

Jarallah on Iraq border, Iran ties, executions, NATO center



Gulf Bank reports KD 43m profit, up 10% from 2015



Miss France crowned Miss Universe in Philippines



James first to score 20,000 points for Cavaliers



GOVT LAUNCHES AMBITIOUS 'NEW KUWAIT' 2035 STRATEGY

NOD TO BUDGET WITH HUGE DEFICIT • 60-40 EXPAT RATIO EYED



Min 03°
Max 21°
High Tide 01:12 & 14:46
Low Tide 08:27 & 20:28



150 FILS
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40 PAGES

conspiracy theories

REGULATION, NOT DISCRIMINATION



By Badrya Darwish

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I received a recording on WhatsApp yesterday of a Saudi imam delivering a sermon in a mosque. I was impressed by his speech. It was very long guys, but it was full of pieces of advice and wisdom. I'm writing about this imam's speech because I am proud to know that there are still many people among us who believe in justice and fairness and fear God.

Lately, we are hearing a lot of criticism left, right and center from writers, politicians, etc, and it's all focused on one topic - against expats in the Gulf. But let me be specific about my country Kuwait. All these speeches and articles against expats present them as if they are invaders in our country or aliens who are stealing our homes and villas and cars and we are living on the streets, or as if they have corrupted our country and taken all our jobs.

Some of them went so far as to compare them to Israeli settlers in the West Bank. It is beyond gross to compare expats in Kuwait - no matter how bad you think they are - to Israeli settlers who are stealing Palestinian land daily inch by inch.

This Saudi cleric's point of view was that apartheid and discrimination are not acceptable in Islam, our religion. I think it is not accepted in any religion, but I'm not here to defend other faiths. He started by giving simple examples that we experience daily: This 'ajnabi' is driving a Mercedes or Lexus, or wearing good clothes or renting a villa, and he's enjoying life. He said: Why do we forget that it is God who gives and takes. It's God who decides the wealth of every one of us. So why are you criticizing God? What is your right to question God's will?

The cleric also mentioned how some people do not respect the contracts they sign with foreigners - we bring them here, and once they are under our mercy, we switch as we like either the salary or the position. The cleric noted that a contract is also with God and that disrespecting it is disrespecting the rules of your religion. Islam is based on justice and fairness. Where is the religion in those who disrespect their words and their contracts?

Another point I like is when he mentioned how some people will address expats as 'you Egyptian, you Hindi, you Bengali'. Why are we discriminating against nations? Aren't nations creations of God? In which way are we better than them? I also liked the way the cleric mentioned the unfair treatment of maids. He gave many examples of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), who advised his followers to treat everyone with respect and kindness, and not denigrate people based on their race, religion, looks, wealth or job.

The cleric invited people to view some of the flats or rooms where domestic helpers live. Sometimes the room is smaller than a prison cell. Isn't this a shame? He even spoke about food. You should feed them properly from what you eat, not the leftovers.

I don't have the space to translate and report the entire speech, but a big thank you to the sheikh for his wisdom and guidance to awaken the nation about this matter. We have lost our way and we need guidance and light from God. This doesn't mean that I am against regulating expats in Kuwait. We need some regulations, but there is a decent and just way to do it.



KUWAIT: Prime Minister HH Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah (fifth left) poses for a group photo with his Cabinet ministers at the Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Center in Kuwait City yesterday. The ministers announced the "New Kuwait 2035" vision, which includes various mega projects. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

By B Izzak and Agencies

KUWAIT: HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah yesterday affirmed a resolve to implement a visionary strategy architected by HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to transform Kuwait into a lucrative business and cultural hub. He was speaking during the launch of Kuwait's long-term development plan till 2035, dubbed 'New Kuwait', held at Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Center late yesterday.

Serious steps were taken over the past years "to translate His Highness the Amir's outlook for activating development, boosting the economy, diversifying productivity, pressing ahead with economic and financial reforms through mega projects and leading role by the private sector," the premier said. Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak affirmed the necessary role of the youth to implement "the new Kuwait outlook for achieving honorable living and bright future for youngsters and the next generations", hoping that they would lead the process of building the aspired modern state.

Speaking at the event, Minister of Social Affairs and Labor Hind Al-Sabeeh said the country's demographic plan estimates that the percentage of expatriates will drop to 60 percent from the current 70 percent by 2030. She said that the higher population committee has drawn up its plan, which is based on achieving the 60-40 ratio by 2030. At present, the number of expatriates is 3.1 million against 1.33 million Kuwaiti citizens, a ratio of 70-30 in favor of expatriates.

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SIX KILLED IN CANADA MOSQUE SHOOTING

TRUDEAU SLAMS 'TERROR ATTACK' • AMIR SENDS CONDOLENCES



QUEBEC CITY: Mohamed Labibi, president of the Islamic cultural center, is comforted by Quebec Premier Philippe Couillard (left) and Quebec City mayor Regis Labeaume (right) during a news conference yesterday about the fatal shooting at Quebec Islamic Cultural Center on Sunday. — AP

QUEBEC CITY/TORONTO: A French-Canadian university student was the sole suspect in a shooting at a Quebec City mosque that killed six people and injured 17 others, Canadian authorities said yesterday, in what Prime Minister Justin Trudeau called "a terrorist attack". The suspect in custody for the attack on Sunday evening prayers was Alexandre Bissonnette, according to a source familiar with the matter. A man of Moroccan descent who had also been arrested was now considered a witness, although his nationality was not immediately known, the source said.

Police declined to discuss possible motives for the shooting at the Centre Culturel Islamique de Quebec. Police said they were confident no other suspects were involved in the attack. "They consider this a lone wolf situation," the source said. The suspect was expected to appear in a Quebec City courtroom yesterday after-

noon. Trudeau, who has made a point of welcoming refugees and immigrants from Muslim-majority countries, told the House of Commons in Ottawa: "Make no mistake, this was a terrorist attack."

He added a personal message to Canada's one million Muslims: "Know that we value you. You enrich our shared country in immeasurable ways. It is your home. Last night's horrible crime against the Muslim community was an act of terror committed against Canada and against all Canadians. We will grieve with you. We will defend you. We will love you. And we will stand with you." Somber parliamentarians observed a moment of silence. Trudeau was to visit Quebec City later yesterday, a spokesman said.

HH the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of condolences yesterday to the Governor General of Canada David Johnston.

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TRUMP DIGS IN AS TRAVEL BAN BACKLASH MOUNTS

US PRESIDENT CALLS SAUDI, UAE LEADERS

WASHINGTON: A defiant President Donald Trump lashed out at protesters, lawmakers and even Delta Airlines yesterday as he struggled to defuse a mounting backlash over a controversial US ban on immigrants from seven Muslim-majority countries. After a weekend of chaos at airports, mass protests in major American cities and a diplomatic outcry, the embattled Republican leader went on the offensive over the temporary measure. "We actually had a very good day yesterday in terms of homeland security," Trump insisted as he met with small business leaders.

In remarks at the White House and on Twitter, Trump hammered Congress for not confirming his cabinet nominees and accused Capitol Hill's top Democrat of shedding "fake tears" over immigrants detained at US airports. Trump variously tried to play down the impact of the order he signed Friday and defended the White House's decision not to give advance warning to border guards, diplomats and travelers. The new president also moved up a decision on his pick of Supreme Court justice to today - two days earlier than planned - as he sought to change the topic.

"Only 109 people out of 325,000 were detained and held for questioning. Big problems at airports were caused by Delta computer outage," Trump claimed. "Where was all the outrage from Democrats and the opposition party (the media) when our jobs were fleeing our country?" Trump asked. The order - which affects nationals from Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen - caused confusion among US officials and



WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump seen through an Oval Office window gives a thumbs up as he speaks on the phone to King Salman of Saudi Arabia in the Oval Office of the White House on Monday. — AFP

led to at least four federal court injunctions, requiring new Secretary of Homeland Security John Kelly to step in. "If the ban were announced with a one week notice, the 'bad' would rush into our country during that week. A lot of bad 'dudes' out there!" Trump claimed.

Eltirmizy Mohamed, a 34-year-old Sudanese doctor, was traveling back to the United States when the order was rolled out. After three years training at the Atlanta Medical Center, he was returning to Georgia to take up a full-time post, but was stopped while trying to catch a

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News

in brief

Govt appoints Rashed Amiri Diwan advisor

KUWAIT: The government yesterday approved the appointment of Ali Fahd Al-Rashed as an advisor at the Amiri Diwan with the rank of minister, Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Al-Sabah said. Rashed, 50, graduated from Kuwait University's Law School in 1993. He was named minister of state for Cabinet affairs in May 2011. Rashed was elected as MP in 2003, 2006, 2008, 2009, twice in 2012 and 2013. Rashed served as a public prosecutor from 1994 to 2000 and a judge at the court of cassation from 2000 to 2003.



Ali Al-Rashed

Tax-free days end for Saudis after oil slump

RIYADH: Tax-free living will soon be a thing of the past for Saudis after the cabinet yesterday approved an IMF-backed value-added tax to be imposed across the Gulf following an oil slump. Residents of the energy-rich region had long enjoyed a tax-free and heavily subsidized existence, but the collapse in crude prices since 2014 sparked cutbacks and a search for new revenue. Cabinet "decided to approve the Unified Agreement for Value Added Tax" to be implemented throughout the six-member Gulf Cooperation Council, the official Saudi Press Agency said.



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives a letter from UAE President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, delivered by UAE Ambassador to Kuwait Rahma Hussein Al-Zaabi.

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with National Security Bureau's Chief Sheikh Thamer Al-Ali Al-Sabah.

KUWAIT: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and State Minister of Economic Affairs Hind Al-Sabeeh. — Amiri Diwan and KUNA photos

AMIR RECEIVES INVITATION TO ATTEND WORLD GOVT SUMMIT

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received yesterday a letter from UAE President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, inviting him to attend World Government Summit due in Dubai in February. The letter was delivered by UAE Ambassador to Kuwait Rahma Hussein Al-Zaabi during a meeting with His Highness the Amir at Bayan Palace. The meeting was attended by Advisor at the Amiri Diwan General Khalid Abdullah Bodai.

His Highness the Amir also received the National

Security Bureau's Chief Sheikh Thamer Al-Ali Al-Sabah. Sheikh Thamer presented to His Highness the Amir an anthropomorphic of NATO regional center and Istanbul cooperation initiative. Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and State Minister of Economic Affairs Hind Al-Sabeeh. His Highness the Crown Prince also received Sheikh Thamer Al-Ali, as well as Mesalat Zin Al-Hathal. His Highness the Crown Prince then received Dr Rola Abdullah Dashti. — KUNA



KUWAIT: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Dr Rola Abdullah Dashti.

KUWAIT RESPECTS BORDER DEMARCATION WITH IRAQ

EXECUTIONS FOLLOW LAWFUL, TRANSPARENT HEARINGS: JARALLAH

KUWAIT: The State of Kuwait fully respect what have been agreed upon with Iraq regarding border demarcation and maintenance of border signs, in line with UN resolution 833, a senior official affirmed Sunday.

Kuwait has been accused of "seizing parts of the Iraqi lands and occupied Khor (inlet) Abdullah, and I confirm that Kuwait has not violated an inch of the Iraqi territories as the State of Kuwait does not allow any part of its lands to be violated," Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah said.

He was answering to queries by reporters over statements by some Iraqi MPs claiming that Kuwait violated its navigation rights at Khor Abdullah. Jarallah, speaking during a reception held by Australian Embassy marking the national day, said Kuwait did not change the geographic conditions of this area. UN resolution 833 demarcates the land borders and part of the marine borders up until sign No. 162, he said. This resolution was issued under Chapter VII of UN Charter. Jarallah said new maps were needed to be drawn following the maintenance of border signs in line with resolution 833. "We are not changing positions of the signs," he added. Kuwait and Iraq agreed to start drawing the new maps and will share the cost. "We have informed the UN about Kuwait's readiness to draw these border maps, and we are awaiting approval of the Iraqi side," he said.

Jarallah explained that Khor Abdullah is a waterway between Kuwait and Iraq. The two countries signed an agreement in 2012 to organize navigation in this inlet. He said Kuwaiti and Iraqi officials met on January 24 and 27 to discuss organization of navigation in Khor Abdullah. Jarallah said they agreed on some navigation issues, but did not elaborate. He added that Kuwait would not protest against these claims because they did not reflect the Iraqi government's position.

Jarallah, meanwhile, reiterated Kuwait's continuous humanitarian support for the Iraqi people. Asked about the Kuwaiti prisoners and missing in Iraq, Al-Jarallah said "the information we have is about witnesses who are being questioned over some information about remains of Kuwaitis, but we did not receive anything specific so far."



KUWAIT: Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah (right) and Australian Ambassador to Kuwait Warren Hauck cut the cake during a ceremony to celebrate Australia's national day. — Photos by Joseph Shagra

Amir's letter

In the meantime, Jarallah mentioned that Iran has welcomed content of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's letter to President Hassan Rouhani, on behalf of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. "The letter was delivered and has been apprehended," he said. "The Iranian side welcomed the content of the letter and voiced readiness to positively react to its content."

Jarallah expressed optimism that upcoming steps would witness a breakthrough in Gulf-Iran relations. He said the message of His Highness the Amir to Rouhani "is based on fundamentals of dialogue between the two sides." First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah delivered the message during a meeting with Rouhani in Tehran last Wednesday.

Executions

Meanwhile, Jarallah said that executions which took place recently in

Kuwait followed "lawful and transparent" court hearings. "These executions have not violated Arab, regional or international human rights treaties," Jarallah told reporters. All defendants have lawyers and were granted full legal rights, he added.

Jarallah said court rulings were issued by an independent judicial authority. he added that courts held public hearings and judges granted defense lawyers for defendants.

On Wednesday, the central prison witnessed execution of death sentences against seven individuals who committed a number of heinous crimes, according to a statement by the public prosecution. The individuals were of Bangladeshi, Filipino, Ethiopian, Egyptian and Kuwaiti nationalities, said the statement, adding that the death sentences were approved by His Highness the Amir.

Concern for security

In the meantime, Jarallah noted that the inauguration of the NATO-Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) regional center



Diplomats and other dignitaries attend the event.

in Kuwait, which took place on January 24th, reflects NATO's explicit concern for Kuwait's security and regional stability.

The center was opened in line with a previously-crafted accord between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the State of Kuwait and implicated "no messages whatsoever to any party," he said, affirming Kuwait's prime quest to bolster its security, stability and "solidity of its internal front."

Jarallah further indicated that the NATO center would hold training courses and seminars by NATO personnel, experienced in various domains. On NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg's call on other GCC states, namely Saudi Arabia and Oman, to join the Istanbul Initiative, Jarallah noted that the First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, had expressed hope that GCC countries join it. "I believe this is the normal evolution that the Gulf Cooperation Council States become members in the Istanbul Initiative." NATO's Istanbul Cooperation Initiative, launched at the Alliance's

Summit in the Turkish city in June 2004, aims to contribute to long-term global and regional security by offering countries of the broader Middle East region practical bilateral security cooperation with the alliance.

Stoltenberg had affirmed that having the center in Kuwait proves NATO's capability in adjusting to new challenges and working with Gulf countries. He had also indicated that cooperation at this level would facilitate joint action against terrorism and cybercrimes.

Turning to ties with Australia, Jarallah lauded these distinctive and developing bonds, underscoring weight of such a huge nation and recalling the Australians' solid support for Kuwait in face of the 1990 aggression by the ousted Iraqi regime. Nowadays, Australia plays a key role as part of the international coalition against "Daesh," he said alluding to the so-called Islamic State (IS). He also reaffirmed Kuwait's readiness to cooperate with Australia on various political, security and military issues, in addition to investments. — KUNA



SOCIETY FACES DISSOLUTION FOR INTERFERING IN POLITICAL ISSUES

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: The legal affairs department at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor (MSAL) is considering dissolving Kuwait Society for the Follow-up Issues of Disabled People for interfering in political issues and calling for and taking part in a sit-in at Irada Square last month. MSAL believes that the society violated article 6 of law number 24/1962 pertaining clubs and NGOs.

In a related note, Chairman of the parliament's budgets and final statements committee Adnan Abdulsamad said the committee discussed MSAL's final statement and audit reports for the fiscal year 2015-2016. The committee hailed MSAL's cooperation with auditors and CSC and called for including more categories to those receiving social aid, such as Kuwaiti women married to non-Kuwaitis. The committee also urged MSAL to reconsider its decision on suspending divorcees' social allowances as well as MSAL's proposal to cut other social allowances. "If the minister wants to cut expenses, there are already millions of dinars wasted at MSAL," Abdulsamad underlined.

Meanwhile, MP Abdullah Fahad rejected MSAL's call to cut social allowances for all categories and warned Minister Hind Al-Sabeeh that such a decision would have a devastating impact on many families. "Deserving citizens such as divorcees, widows, unemployed people, students and Kuwaiti women married to non-Kuwaitis

are already suffering because of the high cost of living," he said.

Allowances

The Public Authority for Disabled Affairs urged the Civil Service Commission (CSC) to pay professional rehabilitation employees hazard allowances. The Public Authority for Applied Education and Training's (PAAET) Deputy Director Majid Al-Saleh said CSC had been accordingly contacted to do justice to the employees and treat them equally as PAAET's medical and nursing staff. In other news, the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) announced paying 50 of its employees a sum of KD 634,000 annually including KD 30,000 to one of nine consultants. The authority also decided forming a technical committee to visit the South Mubtlaa project four times a month to check the progress of construction works there.

Amiri pardon

Minister of Justice and Minister of State for Assembly Affairs Faleh Al-Azab approved the conditions of the Amiri pardon given to inmates who had already served half their time with good conduct, said informed sources, noting that the conditions include excluding non-Kuwaitis imprisoned for crimes (except bedoons) and those who committed cybercrimes, arson, scuttled ships and other environmental violations, in addition to child molesters and sex offenders.

MP PROPOSES COMMITTEE TO MANAGE DEMOGRAPHY

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: MP Waleed Al-Tabtabaei filed a proposal to form a special committee under the name of 'The National Committee to Regulate and Manage Demography'. According to the proposal, the committee would be responsible for achieving the population balance, making sure that citizens get all rights as per the constitution, and performing a study and plan to limit expats' numbers to only 50 percent of the population within a maximum of seven years. It also calls for annually replacing at least 15 percent of expat public employees with citizens, controlling marginal labor, cancelling the residency of and deporting extraneous expat laborers, forming a special company to be responsible for recruiting foreign labor and to report quarterly to the parliament.



