to over 400 keys.

"Kuwait has always been a strong business tourism destination, and with billions of dollars now being poured into mega infrastructure projects such as the Clean Fuels Project and the new refinery project in Al-Zour, the country's business travel potential is at an all-time high," Hutchinson said. "Kuwait is also witnessing a spurt in tourist arrivals from within the GCC - particularly Saudi Arabia and Qatar - thanks to the government's focus on developing the country's leisure and entertainment sector. Rotana is looking to tap into the opportunities thrown up by these trends by opening our first Centro hotel in Kuwait, which will cater to the demands of the new generation of travelers who seek both finesse and functionality at reasonable rates."

In 2016, Rotana opened hotels in Riyadh, Jeddah, Doha, Bahrain, Amman and one in the People's Democratic Republic of Congo in Kinshasa. "Lots more are coming in Africa - we have Tanzania and Angola. This year we are looking at about 10-12 openings - we have four hotels coming up in Saudi Arabia, we will open two in Dubai, we will open two in Abu Dhabi, one more in Doha, we are going to open in Irbil in Iraq and we will open two more in Istanbul. So we have a busy year ahead of us," he pointed out. "While the hospitality sector in Kuwait has indeed come a long way, there remains an urgent need for more budget and mid-market hotels in the country. Bringing a greater level of choice and affordability to the market can have a decisive influence on the country's ability to attract

a broad range of visitors and, by extension, achieve its tourism goals. Rotana is looking to fill this gap in the market by introducing to Kuwait our Centro brand, which has redefined the rules of the mid-market game by combining world-class service and comfort in an affordable package," Hutchinson said.

Besides being one of the region's fastest-growing inbound tourism markets, Kuwait is also a key driver of travel demand for Rotana hotels across the region. In 2016, the company registered a 9 percent increase year-on-year in Kuwaiti room nights.

Commenting on the trends that will drive tourism and hospitality growth in Kuwait and the region in 2017, Hutchinson said: "Intra-regional travelers from the GCC



Photo shows Guy Hutchinson, Rotana's COO speaking to reporters during a roadshow.

remain the dominant source market for Rotana and the industry as a whole, and this trend will likely gather more momentum in the coming months. Technology advances will continue to transform the way the hospitality industry functions, with the use of mobile apps becoming more ubiquitous, and dynamic pricing strategies will keep gaining in popularity. Although we expect some of the economic and geopolitical challenges of last year to spill over into 2017, overall, we feel the increase in supply will make the market more competitive in 2017, leading hospitality players to focus on innovation and resource optimization while creating enhanced value for guests."

On the other hand, he admitted that 2016 was a tough year globally given the challenges in peace and security and the wars and rumors of war in some areas of the world. "We admit a decline in 2016, but this is global phenomenon. But we are very optimistic in 2017. When we see infrastructure spending in Kuwait, you'll see hope - it's very substantial and Kuwait is committed to stimulating the econ-

omy and helping the country. It gives us lots of confidence as investors. So we are working hard to help from our part. The GCC as a whole is a fundamental dynamic - the growth in the Middle East is driven by GCC, so that is why we are here. GCC is a very important market for us," he said.

As part of the government's efforts to boost tourism figures, Kuwait International Airport is undertaking a \$4.31 billion expansion that will see a new passenger terminal built within the next five years. The expansion project is set to boost the airport's capacity to 25 million passengers per year. Rotana currently manages a portfolio of over 100 properties throughout the Middle East, Africa, South Asia and Eastern Europe with an aggressive expansion plan in place. Rotana has chosen to acknowledge how precious time is by making all time spent in their range of hotels 'Treasured Time'. This means Rotana has pledged to understand and meet the individual needs of all guests. In so doing, Rotana has evolved its product brands to include, Rotana Hotels & Resorts, Centro Hotels by Rotana, Rayhaan Hotels & Resorts by Rotana, Arjaan Hotel Apartments by Rotana and The Residences by Rotana.

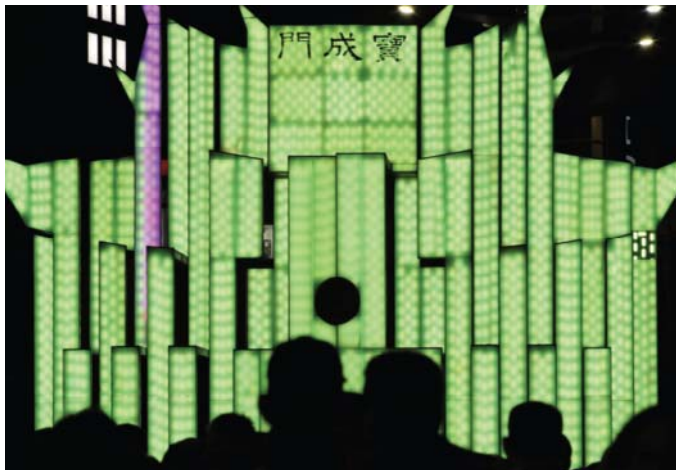
Hutchinson joined Rotana as Chief Operating Officer in Jan 2014, bringing with him extensive experience in the luxury hospitality industry from markets as diverse as Japan, Australia, China and India in addition to a previous stint in the Middle East.