MP Waleed Al-Tabtabaei

national juice production companies to a meeting to discuss voluntary participation in a national campaign to reduce the amount of sugar in their products. This was recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO) in a meeting on reducing sugar intake in the Middle East held in 2015, as sugar is the main reason behind tooth cavities, obesity and diabetes. Hamad explained WHO recommended only a maximum of 10 percent of daily energy intake should come from sugar, ie 50 gm daily.

The meeting was attended by representatives from KDCow, KDD, ABC and Petra, in addition to Chairman of the Kuwait Union of Consumer Co-operative Societies (KUCCS) Saad Al-Shabo, KUCCS Manager Bader Al-Radaan and Kuwait Foodstuff Merchants and Manufacturers Union's Deputy Director Nabil Foudah. They all expressed willingness to take part in the campaign and recommended expanding it to other GCC states.

Sugar intake

Nutritionist Dr Nawal Al-Hamad invited

KUWAIT'S SOVEREIGN CREDIT RATING STILL SOLID: MINISTER

KUWAIT: Kuwait's sovereign credit rating remains strong enough to lure investors and issue public debt, without having to resort to "drastic measures," the Ministry of Finance underscored yesterday. In response to an article published in Al-Qabas newspaper, which attributed Boursa Kuwait's recent momentum to a "sovereign decision," official spokesman for the Ministry of Finance Khaled Al-Rubaiaan told the press that Kuwait's sovereign credit rat-

ing is sold despite dwindling oil prices. "There is no correlation between the performance of the Kuwaiti bourse and the issuance of public debt," he noted, adding that the Kuwaiti stock exchange is susceptible to volatile conditions in the global stock market. Moreover, the spokesman highlighted that the Ministry of Finance is eager to cooperate with the government and private sectors to ameliorate the national economy. — KUNA

CRIMES DOWN BY NEARLY 25%

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Crimes dropped by 24.8 percent last year compared to a year before, the Ministry of Interior (MoI) announced yesterday. Undersecretary Lt Gen Suleiman Al-Fahd made the announcement during a special presentation on 2016 statistics, which was also attended by assistant undersecretaries and top security officials. Statistics prepared by MoI's research and studies center also showed an 18.4 percent drop in homicides, 27.6 percent drop in felonies, a 20.7 percent drop in drug-related crimes and 47.6 percent drop in drug-related fatalities. Statistics also showed that cybercrimes increased from 1,461 in 2015 to 3,942 in 2016, while traffic accidents fell by 15 percent and traffic tickets dropped by 12.7 percent.

Maintenance

Separately, MoI's relations and security media department said the driving test section in South Surra will be closed for two months for maintenance from Feb 5, 2017. The department added that during this period, the Mubarak Al-Kabeer driving test section will be transferred to Sabahiya, Farwaniya section will be transferred to Sabhan and Hawally section will be transferred to the Capital during afternoon working hours from 1:30 pm to 5 pm.

Worker injured

An Arab construction worker sustained

severe injuries when he fell into an elevator shaft in an under-construction house in Saad Al-Abdullah, said security sources, noting that the man was rushed to Jahra hospital.

Cars fire

A fire broke out in two vehicles parked in Salwa. Security sources said firemen rushed to the scene and controlled the fire, preventing it from spreading to other vehicles. A case was filed and further investigations are underway to determine the cause of the blaze. Another fire broke out in a grocery store in Kazema. Security sources noted that firemen managed to control the fire without reporting any casualties.



KUWAIT: Interior Ministry's Undersecretary Lt Gen Suleiman Al-Fahd speaks during a special presentation yesterday.



KUWAIT: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah chairs the Cabinet's meeting yesterday. — KUNA

CABINET DEPLORES MOSQUE ATTACK IN QUEBEC, CANADA

CABINET RECHRISTENS COMMITTEE TASKED WITH IMPROVING BUSINESS

KUWAIT: The Kuwaiti Cabinet condemned yesterday's attack against the Quebec Islamic Cultural Center in which six people were killed and eight others injured. The cabinet reiterated in a statement Kuwait's firm position based on rejecting these criminal acts which run counter to all religions and human values and norms. The cabinet prayed to Allah Almighty to bestow his mercy and forgiveness upon the deceased victims, and wished the speedy recovery of the wounded. Meanwhile, the cabinet condemned a recent hotel attack in the Somali capital of Mogadishu, which left dozens of people dead or wounded. It reaffirmed Kuwait's support to all steps being taken by the Somali government to maintain security and stability nationwide.

Meanwhile, the Cabinet said that recent executions were carried out following public fair trials in line with the Kuwaiti law. It stressed in a statement that the executions did not violate relevant international conventions, mainly the Universal Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Arab Charter on Human Rights as well as Gulf Declaration of Human Rights. It noted that Kuwaiti laws ensure fair and transparent trials ahead of executions, adding that this penalty aimed at protecting human rights and safeguarding social security.

The Central Prison had recently witnessed the execution of death sentences against seven individuals who committed a number of heinous crimes. The executed people were of Bangladeshi, Filipino, Ethiopian, Egyptian and Kuwaiti nationalities.

Improving business

During its weekly meeting at Bayan Palace, chaired by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah,

the Cabinet agreed to rename a committee dealing with the country's business environment as the permanent committee to improve business environment and enhance competition.

On the committee, the Cabinet has decided that it will also comprise the Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI), Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) and Kuwait Economic Society. Moreover, the Cabinet has assigned the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Ministry of Justice, Kuwait Municipality and Kuwait General Administration of Customs (KGAC) to implement measures taken by the committee.

Facilitating business

Meanwhile, the Cabinet was offered an explanation by Minister of Commerce and Industry Khaled Al-Roudhan, where he spoke of the committee's recent work that aims to facilitate business in the country, which in turn, will prove beneficial to the economy. Similarly, the Cabinet looked over a study conducted by a committee dealing with economic affairs, over conditions in some government bodies. The Cabinet lauded the initiative and has referred it to the higher committee tasked with implementing financial and economic reforms.

The Cabinet also endorsed a suggestion by an economic affairs committee germane to merging the 2016/2017 fiscal budgets of government ministries and institutions, as it will be referred to His Highness the Amir pending approval in Parliament. Furthermore, the Cabinet also approved a suggestion by a legal committee for an agreement for legal assistance between Kuwait and Armenia, referring it to His Highness the Amir for approval in Parliament.

Other suggested laws that have been approved by the Cabinet deal with the public tenders' law, a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between Kuwait and the United Nations (UN) for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and an aviation agreement between Kuwait and Azerbaijan. An MoU to form a joint committee for cooperation between Kuwait and Brunei was also approved.

National holidays

On the advent of Kuwait's national festivities marking the 56th National Day and 26th Liberation Day, and 11th anniversary of His Highness the Amir and His Highness the Crown Prince's assumption to power, the Cabinet wished Kuwait and Kuwaitis an everlasting grace of safety, security and development. It also wished solid brotherhood and friendship among Kuwaitis, further progress and prosperity for Kuwait, and an everlasting health and wellness for His Highness the Amir and His Highness the Crown Prince.

Meanwhile, the Cabinet reviewed the letter sent by King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud of Saudi Arabia to His Highness the Amir, in which he invited His Highness to attend and participate in the Janaderiya festival in Riyadh.

It also informed First Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah on the outcomes of NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg's recent visit to the country, during which he inaugurated the NATO-Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) regional Centre. Furthermore, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled informed the Cabinet on the outcomes of his recent visit to Iran, during which he delivered His Highness the Amir's letter to President Hassan Rouhani. — KUNA

OPPOSITION MPs MEET AHEAD OF INFORMATION MINISTER GRILLING

MPs WANT VOTE ON AMENDMENT TO CHARGES LAW

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: About 12 opposition MPs held a coordination meeting yesterday ahead of the debate of the grilling against Information and Youth Minister Sheikh Salman Al-Humoud Al-Sabah which is scheduled to take place today.

Although several other MPs could not attend because they were either outside the country or busy, the opposition bloc formed of 26 lawmakers is no longer a reality as their number has sharply dwindled.

Islamist MP Mohammad Hayef, who hosted the meeting at his assembly office, admitted in a statement to reporters that the number of the opposition bloc is far less than the 26 lawmakers who met immediately after the election. That should be good news for Sheikh Salman because even if his grillers manage to file a no-confidence motion, they will not have the support of the 25 lawmakers needed to vote him out of office.

Coordination committee

MP Majed Al-Mutairi, who attended the meeting, said that it was agreed to form a seven-member coordination committee that will coordinate meetings of the bloc. Mutairi said the meeting discussed the grilling and expected that it will lead to filing a no-confidence motion.

The three lawmakers who filed the grilling - Waleed Al-Tabtabaei, Abdulwahab Al-Babtain and Al-Humaidi Al-Subaie - held a rehearsal for the grilling in the assembly chamber. Babtain warned against deleting any of the grilling issues and said that he was unaware if a no-confidence motion against the minister will be filed. He urged MPs to hear the debate first and then decide. Based on the internal charter of the national assembly, the three MPs who filed the grilling will be given three hours to explain their views and present their reasons for questioning the minister. Then the minister will be given three hours to respond. The three lawmakers will then be given 15 minutes each to respond to the minister who will in turn be given around 30 minutes to respond a second time.

Three MPs supporting the grilling and three opposing it will then be allowed to speak alter-

nately for 15 minutes each before the debate is finished with the minister's final comments. If the opposition MPs decide to file a no-confidence motion, it has to be signed by 10 lawmakers. The vote on the motion will take place eight days later.

Twenty-five MPs must support the motion to succeed as cabinet ministers are not allowed to vote on such motions. If the motion gets the support of 25 MPs, the minister will be considered automatically dismissed. The grilling accuses the minister of failing to take the necessary measures to lift the international sanctions on Kuwaiti sports in addition to alleged financial and administrative violations.

Raising charges

MP Khalil Al-Saleh meanwhile said he sent a letter to the national assembly asking that voting on a draft law preventing the government from raising public charges and fuel prices without the prior approval of the assembly, should take place on February 14. Saleh said that he was one of several MPs who submitted the draft law which essentially wants to prevent the government from hiking petrol prices without a law to be passed by the national assembly. The government hiked petrol prices in September for the first time in almost two decades. MPs could not stop the decision



Information and Youth Minister Sheikh Salman Al-Humoud Al-Sabah

because the law allows the government to raise fuel prices without the prior approval of the assembly. Now the amendment wants to restrict the government hands.

Opposition MP Riyadh Al-Adasani meanwhile demanded that the assembly allocates one hour of the February 14 session to debate the issue of the so-called illegal bank deposit scandal in which a number of lawmakers are allegedly involved. Adasani wants the time in order to announce the names of MPs or former MPs implicated in a national assembly probe but the results of the investigation were never released.

INTERIOR MINISTER TO DESIGNATE HQ FOR ELECTORATE DELEGATIONS

KUWAIT: Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah laid out a decree yesterday to form special headquarters for voter delegations in the country's five constituencies.

The decision is in line with Law 35/1962, dealing with parliamentary elections, which stipulates that every constituency should have its own electorate delegation comprised of a judge and two members, a statement by the Ministry of Interior (MoI) noted. Moreover, the statement added that the

electoral agenda should be amended in February of every year.

On the changes, the statement pointed out that it includes the addition of names who have been eligible to vote, while the names of those who do not meet voting requirements will be deleted. The statement called on citizens seeking inclusion in the national electorate to submit their requests to the delegation in their respective constituency, carrying with them copies of their citizenship certificates and Civil IDs. — KUNA

In Brief

DIWAN OFFICIALS SUBMIT DISCLOSURE STATEMENTS

KUWAIT: Senior officials from His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah's Diwan have provided the Public Anti-Corruption Authority with their financial disclosure statements, following His Highness' orders. The Diwan's chief Sheikhha Etimad Khaled Al-Sabah said. — KUNA



PARLIAMENT DEPUTY SPEAKER RETURNS HOME

KUWAIT: Deputy parliament speaker Essa Al-Kanderi returned home from Britain where he underwent treatment. He was received at the airport Sunday by National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem. — KUNA



LEADERSHIP CARES FOR STUDENTS

MANAMAH: Kuwaiti political leadership cares so much for Kuwaiti students abroad, Dean of Diplomatic Corps and Kuwaiti Ambassador to Bahrain Sheikh Azzam Mubarak Al-Sabah said yesterday while meeting with representatives of Kuwaiti students studying in Bahrain. — KUNA



Photo

of the day



KUWAIT: A Kuwaiti owl breeder poses with his bird. — KUNA



KUWAIT DISTRIBUTES AID TO 700 SYRIAN FAMILIES IN JORDAN

AMMAN: Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) distributed Sunday financial and material aid to 700 Syrian families living in Mafraq governorate, near the borders with Syria, part of KRCS's ongoing relief campaign in Jordan.

This campaign aimed at alleviating suffering of Syrian refugees facing cold weather, so KRCS distributed clothes, blankets and basic food items, said

Khaled Al-Zaid, head of the society's field team. He said KRCS would continue with its humanitarian campaign nationwide in Jordan with the target of including 4,000 families.

Zaid called on humanitarian organizations and individuals to support the Syrian refugees whether in Jordan or in neighboring countries.

Ali Al-Shdeifat, head of Jordan Red

Crescent's branch in Mafraq, commended the cooperation and coordination with KRCS which resulted in an orderly provision of aid for the Syrian families.

He thanked Kuwait for its relentless humanitarian support for the refugees in Jordan and other parts of the world. Shdeifat said the large number of Syrian refugees in Jordan was causing a strain on infrastructure and services. — KUNA



KUWAIT PROVIDES HEATING OIL TO MOSUL IDPS IN NINEVEH



IRBIL: Kuwait provided yesterday about 30,000 liters of heating oil to the internally displaced persons (IDP), from Mosul, at a camp in Nineveh governorate under the supervision of the International Organization for Migration (IOM). IOM has distributed the Kuwaiti-financed kerosene liquids to 740 displaced Iraqi families in camps in Qayyarah area, said Abdulhamid Miran, IOM's representative in Irbil.

Each family received 40 liters of Kerosene, Miran said, adding that heating oil would help these families to stay warm during extreme cold weather. IOM's Qayyarah Jadah camp, built in cooperation with Iraqi displacement and migration ministry, is currently accommodating over 3,000 displaced families. — KUNA

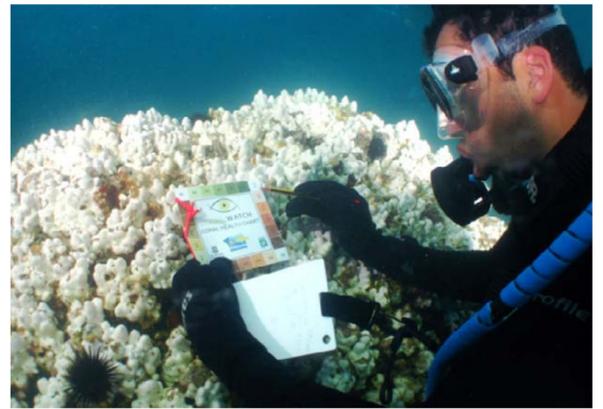




KUWAIT: In these file photos, Kuwait Dive Team members carry out operations at coral reefs in Kuwait including cleaning and inspecting the spread of bleaching. — KUNA

KUWAIT DIVE TEAM PARTNERS WITH QUEENSLAND UNIVERSITY IN CORAL REEF PROTECTION PROGRAM

PROJECT MONITORS OVER 1,200 CORAL REEF SITES WORLDWIDE



KUWAIT: Kuwait Dive Team of the Volunteer Environmental Foundation stressed yesterday the importance of strengthening international relations and environmental visits with various bodies and specialized centers in the field of the protection of coral reef and beaches.

Team leader Walid Al-Fadil said that the team visited recently the Coral Watch Center at the University of Queensland, Australia, and become acquainted with the global project 'Coral Watch' in which Kuwait is a partner represented by the Kuwait Dive Team.

1,200 sites

Fadil added that such a large environmental project monitors more than 1,200 sites of coral reefs in the seas and oceans of the world and also serves researchers and professionals concerned with changes affecting coral reef environment.

He explained that the center chose the Kuwaiti Dive Team as the first global partner in the 'ambassadors of coral reef protection program' based on its efforts over the past years

in the field of control and the protection of coral reef, pointing out that the center also nominated the Kuwaiti team to attend a workshop on monitoring coral reef to be held by the University of Queensland in the middle of this year.

He said that the visit also included participation in cleaning of the Lillies coast in the city of Gladstone, east of Australia, that was organized by the 'Conservation Volunteers' in the regional sector of the city during which several remnants were removed from the coast, in addition to becoming acquainted with the Australian expertise in the control and cleaning of beaches as well as encouraging civil society to pay more attention to beaches. He added that the mission was a success, thanks to the cooperation of Linda Fahle, Gladstone Regional Manager of 'Conservation Volunteers', Australia.

Distinctive experience

Fadil noted that the team was able to carry out a distinctive scientific experience through



its stay for three days in the Heron Island Nature Reserve, which lies 60 kilometers east of Gladstone, one of the best natural reserves in the world for the availability of the distinct

bio-diversity of birds, turtles, sea creatures, fish and coral reefs.

He reported that the island contains a scientific research center affiliated to the

University of Queensland, which was founded in 1951 and is one of the largest research centers in the world. He also indicated that the team was able to dive in the Great Reef and documented the diversity of other sea creatures in pictures and movies.

Bleaching

He said that the team also monitored a case of a limited bleaching of coral within the Coral Watch program and also participated in the environmental program on the island concerning study of turtles and following up hatching of their eggs and their access to the sea in peace as well as being able to save young turtles.

Fadil expressed gratitude to all those who made the visit a success topped by the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Science (KFAS), stressing the continuation of its international activities in the field of marine and coastal environment protection and to identify the best ways to spread environmental awareness. — KUNA

KUWAIT FINANCES UNIVERSITY EXPANSION

AMMAN: Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) signed on Sunday a deal to allocate \$2 million for building and equipping the 'Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah Complex' at Al-Quds University in Palestine. The deal was signed by KFAED Director-General Abdelwahab Al-Bader and the university president, Imad Abu Kishk, during a ceremony held at Kuwaiti embassy building in the Jordanian capital.