Hutchinson moved to Abu Dhabi from New Delhi, where he served as Vice President Operations - India for Hilton Worldwide. Prior to his post in India, Hutchinson served as Regional General Manager China North, responsible for all brands in the group's portfolio for China North and Mongolia. In 2012, he was responsible for a total of 11 trading hotels and 23 hotels in pre-opening phases. He moved to the role from earlier positions as the General Manager of Hilton Shanghai, GM at Cairns in Australia and Director of Operations at Tokyo Bay.

Hutchinson is no stranger to the Middle East - he was the man responsible for managing the pre-opening and trading of Hilton Dubai Creek - including negotiating, securing and launching of the unique partnership with Gordon Ramsay and the Verre Restaurant. Hutchinson joined Rotana's feted executive team with prestigious recognitions of his own such as being named China's Most Innovative Leader (2011) and serving as the Chairman of the Australian Hotels Association (North Queensland).

The international hotelier's career is notable for its creative leadership and his success in change management, repositioning and building high performing teams. As Chief Operating Officer at Rotana, Hutchinson is leading the brand's operations throughout the Middle East, Africa, South Asia and Eastern Europe, and is the key figure driving the company's quality standards and financial performance.

Taiwan lantern makers go green for festival of lights



This picture shows residents walking under an ancient gate-shaped lantern during Lunar New Year celebrations in Taipei. — AFP photos



Lin Chow-chin, a local lantern artist, displaying his work during an exhibition in Yilan, eastern Taiwan.

As Taiwan lists up for the start of its annual lantern festival this weekend, one eco-friendly craftsman is breaking with tradition. Lantern-maker Lin Chow-chin is part of a growing movement on the island to make the celebrations greener, creating sustainable lights which can be converted into everything from desk lamps to flower vases. Each year huge electric sculptures go on display in Taiwan's major cities, children carry tiny disposable lanterns and the skies fill with floating lights for the festival that marks the end of two weeks of Lunar New Year festivities.

Environmentalists say used lanterns are not properly recycled and pile up as rubbish, while batteries inside them contain hazardous chemicals that cause pollution. Lin hopes to help combat the problem by creating lanterns which owners will want to keep rather than discard. He experimented with making them in his youth and even

considered exporting them as a business - but gave up the dream for a steady post office job. After retiring seven years ago, Lin reignited his passion-with a new twist.

"I don't want to see lantern-making become a fading art so hopefully the creative, environmental and practical aspects can appeal to more young people," he tells AFP. Lin's colorful lanterns come in a range of shapes and sizes, some using recycled paper, leaves and plant fibers. His main aim is to make them reusable. Lin has patented a removable plastic stopper that connects to a light bulb inside the lantern. When the bulb is taken out, users can connect the stopper to a water bottle and recycle the lantern as a vase.

Some of the lantern frames are made from self-assembled cardboard cut-outs which Lin says are popular with students as they can be used as pen holders, and come with spare parts that can be modeled into

sculptures and business card holders. It is still a small business and Lin makes all the lanterns himself from home, selling around 800 a year by word of mouth. But interest in his art has seen him conduct workshops across Taiwan and stage exhibitions in Hong Kong and mainland China. "It's rewarding to see my students embrace my ideals and come up with their own creations," says Lin.

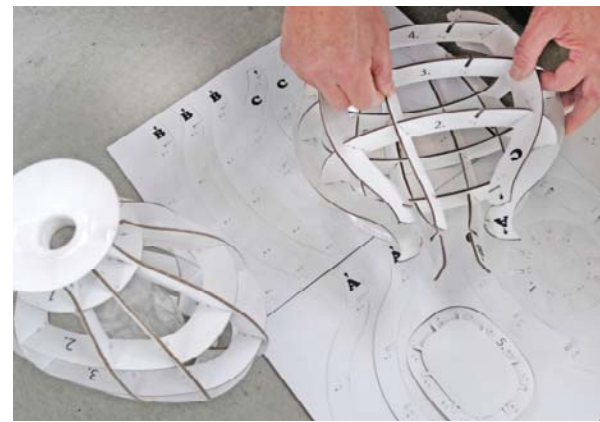
Mass mobilization

Campaigners say they do not want the lantern festival to disappear, just to improve. Liu Jyh-jian, vice director of the Taiwan Environmental Protection Union, says the focus should be on the 'content, not the size' of the celebrations.