The new complex would increase the university accommodation capacity to serve growing numbers of students, Bader said. Two floors are planned to be built and the medical college will be renovated, according to the venture due to finish by the year-end.

The university was originally an orphanage house in the 1950s, but it was later developed and turned into an academic institution with donations from Kuwaiti citizens. Kuwaiti Ambassador Hamad Al-Duaij, who attended the ceremony, affirmed keenness on aiding the Palestinian people, namely the students. For his part, Abu Kishk expressed gratitude to Kuwait, namely His Highness the Amir, for supporting the Palestinian people and projects to expand the university.

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah was the first honorary chairman of the board of trustees at Al-Quds University, now accommodating more than 12,000 students. — KUNA



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Report

MINISTRY DENIES PHONE TAP RUMORS

KUWAIT: Director of the Interior Ministry's Relations and Security Media Department Brigadier Adel Al-Hashash strongly denied rumors claiming that the ministry is monitoring phone conversations and personal social media messages, describing such allegations as 'baseless.' "The ministry does not tap phones or violate privacies," he said, noting that images that went viral on social media showing people installing special cameras were actually taken in another Gulf state. He also stressed that such attempts to scare citizens and residents will be traced by criminal investigators to refer those responsible to public prosecution.

Retaliation

A citizen was arrested for burning down a bedoon (stateless) man's house in Sulaibiya, said security sources, noting that the suspect justified his crime by retaliating against the bedoon for selling him fake drugs.

Auto theft

An Egyptian man reported that an anonymous person stopped him in Sulaibiya claiming that the front right tire was running flat. He stopped his vehicle and stepped outside of it, then the man rushed inside the vehicle and drove off with it, he said. An auto theft case was filed pending further investigations.

Kidnap threat

A female citizen reported receiving phone calls from an unidentified woman threatening to kidnap her granddaughter, said security sources, noting that the woman demanded for protection. A case was filed for investigations.

Drug possession

In an attempt to get rid of evidence after being arrested with the possession of hashish, a citizen swallowed a piece of hashish and was hospitalized. He later managed to escape from the hospital after receiving medical treatment, said security sources. Investigations are ongoing in search for him.

Death

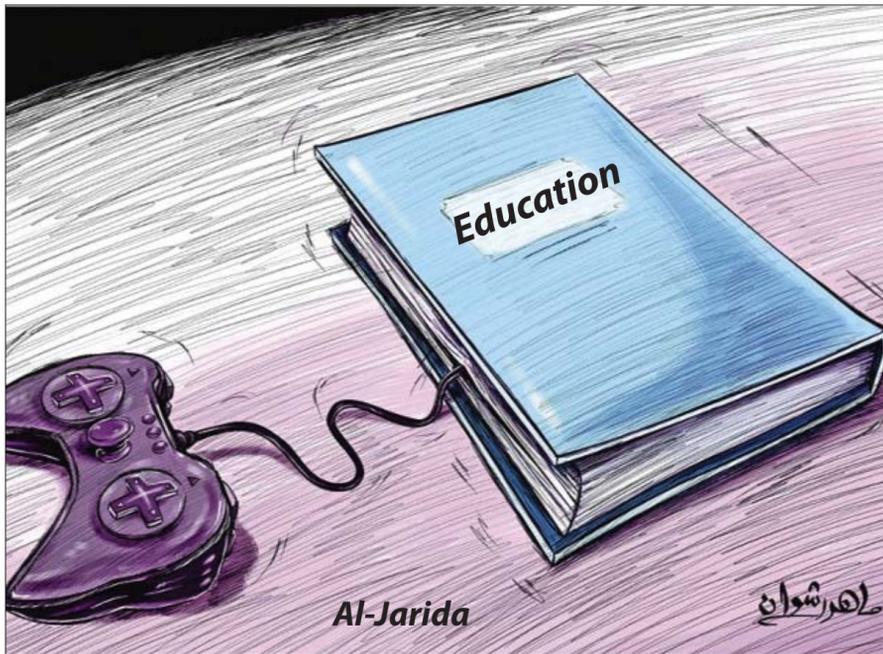
A farm keeper was killed and another suffered from smoke inhalation when they left a burning charcoal fire inside their room overnight.

Policeman insulted

A traffic policeman filed a complaint against a female citizen accusing her of insulting him while on duty, said security sources. The policeman said that while he was issuing a traffic ticket for the girl for violating traffic laws, she insulted him and said that her uncle is a major general while another is a lieutenant colonel. She told him that he was 'nothing but a serviceman who can be crushed' before driving off, he said. A case was filed.

Dog attack

A citizen and his sister were attacked by their neighbor's dog in Mubarak Al-Kabeer, said security sources, noting that the neighbor easily managed to control the canine. —Al-Rai



Al-Jarida

القمرشوان

الجريدة

Al-Jarida

KINDLY BE INFORMED

By Ali Mahmoud Khajah

There are a few basic elements that make a place fit for permanent residence. I am not talking about whether a piece of land is mountainous or overlooks a beach. I am talking about the cities where people live and spend most of their lives.

As far as Kuwait is concerned, these elements include access to water, for drinking and washing, and food, whether locally grown or imported. They also include housing that suits Kuwait's climate, properly paved roads facilitating transport for the population, power supply for all electricity needs, incomes allowing people to earn a living, adequate health care - including medical staff and equipment - and shops and stores, allowing people to purchase necessary goods.

Medical services are, for the most part, provided by expats, especially nursing, equipment maintenance and the cleaning of medical facilities. The same can be said for the shops and stores we purchase most of our goods from, which are mainly run by expats. These expats are occasionally unpaid, while all Kuwaitis working in those sectors are paid for the work they do, and sometimes do not.

The bottom line is that basic elements of life in Kuwait are run by non-Kuwaitis and it would be hard, if not impossible, to replace them, not least because too many Kuwaitis believe labor jobs are beneath them. Yes, Kuwaitis managed to perform those jobs during the

1990/91 Iraqi Invasion, but that was an exception rather than the rule.

Despite our dependence on expats in Kuwait, many of us are deliberately trying to force them out of the country, believing they are responsible for traffic jams and the current state of deterioration. Well, let us think it over a little. Our harmful decision to export oil and refrain from various sectors cannot be changed in the blink of an eye or by strong rhetoric. Words cannot hide the fact that replacement requires a cultural change that would see us accept all sorts of jobs without looking down on them. Only then can we talk about Kuwait's demography in a more logical and realistic manner.

— Translated by Kuwait Times

Basic elements of life in Kuwait are run by non-Kuwaitis and it would be hard, if not impossible, to replace them

القمرشي

Al-Qabas

SELECTIVE LAW IMPLEMENTATION

By Khalid Al-Tarrah

Former Health Minister Ali Al-Obaidi left a broad argument over many decisions he made, especially with regards to 'medical tourism' and sending a large number of Kuwaitis into retirement, some of whom are experienced consultants in vital fields and have medical achievements that have saved a lot of lives. The Civil Service Commission (CSC) said in its reply to the legal question about "retiring some doctors and medical professionals," that it is a legal decision and falls under the authority of the minister according to what the public interest requires.

The retirement law and its articles are clear, but retiring doctors, especially consultants, might cause a disturbance in the medical field, especially under the increasing need for consultants with specialties. That will lead to a deficiency in the medical field, which in turn will lead to hiring non-Kuwaiti doctors in contradiction with the state's Kuwaitization policies. In some state departments including the foreign ministry, some ambassadors reached their retirement age and were retired, but some of them remained in service on special contracts through decisions made to serve the 'public interest,' besides other official bodies that grant special contracts to non-Kuwaitis over the age of 70 in fields such as law, engineering and medicine.

The issue is not implementation of the text of the law, rather complying with some laws for special purposes, while the law is sometimes broken or bypassed in other fields under the umbrella of the same state department. In the medical field, the health ministry sometimes invites foreign consultants who are over 70 years of age due to their experience, and this justifies keeping Kuwaiti medical expertise.

Retirement and use of foreign non-Kuwaiti expertise is one of the main reasons of demographic problems that Kuwait has been suffering from for years, and the best example can perhaps be found in the recent statement of Egypt's labor minister in regards to Egyptian labor forces and 'imposing' Egyptian manpower on the Kuwaiti labor market. The demographic structure in Kuwait became 'paralyzed because' of the comparatively low number of citizens and rise in the number other communities. And because of such grave mistakes, Kuwait will keep paying the price especially in the field of job opportunities.

The problem lies in the selective policies adopted by most state departments in implementing the law. Many exceptions are made in appointing officials who are unqualified for promotion or appointment because they already have passed the retirement age according to the law, but the government's appeasement of some people creates a social rift, discrimination and does not serve public interest. The demographic imbalance and selective implementation of retirement should get the attention of members of the parliament, and not just remain as words exchanged for ethnic, sectarian and political motives. Justice, equality and freedom are basic principles according to the constitution, so who will take the initiative to implement them?

— Translated by Kuwait Times

KIB STRATEGIC SPONSOR OF KUWAIT CSR CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION

KUWAIT: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) announced that it will be providing its strategic sponsorship to the second Kuwait CSR Conference and Exhibition, which is set to be held on the 1st and 2nd of February under the patronage of Sheikh Salman Al-Homoud Al-Sabah, Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs.



Nawaf Najia

The conference aims to promote a culture of social responsibility, inviting companies and governments to share their contributions and strategies in an effort to help expand current understanding about Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). KIB's

participation in the conference comes in line with the Bank's strategy to support programs and initiatives that promote social development.

On this occasion, Nawaf Najia, Manager of the Corporate Communications Unit at the Bank, said: "KIB is keen to participate in conferences such as this one that embody a message of social and national development. Through the accompanying exhibition, this event seeks to promote the values of social responsibility, emphasizing its vital role in achieving sustainability."

Najia further added that the conference presents a great opportunity to meet with prominent local and international CSR professionals, who will be presenting their own unique ideas and examining best practices in CSR. The event will also showcase some standout CSR programs developed by leading companies, in addition to presenting examples of social responsibility plans developed by governments around the world to achieve development and sustainability.

KIB has always believed in the importance of social responsibility, and the need for organizations to utilize their resources to invest in initiatives that help improve the quality of life in the community. In this sense, KIB believes that its role within the community goes beyond the mere provision of banking services and products; but rather, that as a leading financial institution it has an important duty to fulfill towards the community - by supporting and initiating programs that better it.



NBK SUPPORTS JEDAREYAT INITIATIVE IN REPAINTING THE ORPHANS HOUSE WALL

RUSHAID: COMMUNITY SERVICE AT FOREFRONT OF NBK'S PRIORITIES

KUWAIT: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) supported new Jedareyat Volunteer Group initiative in transforming the wall of the Orphans House to a colorful painting, as part of a wider philanthropic scheme that include involvement of NBK in a series of cultural activities meant to encourage our community to follow suit the influential message of art and support young Kuwaiti talents.

More than 40 volunteers participated in this initiative which was held in cooperation with "Kiyan social care society". The repainting of the Orphans house wall embraces creative colorful

drawings in addition to NBK's group emblem as an appreciation for the bank's support and sponsorship.

Commenting on the occasion, NBK's Public Relations Executive Manager, Abdul Mohsen Al-Rushaid said that NBK's commitment to the community, which by far exceeds the role normally expected from a banking institution and embraces a broad spectrum of social and philanthropic involvement.

"NBK has a long tradition in the adoption and support of social and cultural initiatives. Our vision have met with Jedareyat,



Abdul Mohsin Al-Rushaid

and here came this cooperation which we look through it to see a beautiful, colorful Kuwait signed by talented and ambitious young Kuwaitis," he added.

It is worth mentioning that NBK has undertaken several major initiatives to demonstrate its full support for society, including the creation of the NBK Children Hospital at Al Sabah Medical Area to provide medical attention for children suffering from chronic and incurable ailments, in addition to the annual budgets allocated for supporting the various charitable and philanthropic projects.



MILLENNIUM HOTELS AND RESORTS
MILLENNIUM • COPTHORNE

MILLENNIUM HOTEL WINS FOUR AWARDS AT HORECA KUWAIT

KUWAIT: In recognition of its excellence and adherence to the highest of hospitality services standard, Millennium Hotel and Convention Center Kuwait - for two consecutive years - wins four quality awards at the HORECA Kuwait 2017 exhibition. HORECA awarded the performance of the hotel's professional and experienced chefs who are part of Millennium's reputed Food and Beverage Department, and that is for their unconventional and unique plates and servings.

Commenting on this special occasion, Dani Saleh; the Area General Manager of Millennium and Copthorne Hotels Kuwait,

said: "HORECA Kuwait is the most anticipated culinary art show and hospitality exhibition in the country, hosting a large number of international chefs and attracting thousands of foodies each year. We are always keen on participating in hospitality events of such caliber for their prominence in recognizing the best in the industry. We are utterly proud to receive four awards this year to add to our trophy case. I would like to congratulate the heads of Millennium Hotel's Food and Beverage Department and their talented team of chefs for their wonderful performance."



Religious groups slam Trump's refugee order

MOURNERS GATHER FOR FUNERAL OF MUSLIM LAWYER

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TRUMP BEGINS GOVERNING BY CHAOS

SETTING FIRE TO THE PLAYBOOK US LEADERS HAVE LONG RELIED ON

WASHINGTON: Donald Trump campaigned as a disrupter. Now he's governing by chaos. Trump's temporary halt to the US refugee program - the most consequential policy he's unveiled in his presidency's opening days - wreaked havoc at airports and sparked protests across the country. The order left Trump's own government agencies scrambling, his Republican Party divided and allies around the world uneasy. A federal judge issued an emergency order temporarily blocking part of the measure, setting up a legal battle ahead.

Trump could have avoided at least some of these consequences. He could have consulted significantly with the agencies tasked with implementing the order. He could have delivered a speech explaining his action and its intent in detail to the American people. His team could have prepared a contingency plan for the newly banned travelers already en route to US as Trump signed the order.

Instead, Trump showed that not only does he intend to follow through on his controversial campaign promises, he plans to do so in the spirit of the mandate his advisers believe he has: disrupting Washington and setting fire to the playbook its leaders have long relied on.

It's not clear whether the White House acted Friday knowing the consequences that would follow. But on Saturday, as protesters crowded US airports where legal US residents were stuck in limbo, the president declared he was pleased with the results. "It's working out very nicely," Trump said Saturday. Trump is known to tolerate considerable instability and fluidity in his inner circle. His campaign was often improvisational and unpredictable, driven at times by the split decisions of the candidate. As a chief executive of a private company, Trump rarely had to contend with the complexity or scrutiny involved in operating the federal government.

Sowing confusion

Even before the chaos surrounding the refugee restrictions, Trump was sowing confusion in his first days in office. He announced an investigation into voter fraud - on Twitter - but a scheduled signing of the executive action was canceled at the last minute.

He clashed with the president of Mexico, one of America's most important international partners, over his planned



SEATTLE: The Statue of Liberty is pictured on a sign as people march in support of immigrants and refugees. — AFP

southern border wall, prompting President Enrique Pena Nieto to cancel a visit to Washington. A spokesman raised the prospect of paying for the wall with a 20 percent tax on all imports from Mexico, only to quickly backtrack.

As the weekend wrapped up, Trump's White House appeared to be acknowledging the trouble with governing by decree. Top aides scrambled to explain the policy and offer guidance to those implementing it.

A statement from the president sought to clarify that Trump was not intending a ban on all Muslims. Aides also backed off earlier assertions that a full ban on entry from sev-

eral Muslim-majority countries applied to those with US legal permanent residency "green cards." The White House, which was largely silent about details of the refugee restrictions after Trump signed the order, hastily arranged two briefings for reporters over the weekend.

Still, Trump heads into his second full week in office facing a test on which presidencies can rise and fall: selling a controversial and complicated policy to the public. He'll do so against the backdrop of a steady stream of sympathetic stories about families split up by the refugee ban, and children and the elderly detained at US airports.

Meanwhile, experts dispute Trump's assertion that the policy is needed to keep Americans safe. Recent acts of deadly extremist violence have been carried out either by US citizens or by individuals whose families weren't from the nations singled out. Many of Trump's loyal supporters no doubt back his actions and his decisive, urgent approach. As a candidate, Trump called for a full ban on Muslims coming to the US, then shifted his focus to temporarily halting entry from countries with terror ties to give the government time to implement "extreme vetting" measures.

Leaping to defense

Some Republicans also leapt to Trump's defense, including House Speaker Paul Ryan, who said it was "time to re-evaluate and strengthen the visa-vetting process." But Trump is otherwise left with few defenders, even within his own party. The White House spent little time briefing lawmakers on the order before the president signed it, leaving even those who might be inclined to support the directive with little information to help make Trump's case. Other Republicans were willing to publicly break with their party's new president.

"This executive order sends a signal, intended or not, that America does not want Muslims coming into our country," Republican Sens John McCain and Lindsey Graham said in a joint statement. "That is why we fear this executive order may do more to help terrorist recruitment than improve our security." The business executives and Silicon Valley moguls whose support Trump has been trying to cultivate also appeared caught off guard. Some issued statements criticizing the directive, noting the positive impact immigration has had on their businesses.

And allies - including British Prime Minister Theresa May, who spoke warmly about building a relationship with Trump after a visit to the White House Friday - panned the measure. For world leaders who depend on America's stability, Trump's action seems likely to only deepen their leering of his vows to govern unpredictably. "This will be one particularly egregious piece of evidence of their judgment of the whole man and it's a pretty negative judgment," Eliot Cohen, a State Department counselor under former President George W. Bush, said of the world's response. — AP

'SPIDERMAN' BURGLAR ON TRIAL OVER \$100M PARIS ART HAUL

PARIS: A burglar known as "Spiderman", notorious for daring acrobatic heists, goes on trial yesterday for the 2010 theft of a \$100-million haul that included works by Picasso and Matisse from a Paris gallery. Vjeran Tomic, 49, who is facing 14 charges, will stand trial along with two accomplices charged with handling stolen goods.

The three were charged over the May 2010 robbery at the Modern Art Museum of five paintings by Henri Matisse, Pablo Picasso, Georges Braque, Ferdinand Leger and Amedeo Modigliani. On May 19, 2010, a thief cut through a padlocked gate and broke a window to get into the gallery, one of the most-visited museums in Paris on the leafy banks of the Seine, in the shadow of the Eiffel Tower. The museum's alarms had been awaiting repair for several weeks and the thief somehow managed to knock out a security camera. Three guards were on duty that night, but the paintings were only found to be missing from their frames just as the museum prepared to open to the public the next day.

When police arrested the Serb in May 2011, Tomic told them he had initially broken into the museum for Leger's "Still Life with Candlestick" from 1922, not thinking he would also be able to steal another four. Besides the Leger canvas, the other works stolen were Picasso's cubist "Dove with Green Peas" from 1912 — worth an estimated 25 million euros (\$26.8 million) alone - French contemporary Matisse's "Pastoral" from 1905, Braque's "Olive Tree near Estaque" from 1906, and Modigliani's "Woman with a Fan" from 1919.

All but the Modigliani were hung in the same room in the museum, located in the well-heeled 16th district of Paris, which is run by the city and is home to more than 8,000 works of 20th-century art. Tomic said he took them all because he "liked" the paintings. Authorities put the total value of the haul at 100 million euros (\$107 million), but some experts said they were worth twice that, while admitting it would be totally impossible to sell them on the open market. French police arrested Tomic after receiv-

ing an anonymous tip. Surveillance cameras from the night of the heist recorded only one person entering through a window but the person could not be identified.

Where are paintings?

Tomic, an athletic 1.90 meter rock climbing enthusiast, earned his nickname for clambering into posh Parisian apartments and museums alike, to steal valuable gems and works of art. Authorities said he was spotted by a homeless man as he roamed around the museum in the days leading to the theft.

And they say Tomic's mobile phone or that of one of his accomplices showed a signal coming from that area during the heist. They trailed the signal to a Paris metro station then to a car park in the city centre. Authorities believe that is where he may have sold the paintings to a first dealer. A second dealer claimed he held on to the paintings for a short time before he dumped them in a garbage can, which authorities do not believe. International police body Interpol put out an alert to its 188 member countries in the hope of recovering the five paintings, but so far they all remain missing. There has been a spate of art thefts in Europe in recent years. — AFP

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MILITARY: FIRST-KNOWN COMBAT DEATH SINCE TRUMP SWORN IN

WASHINGTON: It's been described as the greatest burden any commander in chief must bear. Just days into his young presidency, a US service member has died in military action authorized by Donald Trump. It's the first known combat death of a member of the US military since Trump took the oath of office on Jan. 20 and underscores the gravity of the decisions he now makes.

Three service members were also wounded Sunday during the firefight with militants from Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula's branch in Yemen. The raid left nearly 30 others dead, including an estimated 14 militants. A fourth US service member was injured when a military aircraft assisting in the mission had a "hard landing" nearby, according to US Central Command.

"Americans are saddened this morning with news that a life of a heroic service member has been taken in our fight

against the evil of radical Islamic terrorism," Trump said in a statement. "My deepest thoughts and humblest prayers are with the family of this fallen service member," he said. The names of the casualties were not released.

Planning for the clandestine counterterrorism raid began before President Barack Obama left office on Jan. 20, but Trump authorized the raid, according to a US defense official, who was not authorized to discuss details beyond those announced by the Pentagon and so spoke on condition of anonymity. The US has been striking Al-Qaeda in Yemen from the air for more than 15 years, mostly using drones. Sunday's surprise pre-dawn raid could signal a new escalation against extremist groups in the Arab world's poorest but strategically located country.

The action provides an early window into how the new president will put his

campaign rhetoric into action when it comes to foreign intervention. Trump had promised an "America first" approach and an end to the "era of nation building" if he won the White House. Many interpreted his language as isolationist and expected Trump to be more cautious about where the US intervened.

'Keeping our country safe'

At the same time, Trump had broadcast a stronger posture on the world stage. He pledged to beef up the military and said he aimed to achieve "peace through strength." Sunday's raid was not the first time that the United States had conducted a counterterrorism raid on the ground in Yemen, but it was not the usual approach of striking from the air, the defense official said.

The raid was planned as a clandestine operation and not intended to be

made public, but the loss of a service member changed that, the official said, adding that no detainees were taken in the operation. An Al-Qaeda official and an online news service linked to the terror group said the raid left about 30 people dead, including women and children. Among the children killed was Anwar, the 8-year-old daughter of Anwar Al-Awlaki, a radical Yemeni-American cleric killed in a US airstrike in Yemen in 2011, according to the girl's grandfather.

Nasser Al-Awlaki told The Associated Press that Anwar was visiting her mother when the raid took place. She was shot in the neck and bled for two hours before she died, he said. In addition to killing the militants, White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer said US forces "captured a whole host of information about future plots that's going to benefit this country and keep us safe."

The president "extends his condolences," he said on ABC's "This Week." "But more importantly, he understands the fight that our servicemen and women conduct on a daily basis to keep this country safe." Just over a week ago, suspected US drone strikes killed three other alleged Al-Qaeda operatives in Bayda in what was the first such killings reported in the country since Trump assumed the US presidency.

Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, long seen by Washington as among the most dangerous branches of the global terror network, has exploited the chaos of Yemen's civil war, seizing territory in the south and east. The war began in 2014, when Shiite Houthis rebels and their allies swept down from the north and captured the capital, Sanaa. A Saudi-led military coalition has been helping government forces battle the rebels for nearly two years. —AP

WHO IS AFFECTED BY IMMIGRATION BAN?

WASHINGTON: Ambiguity reigned Sunday as to the finer details of Donald Trump's temporary ban on incoming refugees and travelers from seven Muslim countries, with questions remaining about how exactly the measures affect various populations. The order initially took many travelers by surprise, especially those already aboard airplanes en route to the United States as the president signed the measure into force on Friday afternoon.

Administration officials reported that 109 people had been detained as they arrived in the United States on Saturday, of which "a couple dozen" individuals were still being held as of Sunday morning. The following is a list of the nationalities and groups of people affected by Trump's order, which is titled "Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States."

Refugees

The decree prohibits entry to all refugees, regardless of nationality, for 120 days. Beyond that time, the United States will admit a maximum of 50,000 refugees in 2017, more than halving the 110,000-person limit set by former president Barack Obama. The US refugee program was previously frozen for three months following the September 11 attack in 2001.

7-nation strike

All Syrians, refugee or otherwise, are forbidden from entering the United States until further notice. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the Syrian war has forced 4.8 million people to flee the country since 2011. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said in December it had recorded the deaths of 312,001 people since the conflict

began with anti-government protests in March 2011. No visas will be issued for 90 days to migrants or visitors from seven mainly Muslim countries: Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen.

Green card holders

The decree does not affect those who hold a US green card. Secretary of Homeland Security John Kelly declared the entry of lawful permanent residents to be "in the national interest." However, White House Chief of Staff Reince Priebus said that nationals from the seven countries named in the order should expect to be subject to increased border controls.

Visa holders

All visa holders coming from the seven specified countries are subject to the new order, with the exception of those who hold diplomatic visas or visas to international institutions such as NATO or the United Nations. Judges in at least four states have blocked part of the ban, ordering authorities to stop deporting refugees and other travelers stuck at US airports.

Bi-nationals

The situation for individuals with dual nationality remains complex. US officials said Saturday that American citizens who also have a passport from one of the seven barred countries are not affected by the order. An exemption is also granted to dual nationals holding British and Canadian passports. Britain said its nationals would not be subject to additional checks unless they traveled directly to the US from one of the listed countries. But dual nationals who hold passports from one of the seven countries plus an additional foreign country will not be able to gain entrance. —AFP

SYRIA WARNS OF SETTING UP SAFE ZONES FOR CIVILIANS AS UNSAFE

BEIRUT: Syria warned yesterday of safe zones for civilians that US President Donald Trump has expressed interest in creating, saying it would have to come in coordination with the Syrian government, otherwise it would be unsafe and violate the Arab nation's sovereignty. The announcement was made in Damascus by Foreign Minister Walid al-Moallem during a meeting with the head of the UN refugee agency UNHCR, Filippo Grandi, who began an official visit to Syria yesterday.

The announcement came about a week after the Trump administration's expressed interest in setting up safe zones for civilians in war-torn Syria, an idea that was greeted with caution by Russia and Turkey, who have taken the lead in the latest peace efforts to end the Mideast country's devastating six-year war.

The idea of safe zones, proposed by both Republican Donald Trump and Democrat Hillary Clinton during the US presidential election campaign, was ruled out by the Obama administration for fear it would put US aircraft in harm's way with Russia waging an air campaign to aid Syrian President Bashar Assad's forces since September 2015.

The recent rapprochement between Russia and Turkey, a key backer of Syrian rebels which now has thousands of troops in northern Syria, in theory makes the cre-

ation of safe zones more achievable. So does Trump's pledge to mend ties with Moscow. However, Syrian state news agency, SANA, said the foreign ministry and UNHCR officials agreed that any attempt to impose safe zones without coordination with the Syrian government will be an "unsafe act and will pose a violation of the Syrian sovereignty."

Travel ban

Meanwhile, Al-Moallem called on all Syrians refugees who fled the war in their homeland to return home, pledging that the government will meet all their needs. It was not clear if the call was related to Trump's signing of executive orders placing a 90-day ban on travel to the US by citizens of Iraq, Syria, Iran, Sudan, Libya, Somalia or Yemen, and a 120-day suspension of the US refugee program. Syrians are indefinitely blocked from entry.

Syria's conflict, which began in March 2011, has displaced half the country's population and sent more than four million Syrians as refugees, mostly to neighboring countries. SANA said Al-Moallem briefed Grandi on the "huge efforts" the Syrian government is exerting to improve the living conditions of its people and the displaced as well. For his part, Grandi stressed that the offering of humanitarian aid will continue. —AP



TEHRAN: Pedestrians make their way on a sidewalk in central Tehran. — AP

IRANIAN STUDENTS FEEL ROBBED OF ALL THEIR AMERICAN DREAMS

'FUTURE OF ALL OUR PLANS IN JEOPARDY'

DUBAI: The new US immigration curbs have cast uncertainty over the futures of thousands of Iranian students in the United States, with many losing hope of being able to finish their studies or find a job in the country. US President Donald Trump's executive order bans travelers from seven Muslim-majority countries including Iran for three months, and there is little certainty of what will happen after that.

Many of the students have spent their families' life savings to pay for an American higher education, which they hope will be a ticket to a well-paid job in the West or Iran. Now they fear if they leave the country, they will not be allowed back in. They also do not know what status they will have after the three months are up, and whether they will be allowed to study, live or work in the United States.

Amin Amouhadi, 32, studies at the University of Georgia. His girlfriend, who is also Iranian, is about to finish her PhD in Canada. "We were planning to get married in a month and move in together but the current ban and its possible consequences have put the future of all our plans in jeopardy," he told Reuters. "I might quit my PhD program, (and) try to find a university in Canada to apply for. I can't think of any other plan." The United States is the most popular destination for Iranians studying abroad, despite decades of hostility between the two countries. The trend goes right to the top; Iranian President Hassan Rouhani's cabinet boasts more US doctorates than did the cabinet of Trump's predecessor Barack Obama.

About 8,700 Iranian students were at US universities in 2014, a fifth of the estimated 50,000 Iranians studying abroad, according to the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. More than 3,000 Iranian students have received PhDs from American universities in the past three years, over 7,000 US academics including 40 Nobel Laureates said in a petition against the order signed by Trump on Friday. They said the ban could lead to the departure of many talented individuals.

'Inhumane order'

Mohammadreza Jalaeipour, a post-doctorate student at Harvard University, has cancelled a study visit to Oxford University in Britain because he was afraid he would not be able to return. The 34-year-old said he was not hopeful of extending his studies in another American university or receiving a visa for a job in the United States. "This discriminatory and inhumane order is targeted to harm Iranian society. It shows that the US government is dishonest when it says they have no problem with the Iranian people and they are only against the Iranian government," he said.

Medical students could be among the hardest hit. Roozbeh Efsandiari is an Iranian who studied medicine in the United States before gaining a job as a researcher at Harris County psychiatric center in Houston. He said US medi-

cine school qualifications could not be easily transferred to other countries, so it would be a major blow for Iranian graduates if they were unable to work in the United States after several years of study.

"This news (Trump's order) is a headache for Iranian doctors applying for residency," he said. The Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates said on its website that it was aware of the executive order and was evaluating the potential impact on international medical students and graduates.

Anxiety, depression

Even before Trump's order, the road to American higher education has always been a tough one for Iranians. Since there is no US embassy in Iran, students must travel to embassies or consulates in other countries to apply, which can cost them thousands of dollars. Student visas can take many months to secure. Because of security concerns, Iranians can face

background stiff checks.

Zahra Razavi, a computer science student at the University of Rochester, said her husband had applied for a US visa several times under the Obama administration, with no success. The Trump order has crushed their lingering hopes of living together in the United States, she added. "This disaster has caused depression and deep anxiety in me. It's impossible to continue this way. I have no choice but to say goodbye to my dreams and quit my studies."

Shirin Sajadi, an Iranian psychotherapist in Boston, wants to help shell-shocked students from her homeland by offering them free psychotherapy sessions.

"There's a sense of facing crisis and the need to make sense of the chaos surrounding us," she told Reuters. "Many immigrants have come to this country when they had nothing but hope for a better life. They've worked hard, played by the rules and hoped to succeed. But now that hope is gone." — Reuters

JIHADISTS LAUGH AT TRAVEL BAN, VOW MORE ATTACKS

CAIRO: Supporters of Islamic State mocked US President Donald Trump's decision to deny entry to citizens of seven Muslim-majority countries, saying it would fail to stop attacks in the United States and help win new militant recruits instead. "Your decision will do nothing. Attacks will come at you from inside America, from Americans born in America with American parents and grandparents," one Islamic State supporter posted on Telegram, an encrypted messaging app.

In a move he said would help protect the United States from terrorists, Trump signed an order on Friday suspending the entry of people from Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen for at least 90 days. Admission of all refugees was halted for four months, and for Syrians indefinitely. The sweeping travel curbs took effect immediately, wreaking havoc for would-be travelers with passports from the seven countries and prompting an international outcry.

Islamic State, which has been fighting military assaults on several fronts in its heartlands of northern Syria and Iraq, has made no formal comment on Trump's ban. But some sympathizers took to social media to pour scorn on immigration restrictions they said would serve Islamic State's cause. "Trump bans Muslims from entering America and kills them in Yemen, Iraq and Syria, then threatens them ... the wretch does not know he presents an invaluable service to Islamic State," a supporter calling himself Salem Al-Mosuly wrote on Twitter.

An Islamist channel on the messaging app Telegram called "Scholars of Haq", monitored by US monitoring service SITE, asked whether Trump's policies meant he was currently the best "caller to Islam" - someone who attracts new believers. Of the first 48 users to respond, 34 answered that he was, according to SITE. SITE quoted one respondent, Abu Magrebi, as saying: "What Trump has done has clearly revealed the truth, and harsh reality behind the American government's hatred towards Muslims."

"What is Trump doing to his country? He just become president and already people (are) protesting against his policy, and worldwide countries criticizing him. Trump will bring American down God willing," Abu Magrebi wrote in another post monitored by SITE. By yesterday morning, the Scholars of Haq channel had been taken down, along with several other channels on which Islamist militants had posted responses on Sunday.

Other Islamic State supporters mocked an order issued by Trump on Sunday requiring his joint chiefs of staff give him a plan, in the next 30 days, to defeat the militant group. "The Crusader Trump has made himself an unthinking Pharaoh. The despicable Crusader forgets the reckless utterances of Bush Junior and the mule Obama before him. They did not succeed and by the grace of God we will rub his nose in the mud as we did his predecessors," wrote user Turjman Al Asawirti on Telegram. — Reuters



DAMASCUS: A Syrian man rides a bicycle in the rebel-held town of Douma, on the eastern outskirts of the capital. —AFP

TRUMP TO ANNOUNCE SUPREME COURT PICK

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump said he will announce his nomination to the Supreme Court today, a pick likely to tilt the court to conservatives on crucial issues such as abortion and gun control. Trump's choice will fill a vacancy left by the sudden death last year of conservative justice Antonin Scalia, which left the court evenly divided between four conservative and four liberal justices.

"I have made my decision on who I will nominate for The United States Supreme Court. It will be announced live on Tuesday at 8:00 P.M. (W.H.)," Trump said on his Twitter account. Abortion, gay marriage, gun control—the Supreme Court is the final arbiter of many of the most sensitive issues of American life and law.

Its members, who must be confirmed by the Senate, are named to life terms so their influence is long lasting. Trump has said he

wants a candidate who is against abortion and firmly backs Americans' right to own guns. Among those tipped as frontrunners for the post are Neil Gorsuch, a respected appellate court judge who is considered an ideological match to Scalia, and William Pryor, an Alabama appellate court judge considered an opponent of abortion rights.

Trump had said he would announce his pick on Thursday, but has moved the date up amid a raging controversy and confusion over his order to temporarily bar travelers from seven predominantly Muslim countries from entering the United States. His Supreme Court pick is certain to set off another pitched battle with Democrats. Former president Barack Obama had named Merrick Garland, an appellate court judge, to fill Scalia's seat but Republicans used their control of the Senate to keep his nomination from being considered. — AFP



WASHINGTON: Protesters carry signs and chant on Pennsylvania Avenue near the White House during a demonstration to denounce President Donald Trump's executive order that bars citizens of seven predominantly Muslim-majority countries from entering the US. — AP

SYRIAN COUPLE SEPARATED BY TRUMP'S TRAVEL BAN

DAMASCUS: When Syrian law graduate Adel first saw the visa for the United States in his passport, he could hardly believe he would finally be joining his wife in New York. "I kept wiping my eyes to make sure I wasn't dreaming," says Adel. But Adel's life was turned upside down when US President Donald Trump issued a 90-day ban on Friday on travelers from several countries including Syria.

"It was such a shock. I never thought it would be so hard to get a visa for the United States. I got it, but now it's not worth anything," says the 25-year-old from Damascus, whose name has been changed to protect his identity. It took Adel a year of phone calls and five trips to the US embassy in neighboring Lebanon to obtain the visa after his wife Lamia sent him an official invitation.