Taiwan's tourism bureau, which sponsors the island's biggest lantern celebrations, featuring huge electric lights in the shape of zodiac animals, says the creations are

now being "adopted" after the festival, mostly by schools and local government departments. Environmental authorities are also urging the public to recycle batteries used in small hand-held lanterns-last year they generated an estimated 3.79 tons of waste. Mountainous Pingshi town in northern Taiwan is at the vanguard of the new green push.

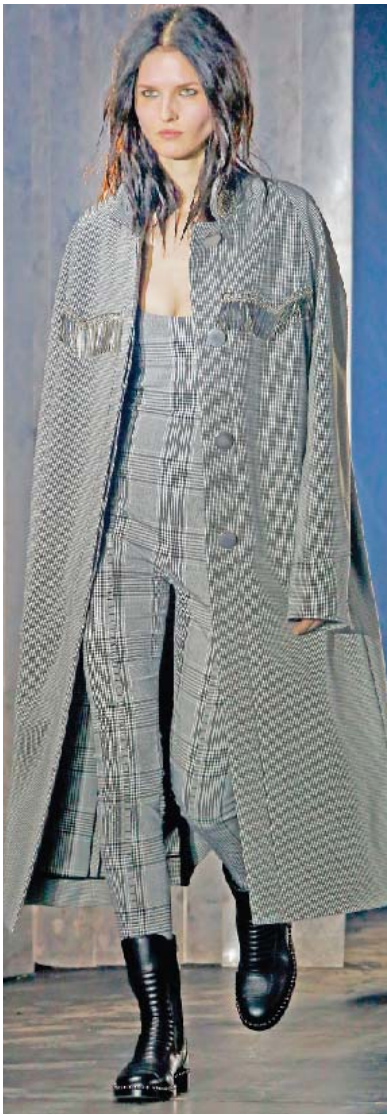
Special hiking groups head out into the hills to retrieve thousands of floating lanterns which are released into the sky then fall to earth. Authorities there are also offering cash or small gifts as rewards for recycling. Hu Min-shu, a veteran sky lantern maker who uses recycled materials and is head of an association promoting the craft in Pingshi, says up to 90 percent of used lanterns are now recycled there. "Of course, we hope to achieve a 100 percent recycling rate," he says. "The whole town is mobilized." — AFP



Lin Chow-chin, a local lantern artist, displaying a lantern design during an exhibition in Yilan, eastern Taiwan.



Lin Chow-chin, a local lantern artist, displaying his work during an exhibition in Yilan, eastern Taiwan.



The fashion collection from Alexander Wang is modeled during Fashion Week in New York. —AP/AFP photos



Alexander Wang goes back to black, Siriano does desert



Alexander Wang went back to black in a crumbling old theater in Harlem and Christian Siriano provided a pop of politics in a single T-shirt that read “People are People,” choosing instead to focus on a dreamy copper-colored collection of velvet and satin at New York Fashion Week on Saturday.

Among the day's highlights: Wang feeling bad-to-the-bone

This girl's going to get it done. Wang's models, including Bella Hadid and a freshly bobbed Kendall Jenner, wore mostly black on Wang's raised runway at the abandoned RKO Hamilton Theatre, theatrical fog and a mosh-like pit setting the tone after a DJ and a couple of hip-hop dancers entertained before the show. Hadid donned leather mini-shorts and a long-sleeve



The fashion collection from Christian Siriano is modeled during Fashion Week.



“Night of Treason” top, while other models walked in leather skinny pants, a few in checks and some in deep blue lingerie looks. Little silver balls provided edgy detailing on boots and seams for some. Others carried bags with chain-link straps.

Jenner sis Kylie and on-again, off-again boyfriend Tyga, Ansel Elgort, Teyana Taylor and ASAP Rocky were among Wang's guests. The crowd, wending its way uptown through traffic from the usual lower Manhattan venues, was led to this dystopia through a narrow walkway with black-plastic lined walls, passed shelves of Peroni beer kegs. People were greeted by waiters offering glasses of the brew. Wang does know his way around a neckline. There were some in form-fitting black with bustier bodices and off-the-shoulder sleeves. A black jumpsuit went off the shoulder in long sleeves but also included thin dainty straps that showed off heavy chunk chokers in silver. He also knows how to cut a blazer, providing a few worthy of work or the club, though his tousled-haired models may need to pull out the straightening iron before heading to the office.