The US embassy in Syria closed after the start of the nearly six-year war that has killed more than 310,000 people. After receiving the visa two weeks ago, he was supposed to finally travel to reunite with her in the United States a year after their wedding in Syria. Lamia, 22, lives in New York city by herself after her American father and Syrian mother separated.

'Nightmare'

"I'm so confused. My feet were supposed to touch down in the land of my dreams in just days, but now I'm still here," says Adel. Adel says he fell in love with the country by watching Hollywood films and hearing stories from relatives. "Going to America is a dream for any young guy my age". Adel says he follows the news avidly, hoping the order will be cancelled, and speaks to Lamia every day. "My wife is the other one who's depressed. A whole year of efforts and waiting, and now we won't even meet," he says. "The distance between us has become enormous." Trump faced fresh protests on Monday over his ban on travelers from seven Muslim majority countries entering the United States. Besides Syria, the other countries included in the ban are Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen.

Trump says the measures, introduced just a week after he became president, will make America safe from "radical Islamic terrorists". "I hope the decision will be suspended-even if just for a day," says Adel. "I'll go that day however much it costs." "I can't bear it here anymore. I had bigger hopes," he adds. "I hope this nightmare will end soon." — AFP

RELIGIOUS GROUPS SLAM TRUMP'S REFUGEE ORDER

2,000 PEOPLE GATHERED TO RALLY AGAINST NEW POLICY

WASHINGTON DC: Rabbi Joel Mosbacher had just finished the morning's Shabbat service when he got an urgent message: Rabbis were needed at New York's Kennedy Airport. People were being detained under President Donald Trump's sharp travel restrictions on refugees. Would he come pray? By sundown, Mosbacher was part of a group of rabbis at the airport, playing guitar and conducting a Havdalah service marking the end of the Sabbath. About 2,000 people gathered to rally against the new policy. "We know what it's like to be the stranger," said Mosbacher, a Reform rabbi at Temple Shaaray Tefila, noting that Jewish refugees were at times turned away from the US. "As a person of faith, it was so important to be there."

From pulpits to sidewalk vigils, clergy have been part of a religious outpouring against Trump's plan to suspend refugee entry from seven majority Muslim countries. Faith leaders who support the president's executive order as a way to fight terrorism have been far less vocal, ceding the religious discussion to those overwhelmingly opposed to the president's sweeping immigration order, which suspends refugee admissions for four months and indefinitely bars refugees from Syria.

The US Conference of Catholic Bishops, which runs the largest refugee resettlement network in the country, said it "strongly disagreed" with the prohibitions and pledged to work "vigorously to ensure refugees are humanely welcomed." The Orthodox Union, the largest association for American Orthodox synagogues, acknowledged the complexities of fighting terror, but said "discrimination against any group based solely upon religion is wrong and anathema to the great traditions of religious and personal freedoms upon which this country was founded." Trump's executive order gives preference to refugees fleeing their countries over religious persecution. The president told the Christian Broadcasting Network he aims to prioritize Christian refugees. Still, relatively few evangelicals have voiced support for the idea.

'Freedom and liberty'

Among those who did offer support was the Rev Franklin Graham, whose aid agency, Samaritan's Purse, works with refugees in Iraq, Greece and other nations. Graham said in a statement that he backed a closer examination of refugees' views on "freedom and liberty" and that Islamic law was incompatible with the

Constitution. The Rev Robert Jeffress, the leader of First Baptist Dallas and a vocal supporter of Trump, told "Fox & Friends" television show that Trump was "fulfilling his God-given responsibility to protect this country." A few protesters gathered outside his church during services, with one carrying a sign that read, "Love Thy Neighbor."

"We believe in security. We believe in careful vetting. We just don't think a full shutdown is the right reaction," said Scott Arbeiter, head of World Relief, the humanitarian arm of the National Association of Evangelicals, which resettles large numbers of refugees. "These are people who are running from the very terror as a nation we're trying to stop."

Beth Hood, who attended Mass at St Camillus Church in Silver Springs, Maryland, said her priest did not directly discuss the refugee restrictions, "but the whole tenor of the Mass was somber" and the reason why was obvious. The Roman Catholic parish serves a large immigrant population from El Salvador, Guatemala, West Africa and Bangladesh. The Scripture reading for the day was from the Beatitudes, the blessings from the Sermon on the Mount, including blessings for peacemakers.—AP

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FRANCE'S MAIN CONTENDERS IN THE PRESIDENTIAL RACE

PARIS: A look at the five main candidates competing in France's April-May presidential election, whose outcome remains highly uncertain.

Francois Fillon, 62

Fillon won the conservative nomination in November. He's campaigning on promises of drastic free-market reforms, a hard line on immigration and Islam, support for traditional family values and friendlier ties with Russia's Vladimir Putin. Allegations that his wife, Penelope, held a fake but handsomely paid job as a parliamentary aide disrupted Fillon's campaign during the last week. Polls suggest his biggest obstacle

to advancing in the general election may be far-right leader Marine Le Pen.

Benoit Hamon, 49

Comparatively inexperienced, Hamon was chosen as the Socialist nominee on Sunday, defeating former Prime Minister Manuel Valls in a primary runoff. He is a former junior minister and briefly served as education minister under President Francois Hollande. Hamon then rebelled against Hollande's shift toward more business friendly policies and left the government in 2014. His signature proposal is to give a "universal income" of 750 euros (\$800) gradually to all adults. The Socialist candi-

date is now squeezed between far-left and centrist rivals.

Marine Le Pen, 48

Far-right leader Le Pen, who has strong anti-migrant views, wants to strengthen France's borders and reinstate its national currency, the franc. Since inheriting the leadership of the National Front party from her father, Jean-Marie Le Pen, in 2011, she has ditched its long-standing anti-Semitism to focus on economic protectionism and fears of Islam. The makeover has boosted the party's fortunes among French voters before the spring presidential election. Early polls show Le Pen

may be among the two top contenders in the first round of the two-part election and advance to the runoff.

Emmanuel Macron, 39

Centrist Emmanuel Macron, 39, is campaigning on pro-free market, pro-European views. He suggests loosening some of France's stringent labor rules, especially the 35-hour workweek, to boost hiring. Macron is a former investment banker. He became Hollande's economic adviser at the Elysee Palace in 2012 and two years later, economy minister. He left the government last year after he launched his own political movement, "In Motion" (En Marche). He

never has held elected office.

Jean-Luc Melenchon, 65

Outspoken Jean-Luc Melenchon, 65, is a former Socialist who left the party in 2008 to create his own far-left movement, the Left Party. Presenting himself as the people's candidate, he is calling for reforms to make the European Union "more democratic" and advocates environment friendly measures. He promises a 1,300-euro (\$1,393) minimum wage for employees, up from 1,149-euro (\$1,231) now. Melenchon was a candidate in the 2012 presidential race, coming in fourth with 11.1 percent of the votes in the first round. — AP

UK REBUFFS CALLS TO CANCEL TRUMP VISIT

ONE MILLION SIGN PETITION FOR INVITATION BE WITHDRAWN

LONDON: British Prime Minister Theresa May said yesterday she was looking forward to hosting US President Donald Trump in a state visit, after more than one million people signed a petition demanding the invitation be withdrawn following his controversial travel ban. Already under pressure over her ties to Trump, May is also facing calls by members of her own Conservative party to reconsider the visit, which would see Trump honored by parliament and Queen Elizabeth II.

look forward to hosting the president later this year," a spokesman said.

'Special relationship'

May announced the state visit during a meeting with Trump at the White House on Friday, which was intended to reaffirm the "special relationship" and boost trade ties after Britain leaves the European Union. But her closeness to the erratic billionaire drew fire at home, particularly when she initially failed to condemn the travel

surged since Trump signed his contentious executive order on Friday—a move that triggered global protests, with more expected in Britain later yesterday. "You are not welcome here, Mr President," headlined the Daily Mirror tabloid. Opposition Labor leader Jeremy Corbyn, the smaller Liberal Democrats and the Scottish National Party have all called for the state visit to be cancelled, as have some Tories. "We have to question whether ... this is something that Britain should be doing for a man who has no respect for women, disdain for minorities, little value for LGBT communities, no compassion for the vulnerable and whose policies are rooted in divisive rhetoric," Conservative Muslim peer Sayeeda Warsi told BBC radio. Ruth Davidson, leader of the Scottish Conservatives, said the visit could not go ahead "while a cruel and divisive policy which discriminates against citizens of the host nation is in place."

'Divisive and wrong'

Trump's order suspended the arrival of all refugees for at least 120 days, Syrian refugees indefinitely, and barred citizens from Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen for 90 days. Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson said it was "divisive and wrong to stigmatize because of nationality"—before announcing that, after talks with the US administration, most Britons would be exempt.

Johnson will be called to the House of Commons yesterday afternoon to answer questions on the policy. High-profile British citizens briefly caught up in the new US rules included Somali-born Olympic champion Mo Farah, who slammed a policy based on "ignorance and prejudice" that could keep him apart from his US-based family. The Foreign Office later announced the order would only apply to individuals travelling directly to the United States from one of the seven listed countries. However, there was some confusion when the US embassy in London said that anyone with a passport from those countries would not get a visa there. Trump, whose mother was born in Scotland, has made clear his fondness for Britain and has said last summer's Brexit vote was a "smart" move. — AP



PARIS: Winner of the left-wing primaries ahead of France's 2017 presidential elections Benoit Hamon waves at supporters prior to deliver a speech following the first results of the primary's second round on January 29, 2017, at his campaign headquarters. — AFP

FRENCH LEFT SEEKS UNITY, MACRON GAINS GROUND

PARIS: France's newly-minted Socialist candidate Benoit Hamon has issued a call for the divided left to unite for the presidential election, but his victory could boost fast-rising centrist Emmanuel Macron. Hamon romped to victory over former Prime Minister Manuel Valls in yesterday's primary. He will go up against an array of candidates in April's first round of voting for president, from far-right leader Marine Le Pen and right-wing candidate Francois Fillon to Macron in the centre and Jean-Luc Melenchon on the far left.

The election is being closely watched after the victory for the Brexit camp in Britain and Donald Trump's triumph in the United States. Polls currently show Hamon will be eliminated at the first hurdle as the Socialists pay the price for five years in power under deeply unpopular President Francois Hollande. Hamon, who came from behind with a radical left-wing program, faces a fight to prevent moderate Socialist voters from switching to 39-year-old former investment banker Macron, who says he is neither of the left nor the right.

Adding to the uncertainty of a wide-open race, long-time frontrunner Fillon's popularity has taken a hit after claims his wife Penelope was paid half a million euros (\$535,000) for a fictitious job as his parliamentary aide. Hamon's triumph is another upset in the topsy-turvy French race, with the former education minister and son of a dockworker viewed as an outsider only three weeks ago.

'Innovative left'

As he savored victory, Hamon urged the fractured left to pull together, appealing to hard-left candidate Melenchon and environmentalist contender Yannick Jadot to build a "governmental majority". "Our country needs the left, but a modern, innovative left turned towards the future," 49-year-old Hamon told supporters.

Macron, who created his own En Marche (On the Move) party to contest the elections, has indicated he would be open to alliances but is considered highly unlikely to throw his hat in with the Socialists. Valls, who conceded defeat and wished Hamon

well on Sunday, took a parting shot at Le Pen, saying that Socialists "reject (her) face being the face of France in the future."

Le Pen believes the nationalist sentiment that influenced British and American voters in 2016 will also carry her to the French presidency in what would be a profound shock for Europe. But her anti-immigration and anti-EU National Front party is also embroiled in its own expenses scandal over money from the European parliament.

Race tightening

A poll published Sunday showed the race tightening as Fillon loses ground in the wake of the allegations against him. Le Pen would lead all candidates in the first round with 25 percent, ahead of Fillon on 21 percent, virtually level with Macron, according to the poll conducted by Kantar Sofres-Onepoint on Thursday and Friday.

Hamon would receive 13 percent, with Melenchon scoring 10 percent, according to the survey of 1,032 voters. The poll also showed that while Fillon would easily beat Le Pen in a run-off, he would lose a duel with Macron. The embattled Fillon walked into a packed Paris rally on Sunday hand-in-hand with his wife and told supporters that his critics should "leave her out" of the election. The allegations against him have sparked a preliminary judicial inquiry.

Yesterday, investigators questioned Marc Ladreit de Lacharriere, the owner of a literary review owned by a billionaire friend of Fillon's where his wife Penelope is also said to have worked. In more bad news for Fillon, investigative website Mediapart and the Journal du Dimanche newspaper reported Sunday he had used his parliamentary allowance to pocket up to 25,000 euros while working as a senator from 2005-2007.

The claims are damaging because Fillon has described himself as a "clean" candidate with the moral authority to cut 500,000 civil servants' jobs if he comes to power. In a defiant speech on Sunday he portrayed the claims as a dirty tricks campaign. "On the road to victory, there will be some headwinds, there will be some squalls. We'll go straight ahead, straight to victory!" he declared. — AFP

UK Government and Parliament

Petition

Prevent Donald Trump from making a State Visit to the United Kingdom.

Donald Trump should be allowed to enter the UK in his capacity as head of the US Government, but he should not be invited to make an official State Visit because it would cause embarrassment to Her Majesty the Queen.

▶ More details

Sign this petition

1,099,018 signatures

A laptop screen displays a parliamentary petition on the website of the British government, demanding Britain cancel a planned state visit by US President Donald Trump. — AFP

May's Downing Street office said she does not agree with the US ban on refugees and citizens of seven mainly Muslim countries, but still refused to back down on the visit. "The prime minister extended an invitation on behalf of the queen, and she was very happy to do so. The USA is one of this country's closest allies, and we

ban, saying it was a US affair. Yesterday morning, more than one million people had signed an online petition calling for the state visit to be cancelled because his "well-documented misogyny and vulgarity disqualifies him" from meeting the queen. Set up several months ago, the number of signatories has



BUCHAREST: A man holds a Romanian national flag during a demonstration to protest against controversial decrees to pardon corrupt politicians and decriminalize other offences. — AFP

ROMANIAN LEADER SLAMS GOVT PLAN TO PARDON PROTESTERS

BUCHAREST: Romania's president urged the government yesterday to scrap a proposal to pardon thousands of prisoners, a move which has led to major anti-government protests. President Klaus Iohannis spoke after tens of thousands of people marched through Romania's capital and other cities on Sunday to protest the initiative, which critics say could reverse anti-corruption efforts.

It was the third large-scale protest to erupt in Romanian cities after Premier Sorin Grindeanu requested an emergency ordinance allowing the government to pardon prisoners to ease prison overcrowding. Iohannis posted a message on Facebook yesterday, urging the government again to drop the initiative, and said: "The voice of the people can no longer be ignored."

Justice Minister Florin Iordache defended the proposal, saying it was meant to improve the situation in prisons, adding the government would modify its initial proposal to eliminate unclear passages. He denied the measure was designed to benefit politicians, a number of which have been targeted by the anti-corruption drive in recent years. "I want to make it clear that neither rapists nor murderers, nor those accused of corruption will benefit," he said.

The German Embassy in Bucharest said yesterday that German Chancellor Angela Merkel spoke to Iohannis on Friday, saying "diluting the anti-corruption fight and making the rule of law a relative thing" would send "an absolutely wrong signal." Critics say the proposal could benefit party allies convicted of corruption, includ-

ing the chairman of the ruling Social Democratic Party, Liviu Dragnea. He was handed a two-year suspended prison sentence for vote rigging in April 2016, which bans him from being prime minister, something he calls unfair.

Romania's top prosecutor has also criticized the plan, which magistrates say should be debated in Parliament. It would primarily affect people serving sentences of less than five years, except those convicted of sexual or violent crimes. Prisoners over age 60, pregnant women and inmates with young children would see their sentences halved regardless of the charges on which they were convicted. Prison authorities estimate 3,700 prisoners could be released, while the justice minister said Monday up to 3,000 could be freed. — AP

BRAZILIAN EX-BILLIONAIRE EIKE BATISTA SURRENDERS TO POLICE

RIO DE JANEIRO: Fallen tycoon Eike Batista, who personified Brazil's economic boom and once boasted he'd become the world's richest man, was arrested yesterday at Rio de Janeiro's airport after returning to face corruption charges. Batista, who rose to become his country's wealthiest person and number seven in the world, with a fortune of \$34.5 billion reported by Bloomberg in 2012, flew in from New York and walked immediately to a waiting police SUV. The 60-year-old former oil and mining magnate is alleged to have paid a \$16.5 million bribe to ex-Rio de Janeiro state governor Sergio Cabral, who is already behind bars for allegedly taking bribes over World Cup and Olympics infrastructure projects.

Playboy lifestyle

As a brash, big-spending entrepreneur with a playboy lifestyle, Batista symbolized Brazil's surge to economic power under then-president Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva. His downfall now represents a new landmark in a series of sprawling but interconnected corruption scandals enveloping much of Brazil's elite, including Lula himself. Demonstrating the judiciary's resolve in that campaign, Supreme Court President Carmen Lucia yesterday said she would allow the use of testimony

by executives from the Odebrecht construction company in a massive bribery and embezzlement case centered on state oil company Petrobras.

The construction executives gave a mountain of what is expected to be politically explosive evidence as part of a plea bargain with prosecutors probing the Petrobras scandal. The contents of the evidence remains secret, but leaks have pointed to current President Michel Temer being implicated. For Brazilians sick of top-to-bottom corruption in Latin America's biggest economy, every high-profile development in the anti-corruption fight is a cause to cheer.

Globo television broadcast extensive live coverage of Batista's arrival on a commercial flight from New York and his transfer under escort to a medical center to undergo exams. He was then sent next to the Ary Franco prison in Rio which, like many in Brazil, is seriously overcrowded. It was not clear yet whether the ex-billionaire would get any special privileges.

The cross-border police agency Interpol last week issued a "red notice" alert for Batista after Brazilian police searched the tycoon's home in Rio. Late Sunday he told Globo television from JFK airport in New York that he had decided to fly back voluntarily. — AFP

NIGERIA'S LOST CHILDREN HOPE TO FIND FAMILIES

MAIDUGURI: Running his fingers over the wide scars on his knee and thigh, 13-year-old Usman recalled the moment he thought he would die. The boy was fleeing a Boko Haram attack on his village in northeast Nigeria with his mother last year when two militants knocked him to the ground, and approached him wielding knives.

"I was scared that I would die ... that I would never see my mother again," said Usman, explaining how he limped to a nearby camp for the displaced in Bama town in Borno state, the heart of the jihadists' brutal seven-year bid to create an Islamic state. For two months, Usman heard nothing about his mother, Fatima, until two aid workers brought good news. They had tracked her down to her brother's house in the nearby city of Maiduguri.

"We cried when we saw each other, there was so much joy," he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation, sitting next to his beaming mother, Biba, in the cramped, dusty yard of his uncle's home. More than 30,000 children like Usman have lost or been separated from their parents during an insurgency which has left nearly two mil-

lion people uprooted after fleeing Boko Haram. While two-thirds of these children are being cared for by a relative, the remainder - around 10,000 - are forced to fend for themselves, according to the UN children's agency (UNICEF). With many of them relying on the help of local communities or displaced families to survive, aid workers are striving to reunite these solitary children with their parents. But tracing and tracking down relatives can take several months - leaving them prey to child marriage, sexual abuse and forced labor in the meantime, aid agencies say. "Children may even resort to begging, hawking and transactional sex to survive," said Rachel Harvey, chief of child protection for UNICEF.

Tracing and tracking

When children arrive in a camp or community without their parents, or alone, they are quickly referred to local aid groups which carry out family tracing and reunification programs. Aid workers and volunteers take down as many details as possible from the children and share the information with their colleagues across northeast Nigeria, who go

from camp to camp, community to community, reading out names and following leads. But with three-quarters of the 1.8 million people displaced by Boko Haram living in communities across six states, rather than in camps, the work can be arduous and time-consuming, said Myriem El Khatib of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). "It is much easier to trace relatives living in IDP (internally displaced persons) camps as people tend to gather together based on the village they fled from," said El Khatib, co-ordinator of the ICRC's Restoring Family Links program. "Outside of the camps, the displacement pattern is more random, and there are many areas which we still cannot access due to the insurgency. The average process takes many months."

Even when parents or relatives are tracked down and told about their children, reuniting them is not always simple. The makeshift foster families and caregivers who look after unaccompanied children may refuse to let them go, according to the Centre for Community Health and Development (CHAD). Some people send the children to work or attempt to marry

them off for money, while others hope having another child under their care will result in more humanitarian aid, said Shadrach Adawara, family tracing and reunification officer for CHAD.

"In one case, an uncle refused to release his brother's children, because he wanted to marry the eldest daughter off." "Thankfully, a call between them resolved the issue, and the children returned to their father," said Adawara, adding that aid workers regularly check up on reunited children, and refer them to services from healthcare to psychosocial support.

'Tears of happiness'

In some cases, children may decide not to go back to their parents or relatives, several tracing officers said. They may have suffered abuse or had been forced to work by their parents, or decide to spare their struggling families the added burden. When 17-year-old Fatima, a former Boko Haram captive who escaped after two years while heavily pregnant, was reunited with her mother, they could not stop crying and hugging - having presumed each dead for so

long. But Fatima soon realized she and her baby could not stay with her mother and younger siblings in her hometown of Monguno. "I saw the poverty, and many responsibilities of my mother ... and decided it would be better for me and my baby boy to live with my older brother in this (Bakassi) IDP camp," Fatima said, cradling and rocking her two-year-old to sleep. While Fatima is relieved to be with her brother, she is one of the lucky few. Only some 400 children - out of 32,000 living alone or without a parent - have been reunited with their families so far, according to figures from UNICEF.

"It can be very frustrating because it can take so long," said El Khatib of the ICRC. "But it is worth it when you see the emotion from the families ... whether it is tears of happiness or just a pat on the arm and saying: 'Nice to have you home.'" Back at her brother's house in Maiduguri, Biba fusses over 13-year-old Usman - much to his embarrassment - as she recalls the day they were reunited after two long months. "I could not stop smiling," she said. "Everybody in the neighborhood saw my face, and knew he was finally back." — Reuters

PAKISTANI BLOGGERS ABROAD FOR SAFETY

ISLAMABAD: Two Pakistani bloggers freed after vanishing earlier this month have now left the country because of safety fears following a virulent media campaign painting them as blasphemers, relatives said yesterday. They were among five men who went missing from various cities in Pakistan. Four of the five—who had taken a stance against religious intolerance and criticized the military—have been freed, their families said.

They would not comment on where the men had been held. Their disappearance triggered nationwide protests and raised concerns of government involvement, claims denied by officials. Allegations on social media networks Facebook and Twitter and by right-wing TV hosts that the missing men were blasphemers have triggered a flood of threats despite denials from their worried families.

Such allegations can be fatal in deeply conservative Muslim Pakistan, where 17 people remain on death row for blasphemy. Liaqat Ali Goraya, the father of blogger Waqas Goraya, confirmed to AFP that his son had left the country. "Waqas has gone, we've sent him abroad," said his father, declining to comment on who had held him. Before he went missing, Goraya was based in the Netherlands but had returned to Pakistan for a family wedding.

A source close to the family of blogger Asim Saeed confirmed he too had left the country. His father Ghulam Haider Akbar declined to specify his son's whereabouts but said the family had received death threats purporting to come from the anti-Shiite Lashkar-e-Jhangvi group. "You who have blasphemed deserve death. You are out of Islam and should be ready for a painful punishment, which will be remem-

bered by your generations to come," a text message said, according to Akbar.

A relative of a third blogger, who asked to remain anonymous, said both he and his family had left their home town and were in hiding. "We are going to think about it for a few days and assess the situation. If it seems OK, we'll return, else we'll try to go abroad," the relative said. Zeeshan Haider said his brother, poet and activist Salman Haider, was "fine and safe". The whereabouts of the fifth man remains unknown.

Coordinated campaign

Rights groups have long criticised the colonial-era blasphemy legislation as a vehicle for personal vendettas as even unproven allegations can result in mob lynchings. Several NGOs and observers say the online campaigns are intended to silence progressive voices and are carefully coordinated.

Pakistan has had a history of enforced disappearances over the past decade, but this has mainly been confined to conflict zones near the Afghanistan border or Balochistan province, where separatists are battling for independence.

The country is among the world's most dangerous countries for journalists. Reporting which is critical of security policies controlled by the powerful military is considered a major red flag, with reporters at times detained, beaten and even killed. Yesterday, satirical news site Khabaristan Times announced it had been blocked by Pakistan's Internet regulatory authority. The site "has been blocked on complaints of objectionable content", a government source confirmed to AFP, requesting anonymity. The site often poked fun at the military and politicians. — AFP

NEW LAW A SIGN OF HOPE FOR WOMEN'S LAND RIGHTS IN MALI

KATIBOUGOU: Wearing a long white tunic covered with bright-colored patterns, Aminata Berthe bends to water a plot of lettuce with a can in this village near Bamako, the Malian capital. "I'm the first one in my home to wake up and the last to go to bed," she said, pausing to catch her breath. She has been farming the land for three years as part of a women's vegetable cooperative, but doesn't have the right to own it.

"The land we're farming belongs to the husband of one of the cooperative members," she explained. In Malian society, men hold primary rights of access to and control over land and decide which parts, if any, women are allowed to farm. But worsening climate conditions such as unpredictable rainfall and prolonged drought have increased competition for land, leading men to encroach on land traditionally farmed by women.

Change is afoot, however. The government this year could pass a new law that would set aside a share of government-managed land for women to farm, said Siriman Sakho, a rural development specialist who works with a group of Malian farmers' representatives. Discussion about the proposed law have included farmers groups, particularly the National Federation

of Rural Women in Mali, he said.

"The government is in a drive to fit up farming land throughout the country," Sakho said. "Under the new law, the authorities would give women exclusive access to 10 percent of government-managed land, at a cost of 65,000 CFA francs (\$105) per year." Each woman who accessed land would pay the annual fee, he said.

Meanwhile, "the rest of government land will continue to be farmed by women and men alike," he said. Under the Malian Family Code, women are required to obey their husbands, who are considered head of the household. "This means women can lose the land they are farming on if their husband, brother or father decides to sell the family's farm," said Sakho.

The proposed law is a welcome development, said Bakary Togola, the head of a farmer group that supports the draft. "As climate is changing, agriculture needs to change too," he said. "How can we improve our yields when most farmers - women - don't have the right to own land?" Oumou Bah, the minister for the Promotion of Women, Children and Families, agrees. She said at an event in Bamako in December that giving women access to land would improve not just their living conditions, but the economy. — Reuters



COX'S BAZAR: Members of Myanmar's Advisory Commission on Rakhine State talk with displaced members of the Rohingya community as they visit Rohingya shelters in Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar. — AFP

BANGLADESH PUSHES ON WITH ROHINGYA ISLAND ISLAND FOR REFUGEE RELOCATION A 'SQUALID DUMP'

DHAKA: Bangladesh will push ahead with a controversial plan to relocate tens of thousands of Rohingya refugees from Myanmar to a remote island despite warnings it is uninhabitable and prone to flooding. The government has set up a committee comprising state officials in the coastal districts, ordering authorities to help identify and relocate undocumented Myanmar nationals to Thengar Char in the Bay of Bengal.

"The committee will assist transferring both registered and unregistered refugees from Myanmar to Thengar Char near Hatiya island in Noakhali district," according to an order issued by the Cabinet Division last week and posted online. Hatiya is situated on the estuary of the River Meghna and is a nine-hour journey away from the camps where the Rohingyas have taken shelter.

Some 232,000 Rohingya Muslims—both registered and unregistered—were already living in Bangladesh before more than 65,000 stateless Rohingyas fleeing violence in Myanmar's western state of Rakhine began entering the country last October. Most of those who fled to Bangladesh live in squalid conditions in refugee camps in Cox's Bazar district, which borders Rakhine state and is home to the country's biggest tourist resort.

Bangladesh has also asked its officials in the

border districts to identify the Myanmar nationals who "illegally infiltrated" the country. "It has to be assured by taking preventive measures that they (refugees) cannot spread out and mix with the locals," read the order which was dated January 26. "The identified refugees should be arrested or pushed back to the camps if they try to go out beyond the assigned boundary." Bangladesh first mooted the idea of relocating them in 2015 despite allegations that the island was still not ready for human habitation. The idea sparked outcry from Rohingya community leaders, while a UN agency said a forced relocation would be "very complex and controversial".

'Terrible idea'

An official in the region criticized the idea, saying the 6,000-acre (2,430-hectare) island was "only accessible during winter and a haven for pirates". The authorities were planting trees in a bid to shore up land against high tides and flooding, but those efforts were at least a decade away from completion, the official added. "It completely inundates during the monsoon," the official told AFP, speaking on condition of anonymity.

"It's a terrible idea to send someone to live

there." There was no immediate comment from the Rohingya community leaders. The island push came as members of Myanmar's state-appointed body probing violence in Rakhine state visited refugee camps in Cox's Bazar. Three members of the commission, which is headed by former UN chief Kofi Annan, spoke to refugees who recalled horrific incidents of rape and murder at the hands of Myanmar's security forces.

Kamal Hossain, 50, told the observer team his entire village was burned to the ground and his brother killed by the army, forcing him to flee to Bangladesh for safety. "We want to go back home. We don't want to live as refugees here, but we need assurance that we will not be slaughtered like cattle," he told AFP. Dudu Mia, a Rohingya community leader, said he hoped the commissioners would relay to the government in Myanmar about "our people being killed and tortured and women raped by their security forces".

The team also met with Bangladeshi officials at Cox's Bazar, and was due to hold talks with the country's Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina before their departure on February 1. "The commission came to see for themselves whether these people were forced to come here," Ali Hossain, chief administrator of the district, told AFP. — AFP

DEATH TOLL FROM KASHMIR AVALANCHES RISES TO 25

SRINAGAR: The death toll from a series of avalanches in Kashmir has climbed to 25 after five Indian soldiers pulled alive from beneath heavy snow died of their injuries, the military said yesterday. The seriously injured troops were rescued Saturday after a day-long mission along the de facto border that divides the disputed territory with Pakistan.

They had been approaching a border post along the Line of Control (LoC) when their track caved in. Hostile weather prevented the soldiers from being flown to a base hospital in the main city of Srinagar 140 kilometers away until yesterday, but they succumbed to their injuries, the military said in a statement. They were the latest casualties from a series of avalanches in Indian-administered Kashmir, which is suffering one of its severest winters for decades.

Last Wednesday 15 Indian soldiers died when a patrol and two camps were hit by separate avalanches in the north of the territory that is also claimed by Pakistan. It took rescuers two days to retrieve their bodies from under tons of snow. Five civilians—four from a single family—also died in separate avalanches. Heavy snowfall was recorded across the region and temperatures dropped to minus seven degrees Celsius (19 degrees Fahrenheit). Dozens of Indian and

Pakistani soldiers are killed by avalanches every winter along the heavily militarized dividing line. Authorities have warned of the possibility of

more avalanches in the Himalayan region and urged residents in the mountainous areas not to venture out. — AFP



TANGMARG: Kashmiri men walk on a snow-covered road after a heavy snowfall. — AFP



ISLAMABAD: A Pakistani woman walks past billboards showing the portraits of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, (c), Pakistani President Mamnoon Hussain (l), and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in Islamabad yesterday. Abbas will arrive in Islamabad along with a 17-member delegation which includes five ministers. — AFP

PHILIPPINE POLICE STOP CRACKDOWN AMID SCANDAL

MANILA: The Philippine police chief stopped the use of the national police force in anti-drug operations yesterday and disbanded all police anti-narcotics units after the president's brutal crackdown was used as a cover by rogue officers to kidnap and kill a South Korean man for money.

Police Director-General Ronald Dela Rosa told police officers he would use the indefinite halt of anti-drug operations to launch a massive purge of police involved in crimes. A counter-intelligence force would be formed to catch rogue officers and records of those previously implicated in crimes would be reviewed. "No more drug operations now," Dela Rosa told police officers at the main police camp, without indicating how long the

ban would last. An estimated 7,000 drug-related killings have occurred since President Rodrigo Duterte started his anti-drug crackdown in July, and more than 2,500 of those involved suspects who allegedly fought back and were gunned down in clashes with police, the national police said, adding 35 policemen and three soldiers had been killed. The scale of the anti-drug campaign has been unprecedented, with officials reporting that more than 7 million houses of drug suspects have been visited so far, prompting more than 1.1 million mostly drug users to surrender and agree to undergo rehabilitation programs.

'Empty public relations gesture'
Human rights watchdogs have sus-

pected extrajudicial killings of drug suspects may have been covertly carried out by police or at their behest. Phelim Kine, deputy Asia director at US-based Human Rights Watch, said the temporary stoppage in police anti-drug operations to allow an internal police purge "is nothing less than an empty public relations gesture unless he seeks meaningful accountability for the more than 7,000 Filipinos killed" in the crackdown.

While Dela Rosa has suspended police operations, Duterte has declared his crackdown would continue up the last day of his six-year term. "We have to focus our effort toward internal cleansing and by the time we have cleansed the national police, the president will determine that and he will instruct us to

go back to our war on drugs," said Dela Rosa, warning wrongdoers they face dire punishments.

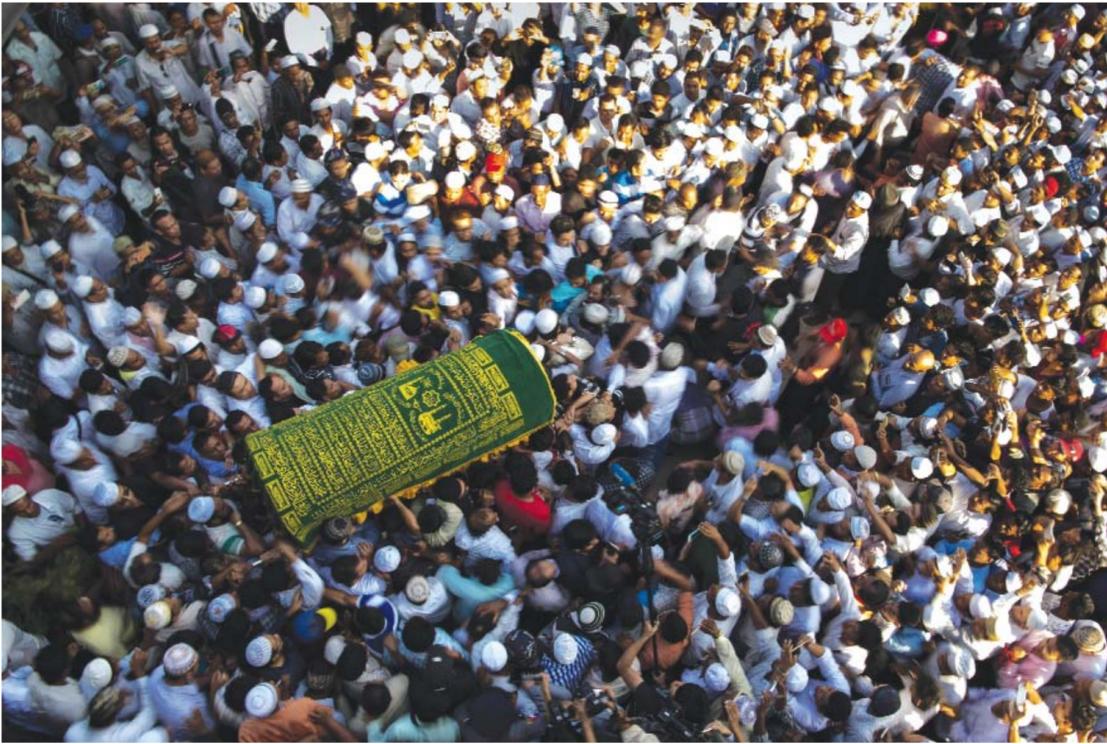
"You policemen involved in syndicates, let's see what happens now, fight back so you'll end up dead," Dela Rosa said. "You will be killed by this counter-intelligence task force." With the police essentially taken out of the crackdown, most of the work would shift to the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency, which has a much smaller number of enforcers, Dela Rosa said.

As to how the police crisis affects drug lords, "this is a momentary victory on your part," the police chief said, expressing fears that use of methamphetamine, locally known as "shabu," may rise again. "Go ahead and enjoy, but

there is always a time for reckoning."

The crisis was sparked by the kidnapping and killing of a South Korean businessman, who was snatched by police officers for ransom using a fake warrant for his arrest for a purported drug offense. But the victim was killed at the main police camp in metropolitan Manila, and the officers collected the ransom without telling his wife he was dead, according to police. He was allegedly cremated, his ashes flushed down a toilet bowl, according to an angry Duterte.