Models walk the runway during the Lacoste fashion show.



Siriano's windswept copper, luxe velvet

The designer said he was inspired in part for this fall collection by beehive sand formations in Nevada's Valley of Fire State Park. The shapes he was referring to were created by wind, providing a layered effect that impacted his silhouettes and a fiery copper color that dominated. From the park, he said in a backstage interview: "We took everything. We took colors, we took textures. I felt like when I was there I literally felt like I was in a dream." His setting: The Grand Ballroom of New York's storied Plaza Hotel. Some of his guests were treated to box seats above his rows of chairs. Mega-model Karolina Kurkova was among his walkers, while Juliette Lewis and Janet Mock were among his front-row guests. Considering today's



contentious political climate, Siriano said, "I think it was important to kind of take everybody out of their element and just be in a dream." Last season, Siriano made a point of mixing all shapes and sizes among his models. Many of the same plus-size models walked this time around as well. He showed gold-and-black velvet looks with bustiers and Victorian sleeves. A strapless dress had gold crystal tassels and a maroon bell-sleeve gown was fringed. He cut trousers wide in metallic copper and added a touch of faux fur on wool coats.

Among his desert tones was a touch of mauve and coral. Siriano's "People are People" T-shirt was about as overtly political as he got. The black top was paired with a long, pinkish satin skirt slit high on one side. The thing that matters to Siriano, as a gay man who married just last year, is this: "We have to do something to make sure that we're all comfortable in our lives," he said.

Lacoste goes cosmic at New York fashion week

French label Lacoste went cosmic at New York fashion week on Saturday, using space as an inspiration to send Star Trek-style nylon mixed with leather down the runway. "This is

a look into the future," said the sportswear label's Portuguese designer Felipe Oliveira Baptista. "Looking at the future is also a way of being more optimistic."

The idea of "a cosmic voyage" was rooted in the history of brand founder Rene Lacoste's brief foray into the aircraft industry, something that Baptista shares as his own father was a pilot. Lacoste, who is most famous for his



tennis career before founding the eponymous sportswear label 84 years ago, also set up a company that contributed to developing the Concorde and Airbus aviation programs.

"I went to the cosmic museum in Russia and really looked into details at the spaceships," said Baptista, explaining his research. The collection was both urban and vintage, clothes in contrasting colors from metallic blue, to ochre, beige and lilac, and from earthy cotton, wool and leather and shiny nylon. — AP



Models walk the runway at the VFILS runway show during New York Fashion.



Shanghai designer readily embraces Trump daughter



Tiffany Trump poses backstage at the Taoray Wang show during New York Fashion Week.

To boycott or not to boycott First Lady Melania Trump because of her husband's politics has been hotly debated in US fashion circles, but for one Chinese designer, at least one member of the first family is a major asset. Tiffany Trump, the youngest daughter of the US president, was guest of honor in the front row at Taoray Wang's New York fashion week show Saturday, accompanied by her mother, Trump's ex-wife Marla Maples.

The 23-year-old first daughter, who wore Taoray Wang at her father's inauguration weekend, has been happily adopted by the Chinese label as it seeks to open its first overseas store, in New York in September. She looked beautiful in a pale pink Taoray Wang coat and ivory dress, a similar version of which appeared in navy on the catwalk, and the label proudly announced her attendance in a subsequent statement. The namesake brand of Shanghai-based designer Wang Tao, the fall/winter 2017 collection starred her modern take on classic suiting, with a unique twist of East meets West, and an empowering masculine look made feminine when paired with delicate lace negligees.

Wang designs for the powerful, professional and modern woman-leaders in government, business, finance and law who are not afraid to disguise their femininity. She sent down the runway black jackets, military-style double breasted coats and wide-legged tweed pants—a powerful look made sexy with knee-high platform boots, lace underlay and pink silk lining on coats. Wang said that clients, who are largely in China, and been delighted to see Trump—"this wonderful young lady"—wear her clothes at the inauguration and said there had been no negative feedback. "I would rather focus on personal qualities and characters, rather than labeling them," she told AFP backstage before the show.