Two of the officers suspected of carrying out the crime were on a key anti-drug force. Dela Rosa resigned amid the scandal but Duterte asked him to stay on. — AP



YANGON: Mourners carry the coffin of Ko Ni, prominent Muslim lawyer who was shot dead on January 29, at the Muslim cemetery. — AFP

MOURNERS GATHER FOR FUNERAL OF MUSLIM LAWYER SHOT AT AIRPORT

PROMINENT MEMBER OF MYANMAR'S MUSLIM MINORITY

YANGON: Tens of thousands of people gathered in the Myanmar city of Yangon yesterday for the funeral of Ko Ni, a Muslim lawyer shot dead the previous day who was involved in efforts to amend a military drafted constitution. The 63-year-old was an expert in constitutional law and adviser to Aung San Suu Kyi's ruling National League for Democracy (NLD) party, that came to power in April. He was also a prominent member of Myanmar's Muslim minority.

His killing, amid heightened communal and religious tension in Buddhist-majority Myanmar, appears to be a rare act of political violence in the former capital that coincided with a tough security operation in a northwestern region populated mostly by Muslims. Police have arrested a 53-year-old man, suspected to be the lone gunman who shot Ko Ni in the head while the lawyer held his grandson outside Yangon's international airport on Sunday evening.

He had just returned from a trip to Indonesia, where Myanmar government officials and Muslim community leaders discussed with Indonesian counterparts issues of reconciliation. Taxi driver Nay Win, 42, was also killed when he attempted to apprehend the gunman, state media reported. Police Colonel Myo Thu Soe told Reuters the suspect, Kyi Linn, was from central Myanmar's Yinmabin township who has served two stints in jail for trafficking religious antiques.

Kyi Linn was last released in a 2014 amnesty by then-President Thein Sein, he said, adding

that the suspect had not given clear answers during interrogation. "We cannot say exactly why he killed or who was behind him," Myo Thu Soe said. Reuters was unable to contact Kyi Linn's family for comment and it was not clear if he had legal representation. An estimated 100,000 mourners, including family members, lawyers, NLD activists and members of Yangon's diplomatic corps, attended Ko Ni's funeral beginning at a Muslim cemetery in northern Yangon. Suu Kyi was not in attendance and has yet to comment on the killing. Her party said on Sunday Ko Ni's death was "a great loss for which there is no substitute".

Legal mastermind

Khin Maung Htay, a colleague of Ko Ni's at the Yangon-based Laurel Law Firm, said Ko Ni was instrumental in devising the role of "state counsellor" for Suu Kyi, enabling her to lead the government. The 2008 constitution, drawn up by the then ruling military, bars Nobel laureate Suu Kyi from the presidency because she has family members who are foreign citizens. Ko Ni was working on amendments that would further challenge the role of the military, which retains a quarter of parliamentary seats and controls security ministries under the charter.

Aung Shin, a member of the NLD's central committee, said the murder was a "well-planned, fearless conspiracy" to kill a man who had extensive legal expertise and an ability to communi-

cate the flaws of the 2008 constitution to the public. Ko Ni was also spearheading a new Interfaith Harmony Bill that would include provisions on hate speech, hate crimes and discrimination, according to two experts working with him on the draft legislation.

Family members and friends told Reuters that Ko Ni had received death threats connected to his political work, but the motive for the killing was not known. The timing of the killing was a matter of particular concern, said the International Crisis Group (ICG) think-tank, since it comes just months after deadly attacks on police near the border with Bangladesh blamed on insurgents from the Rohingya Muslim minority.

It was essential "that no stone is left unturned in finding the truth about this incident and who may have been behind it", the Brussels-based group said in a statement. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs said yesterday 69,000 people were now estimated to have fled to Bangladesh since the launch of a sweep by the security forces in response to the attacks on Oct 9 in which nine policemen were killed.

More than 23,000 people have been internally displaced, the office said. "In a context of strong anti-Muslim sentiment, rampant hate speech on social media, and virulent Buddhist nationalism propounded by some senior monks, this crime could embolden others and unleash further violence," the ICG said. — Reuters

MALAYSIA EXPANDS SEARCH FOR THOSE MISSING ON SUNK BOAT

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia searched yesterday for four Chinese tourists and a Malaysian missing after a boat on a Lunar New Year holiday cruise capsized off the coast of Borneo, tossing 30 people into stormy seas and killing three Chinese passengers. The catamaran carrying 27 Chinese tourists and three crew members sank late on Saturday as it sailed from Kota Kinabalu, the capital of the eastern Malaysian state of Sabah, to the tourist spot of Mengalum, Malaysian maritime officials said.

The boat went down after being battered by heavy waves. The tourists were tied together in life jackets and swept away by the current, the head of the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA) said. Adrift for several hours before help arrived, the tourists were picked up by fishermen, Malaysian maritime officials said. Three of the tourists were found dead on Sunday, while 22 people, including the boat's captain, were rescued.

Military ships and aircraft were scouring an area of 2,400 square nautical miles of sea, the agency said. The search had been hampered by strong wind and choppy waters, officials added. Provincial police chief Ramli Din said three people had been arrested for questioning, including the boat owner and captain. Maritime officials said late yesterday 27 Chinese tourists were on the boat and not 28, as they had previously said.

Anxious relatives
Chinese President Xi Jinping had offered

assistance and neighboring Brunei deployed a helicopter and naval assets to help. The rescued passengers and crew arrived in Kota Kinabalu early yesterday and were taken to hospital, the maritime agency said. Anxious relatives arrived and were escorted to the hospital by Chinese embassy officials.

Authorities were investigating whether the boat should have been used as a tourist vessel, the MMEA's director-general, Ahmad Puzi Ab Kahar, told reporters.

"According to the skipper, the boat was 'broken' after being hit by strong waves, and sank. All the tourists were tied together and were carried away by the currents," he said late on Sunday.

Thousands of Chinese visitors flock to Mengalum island during the long Lunar New Year holidays. China is one of Malaysia's main sources of tourists. Ties between the two countries were strained in 2014 when Malaysia Airlines flight MH370 went missing on its way from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing. Most of its passengers were from China. The search for the airliner ended this month with no clue of its whereabouts. Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak called for a full investigation to determine why the boat sank.

"However, at the moment we must concentrate fully on the search and rescue efforts," he said in a statement. China said it hoped Malaysia would conduct a fair and objective investigation and "ascertain the facts about the incident as quickly as possible," foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said in a statement. — Reuters



KOTA KINABALU: Survivors of a sunk boat receive medical assistance at the Malaysia Marine Operation Force post. — AP

INDIA'S HOUSING PLAN WON'T HELP THE HOMELESS, SAY CAMPAIGNERS

MUMBAI: The Indian government is doling out incentives to people to buy affordable homes as officials race to meet a 2022 deadline of providing housing for all, but campaigners say the measures won't fix the problem of homelessness. Prime Minister Narendra Modi last month extended subsidized loans for building or

expanding homes in rural areas, as well as for the urban poor. The federal budget, due on Feb. 1, may have even more perks for the sector, analysts say.

"There is every reason to expect a significant boost for affordable housing in the upcoming budget," said Anuj Puri, country head of real

estate consultancy Jones Lang LaSalle. The government plan, to provide housing for all by 2022, is meant to create 20 million new urban housing units and 30 million rural homes. Builders define affordable homes as costing 2-4 million rupees (\$29,400-\$59,000). They are generally units of up to 600 sq ft.

The federal scheme initially offered lower interest rates for loans up to 600,000 rupees. Modi last month extended subsidies for loans up to 1.2 million rupees, seen as benefiting young couples who are first-time homebuyers. Yet the pace of implementation of the housing scheme has been slow, with only 2,776 houses built in urban areas from June 2015 to August 2016, according to advocacy group Housing and Land Rights Network (HLRN). In rural areas, more than 1 million homes were built.

Flagging growth

Meanwhile, evictions of slums in cities have left thousands more homeless. "The slow rate of implementation of the policy, coupled with the destruction of homes makes the housing for all target seem improbable at this stage," said Shivani Chaudhry, executive director at HLRN. "Just giving cheaper loans is not going to solve the problem. What we also need is increased allocations for homeless shelters and social rental housing in urban areas for migrant workers and the poor," she told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. — Reuters



NEW DELHI: Indian men sit on benches in a park on a foggy morning yesterday. Thick fog engulfs many parts of the country during the winter months and disturbs air, rail and road services. — AP

CHINA SAYS 'REASONABLE CONCERNS' TO BE CONSIDERED ON TRAVEL BAN

BEIJING: China appeared to offer mild criticism yesterday of US President Donald Trump's banning of entry of people from seven Muslim-majority countries, saying immigration policy was a sovereign right but "reasonable concerns" must be considered.

Trump signed a directive on the banning on Friday. US Democrats and a growing number of Republicans assailed the move and foreign leaders condemned it amid court challenges and tumult at US airports.

Trump says his directive is "not about religion" but keeping America safe. Trump has presented the policy as a way to protect the country from the threat of Islamist militants. China's Foreign Ministry, in a statement sent to Reuters, said it had noted the reports of the US administration's decision.

"China believes that adjusting immigration and entry and exit policy is an act within each country's sovereignty," the

ministry said. "At the same time, relevant moves must also consider the reasonable concerns of relevant countries," it added in a brief statement. It did not elaborate.

China is in the middle of a week-long Lunar New Year holiday and government departments do not return to work until Friday. China has been trying to pay a greater diplomatic role in the Middle East, and has particularly close ties with Iran and Sudan, two of the seven countries on Trump's list.

China is home to a Muslim population of about 20 million people, including ethnic Uighur people in the far western region of Xinjiang, where the government says it is facing its own problem with Islamist militants. Rights groups and exiles say China's repressive policies in Xinjiang, including controls on Islam, are the root cause of the unrest, which has killed hundreds in the past few years. China denies any repression and says it guarantees freedom of religion. — AP

TRUMP DIGS IN AS TRAVEL BAN BACKLASH...

Continued from Page 1

connecting flight in Qatar. "I have served many homeless and poor Americans," he told AFP in Khartoum. "My plans were to work in a rural area of Georgia where there are many such Americans in need of a doctor. But now I'm stuck here."

Trump, a property tycoon who has never previously held elected office, sees the ban as making good on a promise to subject travelers from Muslim-majority countries to "extreme vetting". Around 48 percent of Americans support a freeze on immigration from "terror prone" regions, even if it means turning refugees away, according to a Quinnipiac poll released yesterday. Counterterrorism experts warn that the ban would inflame public opinion in the Middle East and make essential cooperation with governments in Muslim-majority countries more difficult, while doing little to prevent attacks.

Iraq's parliament backed reciprocal restrictions if Washington does not change course. "I think the order is going to make the threat worse" said former CIA acting director Mike Morell, who has been an outspoken critic of Trump. "It's going to be a recruitment boon for ISIS," he said, referring to the Islamic State group.

Moral outrage over the ban has been amplified by criticism of the White House's competency - a potentially much more damaging charge for Trump's reputation as CEO-in-chief. Firms from Goldman Sachs to Google voiced their concern and the Dow Jones Industrial Average fell almost one percent - below the 20,000-point threshold lauded by the president just days ago. "This is not a policy we support," Goldman CEO Lloyd Blankfein told staff.

Google also warned of the impact on staff and the potential to create "barriers to bringing great talent to the US". "We'll continue to make our views on these issues known to leaders in Washington and elsewhere," the firm said in a statement. Starbucks said it planned to hire 10,000 refugees worldwide over the next five years, while Airbnb said it would offer free accommodation "to refugees and anyone not allowed in the US".

Although the White House put on a united front in public, behind the scenes, Trump's allies were quick to point blame toward influential aide Stephen Miller. Miller - the author of many of Trump's biggest speeches - is considered a hardliner on immigration and is said to have supported the ban including green card holders and dual nationals. Those provisions now look set to feature prominently in a case that could make it all the way to the Supreme Court.

Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia's King Salman, in a telephone call on Sunday with Trump, agreed to support safe zones in Syria and Yemen, a White House statement said. Trump, during his presiden-

tial campaign last year, had called for Gulf states to pay for establishing safe zones to protect Syrian refugees. A statement after the phone call said the two leaders agreed on the importance of strengthening joint efforts to fight the spread of Islamic State militants.

"The president requested, and the King agreed, to support safe zones in Syria and Yemen, as well as supporting other ideas to help the many refugees who are displaced by the ongoing conflicts," the statement said. The Saudi Press Agency, in an initial readout of the call, made no specific mention of safe zones, but said the two leaders had affirmed the "depth and durability of the strategic relationship" between the two countries.

The agency later said "the custodian of the Two Holy Mosques had confirmed his support and backing for setting up safe zones in Syria", but did not mention Yemen, where a Saudi alliance is fighting against the Iran-aligned Houthi group. A senior Saudi source told Reuters the two leaders spoke for more than an hour by telephone and agreed to step up counter-terrorism and military cooperation and enhance economic cooperation.

The White House statement said the two leaders also agreed on the need to address "Iran's destabilizing regional activities." SPA confirmed the report but made no specific mention of Iran. The White House statement said the two also discussed what it called an invitation from the king for Trump "to lead a Middle East effort to defeat terrorism and to help build a new future, economically and socially," for Saudi Arabia and the region. King Salman and Trump invited each other to visit their respective capitals, SPA said. "The two leaders agreed to schedule the visits in the coming period," it said.

The two also discussed the Muslim Brotherhood, the senior Saudi source said, adding in a reference to the late Al-Qaeda leader, "it was mentioned that Osama bin Laden was recruited at an early stage" by the organization. Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates designated the Brotherhood a terrorist organization. US officials and people close to Trump's transition team have said a debate is under way in the Trump administration whether the United States should also declare the Brotherhood a terrorist organization and subject it to US sanctions.

Trump also spoke with Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan. In what appears to have been a reference to the Muslim Brotherhood, the Crown Prince was cited by UAE state news agency WAM as saying "groups that raise fake slogans and ideologies aim to hide their criminal truth by spreading chaos and destruction". The White House said Trump had also "raised the idea of supporting safe zones for the refugees displaced by the conflict in the region, and the Crown Prince agreed to support this initiative." — Agencies

SIX KILLED IN CANADA MOSQUE SHOOTING

Continued from Page 1

In the cable, the Amir expressed sincere condolences and sorrow over the victims of the attack. HH the Amir affirmed Kuwait's strong condemnation of such terrorist acts against houses of worship that contradict all humanitarian laws, values, and principles.

He also reiterated Kuwait's firm stand against all forms of terrorism, praying to Allah Almighty to bestow His mercy and forgiveness on the deceased, place them in His heavens and grant patience and solace to their families. HH the Amir also wished speedy recovery for the wounded. HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent similar cables.

The attack was out of character for Quebec City, a city of just over 500,000 which reported just two murders in all of 2015. Mass shootings are rare in Canada, where gun control laws are stricter than in the United States. In addition to the six killed, five people were critically injured and 12 were treated for minor injuries, a spokeswoman for the Quebec City University Hospital said. US President Donald Trump called Trudeau to express his condolences "and offered to provide any assistance as needed," said Trudeau spokesman Cameron Ahmad.

Over the weekend, Trudeau said Canada would welcome refugees, his response to an executive order by Trump on Friday to halt the US refugee program and to temporarily bar citizens from seven Muslim-majority countries from entering the United States. Trump's action, which the president said was "not about religion - this is about terror and keeping our country safe," was widely condemned in the United States and abroad as targeting Muslims. Yesterday, White House

spokesman Sean Spicer told reporters that the Quebec shooting was "a terrible reminder of why we must remain vigilant, and why the president is taking steps to be proactive, rather than reactive, when it comes to our nation's safety and security."

A father of four, the owner of a halal butcher near the mosque, was among those killed, said Pamela Sakinah El-hayet, a friend of one of the people at the mosque. The mosque concierge was killed, as was Ahmed Youness, a 21-year-old student, El-hayet told Reuters. One of El-hayet's friends, Youness' roommate, was in the mosque at the time of the shooting. He was unharmed, she said, but in total shock.

Ali Assafiri, a student at Universite Laval, said he had been running late for the evening prayers at the mosque, near the university in the Quebec City area. When he arrived, the mosque had been transformed by police into a crime scene. "Everyone was in shock," Assafiri said by phone. "It was chaos." Universite Laval is the oldest French-language university in North America, with 42,500 students.

Vigils were planned for Montreal and Quebec City, the provincial capital, as well as in Edmonton. There was an outpouring of support for the mosque on social media. Citizens for Public Justice, a group of Canadian Christians, churches and other religious congregations, expressed their solidarity with the Muslim community of Quebec City. "Last night's shooting, targeting people of faith during their worship and prayer, is a deplorable attack on all Canadians and our most deeply-held values," the group's executive director, Joe Gunn, said.

While the motive for the shooting was not known, incidents of Islamophobia have increased in Quebec in recent years. The face-covering, or niqab, became a big issue in the 2015 Canadian federal election, especially in Quebec, where the majority of the population supported a ban on it at citizenship ceremonies. — Agencies

GOVT LAUNCHES AMBITIOUS 'NEW KUWAIT' 2035...

Continued from Page 1

The low percentage of nationals has triggered strong attacks from a number of lawmakers who described expatriates as colonial settlers, with MP Safaa Al-Hashem calling for taxing them for walking on the streets. Sabeeh however said that Kuwait is forging ahead with a large number of mega projects and there will be a big place for expatriates who are needed to take part in those projects. The Assembly is due for a debate on the demographic structure in the country on Thursday.

Sabeeh was among a host of ministers who spoke on the New Kuwait strategic plan, which aims at diversifying the national economy to reduce its dependence on oil revenues. State Minister for Cabinet Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah told reporters that the ambitious plan aims at raising Kuwait's revenues from KD 13.3 billion next year to as much as KD 50 billion in the last year of the plan. He did not elaborate on the means to achieve this. But he listed a large number of mega projects including Silk City, the Subbiya Causeway, Boubiyan Island container harbor and others as some of the projects.