It was a stunning collection inspired by contemporary Chinese drama depicting Qing dynasty characters crossing over from ancient times to the present day, and earned her cheers of approval at the end. Wang said she had not given much thought to the refusal from some prominent American designers to dress the new first lady. "I didn't think about that, because I'm very open minded. I cooperate with international celebrities and all these leaders," she said. Front of house was packed, a mix of Chinese and Asian guests mingled with Park Avenue types-sleekly dressed, stiletto-wearing and well-groomed American women similar to the younger Trump. "I believe there is a lot of bridge between different cultures," said the designer, who studied in Japan and keeps a studio in London. Her label focused on "this blending and diversity," she said. — AFP



An artist takes part in the opening parade of the 133rd edition of the Nice Carnival in Nice, southeastern France. The carnival runs until February 25, 2017 under the theme "The King of Energies". — AFP

Tasty love offering to your Valentine: A heart-shaped oyster



French oyster farmer Christophe Guinot shows heart shaped oysters that he produces and sells on Saint Valentine's Day, in Leucate. — AFP photos

France, traditional land of romance, has come up with a new offering to tempt lovers on Valentine's Day: Heart-shaped oysters. They are the creation of an oyster farmer on France's Mediterranean coast who for some 10 years has successfully cultivated a small quantity of oysters in the form of heart—a special dish found in the region's top restaurants for Saint Valentine's Day. It all started as a love offering from his wife. "One day my beloved gave me an oyster in the form of a heart. I was very

touched by this oyster which had taken that shape by chance," Christophe Guinaut told AFP. "That gave me the idea to try to cultivate oysters in that shape," he said.

Guinart of Port-Leucate in the Languedoc region tested several techniques before perfecting the technique for creating the romantic mollusc. "I keep secret how I make them," he said, adding that each year he tries to improve the process. His labor of love has paid off, with top restaurants coming to him for oysters, including



French oyster farmer Christophe Guinot shows an heart shaped oyster.

the three Michelin starred Can Roca in Girona, Spain, which the British press dubbed the world's best restaurant in 2015.

"I sell them for the same price as the others even though they are three times more work," Guinaut says. "I don't do it for the money." "It's the continuation of a beautiful romance. I love to think that the people who order them have the same emotion as I did when my wife gave me that heart-shaped oyster." — AFP



French oyster farmer Christophe Guinot shows heart shaped oysters.

Japan killjoys wage war on Valentine's 'conspiracy'



A group of Japanese protesters stage an anti-Valentine's Day demonstration march in Tokyo. — AFP

As Japan prepares to celebrate Valentine's Day, a cranky group of marxist protesters have called for an end to public displays of love, claiming it hurts their feelings. Members of 'Kakuhido', or the Revolutionary Alliance of Men that Women find Unattractive, unfurled a giant "Smash Valentine's Day" banner as the party-poopers set off to try and overthrow the annual celebration of romance. The grumpy comrades elicited curious looks from passers-by in the trendy Shibuya district where they rallied against commercialism and chanted other buzz-kill slogans such as "public smooching is terrorism!"

"Our aim is to crush this love capitalism," the group's public relations chief Takayuki Akimoto told AFP. "People like us who don't seek value in love are being oppressed by society," he added. "It's a conspiracy by people who think unattractive guys are inferior, or losers-like cuddling in public, it makes us feel bad. It's unforgivable."

Previously, the killjoy group has also protested against "housewives who control Japan's future" as their hapless husbands work all hours at the office. Valentine's Day in Japan is a huge money-spinner for the confectionery business as women are traditionally expected to buy chocolates for the men in their lives from lovers to work colleagues. Men reciprocate a month later on White Day, a Japanese marketing brain-wave dreamt up by confectioners in the 1980s to keep the cash tills ringing.

"The tradition of giving chocolates means you're always competing," said Akimoto, 33, blasting what his group calls

the "passion-based capitalism" of Valentine's Day. "You're judged by how many sweets you get. It's a business strategy by the chocolate capitalists, it's ridiculous."

Valentine's Day originated as an ancient Christian and Roman tradition and Akimoto fumed: "Religious overtones have been twisted and turned into a vehicle to make money." Japan is experiencing a loss of mojo with couples apparently too stressed or busy to have sex, frustrating government efforts to raise the birthrate as policymakers struggle to cope with a shrinking population. Akimoto claims the group's message has begun to hit home after 10 years of protests.

"Recently you hear of more people spending Christmas alone or women growing tired of Valentine's Day," he said. "We believe that through our fight, we've helped contribute to that social shift." Kakuhido was founded in 2006 by Katsuhiko Furusawa, who began reading the Communist Manifesto after being dumped by his girlfriend and came to the conclusion that being unpopular with the opposite sex was a class issue, fuelling his anti-Valentine message.

Akimoto offered some advice for would-be disciples of the spoil-sport group, which also protests White Day and Christmas. "We're saying you don't have to enjoy Christmas or Valentine's Day," he said joylessly, adding that Kakuhido is also taking aim at Halloween. "Just spend the day doing normal things. Our enemy is formidable, but we are ready for a long, drawn-out war." — AFP