Also, the government yesterday approved the 2017/2018 budget with a projected huge deficit for the third year run-

ning due to the sharp fall in oil prices. Finance Minister Anas Al-Saleh, also speaking at the New Kuwait event, said the fiscal year's budget which begins on April 1 is projecting a shortfall of KD 6.6 billion (\$21.6 billion). The deficit is 25 percent less than the projected shortfall in the current 2016/2017 fiscal year estimated at \$29 billion, due to an improvement in oil prices.

Revenues are projected at KD 13.3 billion and spending is estimated at KD 19.9 billion, the minister told reporters. The budget becomes official only after the National Assembly approves it. Oil revenues are projected at \$38.4 billion, up 36 percent on the estimated oil income in this year's budget, Saleh said. Despite the sharp slide in oil prices in the past three years, income from oil is still projected to make up 88 percent of Kuwait's total revenues, he said.

After posting healthy surpluses for 16 years in a row, Kuwait posted a budget deficit in 2015/2016 which ended March 31 last year. In previous years Kuwait built up a sovereign wealth fund worth around \$600 billion that is invested mostly in the United States, Europe and Asia. As part of efforts to reduce the shortfall, the state hiked the price of petrol in September and plans to raise electricity and water charges.

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Focus

SOME POLICE UNIONS SEEK TO OVERHAUL OBAMA'S REFORMS

Steve Loomis, president of the Cleveland Police Patrolmen's Association, had a blunt message for Donald Trump during a meeting in September: Court-ordered reforms aimed at curbing police abuses in the Midwestern city are not working. Loomis and two other attendees said Trump seemed receptive to Loomis's concerns that federally monitored police reforms introduced during the Obama administration in some cities in response to complaints of police bias and abuse are ineffective and impose an onerous burden on police forces.

Trump, Loomis said, was "taken aback by the waste of money" when the union chief told him that federal monitors overseeing his city's police department earned \$250 an hour - a standard salary for the position. "I think he's going to have a more sensible approach to rising crime rates," Loomis said of now President Trump. "What I got from the meeting was that Donald Trump is going to be a very strong supporter of law and order."

Emboldened by Trump's election, some of the country's biggest police groups want to renegotiate "consent decrees" agreed to under President Barack Obama, the police labor groups said in interviews. Consent decrees are agreements between a police force and the Justice Department that can prescribe changes to use of force, recruiting, training and discipline. They are enforced by a federal court with the oversight of court-appointed monitors. Currently 14 police departments, including Seattle and Miami, are operating under the decrees.

The police groups want to discuss the decrees with Jeff Sessions, Trump's designee for attorney general who has voiced criticism of them, although any renegotiation would be legally complicated because all parties as well as a federal judge must approve any changes. "There are certainly decrees that are in-actively applied that we'd like to see revisited," said Jim Pasco, the head of the Fraternal Order of Police, the nation's largest police union with 330,000 members. It endorsed Trump in September and has worked with Sessions, a Republican senator from Alabama, for years while lobbying Congress for pro-police policies. "We've always found him a man who's willing to listen to alternatives to a previously charted course," Pasco said of Sessions.

Civil rights groups are alarmed at the possibility that the decrees could be unraveled, saying they have been an important tool for the government to try to address issues like excessive use of force by police in Baltimore and an officer shooting in Ferguson, Missouri that led to nationwide protests. Trump officials did not respond to multiple requests for comment on the meeting with Loomis. While Trump has not publicly commented on consent decrees, he has expressed strong support for police departments and unions, and on Jan. 20 the White House said he wants to end the "dangerous anti-police atmosphere in America."

Curbing Abuse

There have been questions by police and conservative politicians over the effectiveness of the consent decrees, which give the Justice Department power to obtain court orders imposing reforms on police forces that routinely violate civil rights through practices such as unlawful stops and seizures, racial discrimination, and illegal uses of force. The federal program was authorized by Congress in 1994 in the aftermath of riots in Los Angeles sparked by the police beating of Rodney King.

Some police unions complain the decrees stigmatize police and impose overly restrictive limits on use of force. They also chafe at what they see as misguided federal prescriptions to local problems and have fought the reforms in court. A reform agreement that the Justice Department negotiated with the New Orleans police department in 2013, for instance, has been "extraordinarily expensive" to implement, said Donovan Livaccari, the lawyer for the Louisiana Fraternal Order of Police. The city of New Orleans is footing the bill.

The Obama administration negotiated 24 reform agreements with law enforcement agencies during Obama's eight years in office after finding patterns of excessive force, racial bias, poor supervision and other issues, more than double the 11 agreements reached under the previous Bush administration. Vanita Gupta, the last Obama-appointed head of the Justice Department's civil rights division, which investigates and recommends reforms for police departments, defended the use of consent decrees in an interview, saying they are apolitical ways of improving public safety and making policing more effective. Bill Johnson, head of the National Association of Police Organizations, which represents about 241,000 officers, said he expects local police associations to examine existing consent decrees to see whether the Justice Department under Obama overstepped in imposing any measures. — Reuters

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RUSSIA IN MAJOR ARCTIC MILITARY PUSH

The nuclear icebreaker Lenin, the pride and joy of the Soviet Union's Arctic great game, lies at perpetual anchor in the frigid water here. A relic of the Cold War, it is now a museum. But nearly three decades after the Lenin was taken out of service to be turned into a visitor attraction, Russia is again on the march in the Arctic and building new nuclear icebreakers. It is part of a push to firm Moscow's hand in the High North as it vies for dominance with traditional rivals Canada, the United States, and Norway as well as newcomer China.

Interviews with officials and military analysts and reviews of government documents show Russia's build-up is the biggest since the 1991 Soviet fall and will, in some areas, give Moscow more military capabilities than the Soviet Union once had. The expansion has far-reaching financial and geopolitical ramifications. The Arctic is estimated to hold more hydrocarbon reserves than Saudi Arabia and Moscow is putting down a serious military marker. "History is repeating itself," Vladimir Bilnov, a guide on board the icebreaker Lenin, which is named after communist revolutionary Vladimir Lenin, told a recent tour group. "Back then (in the 1950s) it was the height of the Cold War and the United States was leading in some areas. But we beat the Americans and built the world's first nuclear ship (the Lenin). The situation today is similar."

Under President Vladimir Putin, Moscow is rushing to re-open abandoned Soviet military, air and radar bases on remote Arctic islands and to build new ones, as it pushes ahead with a claim to almost half a million square miles of the Arctic. It regularly releases pictures of its troops training in white fatigues, wielding assault rifles as they zip along on sleighs pulled by reindeer. The Arctic, the US Geological Survey estimates, holds oil and gas reserves equivalent to 412 billion barrels of oil, about 22 percent of the world's undiscovered oil and gas.

Low oil prices and Western sanctions imposed over Moscow's actions in Ukraine mean new offshore Arctic projects have for now been mothballed, but the Kremlin is playing a longer game. It is building three nuclear icebreakers, including the world's largest, to bolster its fleet of around 40 breakers, six of which are nuclear. No other country has a nuclear breaker fleet, used to clear channels for military and civilian ships. Russia's Northern Fleet, based near Murmansk in the Kola Bay's icy waters, is also due to get its own icebreaker, its first, and two ice-capable corvettes armed with cruise missiles. "Under (Soviet leader Mikhail) Gorbachev and (Russian President Boris) Yeltsin, our Arctic border areas were stripped bare," said Professor Pavel Makarevich, a member of the Russian

Geographical Society. "Now they are being restored."

'Aggressive Steps'

The build-up, which echoes moves in Crimea and Kaliningrad, has been noticed in Washington. US Defense Secretary James Mattis told his confirmation hearing this month it was "not to our advantage to leave any part of the world" to others. Mattis, in a separate written submission, described Moscow's Arctic moves as "aggressive steps" and pledged to prioritize developing a US strategy, according to Senator Dan Sullivan.

That poses a potential dilemma for President Donald Trump, who wants to repair US-Russia ties and team up with Moscow in Syria rather than get sucked into an Arctic arms race. The build-up is causing jitters elsewhere. Some 300 US Marines landed in Norway this month for a six-month deployment, the first time since World War Two that foreign troops have been allowed to be stationed there. And with memories of Russia's 2014 annexation of Ukraine's Crimea still fresh, NATO is watching closely. Six of its members held an exercise in the region in 2015.

The Soviet military packed more firepower in the Arctic, but it was set up to wage nuclear war with the United States not conventional warfare. Arctic islands were staging posts for long-range bombers to fly to America. But in an era when a slow-motion battle for the Arctic's energy reserves is unfolding, Russia is creating a permanent and nimble conventional military presence with different and sometimes superior capabilities.

Sergei Shoigu, the defense minister, is presiding over the re-opening or creation of six military facilities, some of which will be ready by the year's end. They include an island base on Alexandra Land to house 150 troops able to survive autonomously for 18 months. Called the Arctic Trefoil, officials have said they may deploy military jets there. MiG-31 fighters, designed to shoot down long-range bombers, or the SU-34, a frontline bomber, are seen as suitable.

Moscow's biggest Arctic base, dubbed "Northern Shamrock", is meanwhile taking shape on the remote Kotelny Island, some 2,700 miles east of Moscow. It will be manned by 250 personnel and equipped with air defense missiles. Soviet-era radar stations and airstrips on four other Arctic islands are being overhauled and new ground-to-air missile and anti-ship missile systems have been moved into the region. Russia is also spending big to winterize military hardware. "The modernization of Arctic forces and of Arctic military infrastructure is taking place at an unprecedented pace not seen even in Soviet times," Mikhail Barabanov, editor-in-chief of Moscow Defense Brief, told

Reuters. He said two special Arctic brigades had been set up, something the USSR never had, and that there were plans to form a third as well as special Arctic coastal defense divisions. "Russia's military activity in the Arctic is a bit provocative," said Barabanov. "It could trigger an arms race."

'Friendly People'

In Murmansk, home to Russia's icebreakers and just an hour from the Northern Fleet's headquarters, the prospect of an Arctic renaissance is a source of pride. The city is steeped in Arctic and military history. The conning tower of the Kursk submarine, which sunk in 2000 after an explosion, looks down from a hill above the port. And in central Murmansk, scale models of dozens of icebreakers crowd the halls of the Murmansk Shipping Company, while sailors, wrapped in great coats, barrel along its streets.

"These Arctic bases are on our territory. Unlike some other countries we are not building them overseas," said Denis Moiseev, a member of the Russian Geographical Society. "Other countries are also very active in trying to push their borders towards the North Pole. Our army must be able to operate on all our territory in extreme conditions." One country regularly mentioned as an unlikely Arctic rival is China, a close Moscow ally, which has observer status on the Arctic Council, the main forum for coordinating cooperation in the region, and is starting to build its own icebreakers.

Politicians are keener to discuss a commercial Arctic push. New roads and a railway are being built and ports overhauled as Moscow expands its freight capacity and, amid warmer climate cycles, readies for more traffic along its Arctic coast. It hopes the Northern Sea Route, which runs from Murmansk to the Bering Strait near Alaska, could become a mini Suez Canal, cutting sea transport times from Asia to Europe. But while the route's popularity inside Russia is growing, relatively high transit costs and unpredictable ice coverage means it has lost some of its luster for foreign firms. Grigory Stratiy, deputy governor of the Murmansk Region, told Reuters there was strong interest in sea route from Asian nations however and that new icebreakers would allow for year-round navigation in the 2020s. "Whatever the weather, the Northern Sea Route will be needed. Its use will definitely grow," said Stratiy, who said Russia was keen to attract foreign investment to the Arctic. When asked about his country's military build-up, he smiled. "There's no reason to be afraid I can reassure you," he said, saying it was driven only by a need to modernize. "Russia has never had any aggressive aims and won't have them. We are very friendly people."

TRUMP BAN RISKS STRAINING MIDEAST TIES

Just two days after banning travelers from seven Muslim-majority nations, US President Donald Trump invited the Saudi monarch, whose kingdom includes Islam's holiest sites, to fly to Washington. It points to the delicate balancing act Trump faces as he tries to deliver on campaign promises to exterminate "radical Islamic terrorism" without endangering political and economic ties with US allies in the region, including some where the Trump Organization has business interests.

The executive order could upend gains on the battlefields of Mosul, where US forces aid Iraqi commandos, or scuttle billions of dollars' worth of American aircraft sales to Tehran. Trump has vigorously defended the ban, saying it is only "about terror and keeping our country safe". Traditional American allies in the region have kept largely silent about the ban. Many welcome tougher action against Iran, one of the seven countries included in the executive order. But any move to expand the ban to other countries will undoubtedly inflame public opinion and could force them to respond in kind.

"Such selective and discriminatory acts will only serve to embolden the radical narratives of extremists and will provide further fuel to the advocates of violence and terrorism at a critical time," the Organization of Islamic Cooperation said Monday. The 57-nation bloc urged the US to reconsider the policy "and maintain its moral obligation to provide leadership and hope at a time of great uncertainty

and unrest in the world."

The warning came hours after Trump called Saudi King Salman and Abu Dhabi's powerful crown prince, Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, the likely future president of the United Arab Emirates. King Salman also invited Trump to visit Saudi Arabia. Official regional government reaction has been muted to the 90-day ban on travel to the US by citizens of Iraq, Syria, Iran, Sudan, Libya, Somalia and Yemen. The order also suspends refugee admissions for 120 days and indefinitely bars the processing of refugees from Syria.

OPEC members Saudi Arabia and the UAE, the Arab world's largest economies, have bought billions of dollars' worth of weapons from the US, and thousands of US troops remain stationed across the region. Several Arab allies of the US have carried out airstrikes against the Islamic State group and, more vitally, allow access to air bases and seaports supporting the bombing, reconnaissance and refueling runs over Iraq and Syria.

Iraq, which is on the frontlines in the fight against Islamic State group, is just over a third of the way through acquiring three dozen American-made F-16 fighters. It's unclear how the ban will affect the Iraqi pilots, who are trained in the US. The Iraqi Air Force Commander, Lt Gen Anwar Hama Amin, initially said the military has yet to receive a "clear response" on whether the ban applies to members of the Iraqi security forces. "I'm worried and surprised," he said. "We are fighting terrorism and this

order will affect the fighting. ... I hope this order will be reconsidered."

Amin later said American officials told him the pilots wouldn't be affected by the US ban. The US Central Command did not respond to a request for comment. US Sens John McCain and Lindsey Graham, both Republicans and retired military officers, have warned Trump's immigration order could become "a self-inflicted wound in the fight against terrorism".

Intel

Intelligence-sharing and counterterrorism partnerships with Arab allies could also be threatened by a souring of relations. The UAE, for example, hosts a digital communications center focused on countering IS propaganda, and in coordination with Saudi intelligence was instrumental in thwarting a 2010 plot to blow up two US-bound cargo planes. That tight relationship makes it easier for Trump to do business in a country like the UAE, a market his company has tried to break into for over a decade. A Trump-branded golf course is set to open soon in Dubai, and another is in the works.

The Trump Organization also sought business in Egypt, Qatar and Saudi Arabia before he became president. All but four of the Sept 11 hijackers came from Saudi Arabia, while two came from the UAE. Turkey, which is home to the Trump Towers Istanbul, has been hit by a string of deadly attacks. Bahrain and Kuwait have booked space in the new Trump International Hotel in Washington, while

Trump Tower in New York collects rent from the tourist office of Abu Dhabi. Trump announced plans to separate himself from his company earlier this month, handing its management over to his two adult sons, but ethics experts have said conflicts of interest could remain.

Even more is at stake when it comes to American jobs and investors. The Middle East is a major buyer of big-ticket, American goods, from fighter planes and missiles to turbines, cars and construction equipment. American exports to the United Arab Emirates alone topped \$20 billion annually for the past five years. Boeing Co has sealed billions of dollars' worth of deals with Middle Eastern airlines, including Dubai-based Emirates, the region's largest carrier.

The Chicago-based plane maker completed a \$16.6 billion agreement for 80 jetliners with Iran last month, a deal made possible by the 2015 nuclear accord, which Trump has at times threatened to scrap or renegotiate. The Gulf states, which view Iran as their biggest regional rival, are unlikely to object to its inclusion in the travel ban. But any expansion of the visa restrictions to other countries could provoke a backlash. Abu Dhabi's state-owned The National newspaper has already objected to the immigration order, saying it is "not just disrespectful to those who have given their lives, but it also weakens the very alliances needed to stop further attacks in the Middle East and in the US". — AP

GIMENEZ SIDELINED BY THIGH INJURY

MADRID: Atletico Madrid centre-back Jose Maria Gimenez could miss up to two months with a thigh injury picked up in Saturday's 0-0 draw at Alaves. The Uruguayan suffered a "grade I-II muscle injury" to the adductor in his right leg, the club said in a statement yesterday after Gimenez underwent a hospital scan. Atletico provided no timetable for the defender's return, but reports in the Spanish press suggested the 22-year-old would be sidelined for between one to two months. Gimenez will miss the visit of holders Barcelona in the Copa del Rey tomorrow as well as the return leg of the semi-final on February 7. He is also likely to be unavailable for the first leg of the Champions League last 16 clash away to Bayer Leverkusen in three weeks' time. Gimenez left the pitch in tears over the weekend as he was forced off in the 55th minute against Alaves but was quick to try and downplay the severity of his injury. "I thank you from the heart for your affection but the tears were of helplessness rather than pain. I will soon be back helping my team," he wrote on his Twitter account. — AFP

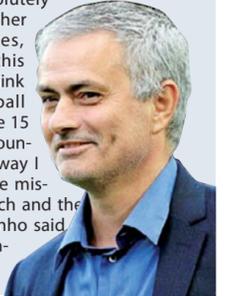


INDIA NAMES FORMER GOLD MEDALLIST IN TASK FORCE

MUMBAI: India's only individual Olympic gold medallist Abhinav Bindra was named on a panel entrusted with the task of preparing the blueprint for the country's success at the next three Games, the sports ministry said yesterday. The world's second-most populous country sent more than 120 athletes to Rio de Janeiro last year with hopes of exceeding the six medals won at London in 2012, but returned with only a silver in badminton and a wrestling bronze. National badminton coach Pullela Gopichand and former India hockey captain Viren Rasquinha were also named in the eight-member task force which will help identify core medal prospects for the Tokyo Games in 2020 and nurture talents for the next two editions of the quadrennial event. The task force will also recommend ways to improve the coaching standards and sports infrastructure in the country of 1.3 billion people. India have won 28 medals since first competing at the Olympics in 1900 but Bindra remains the only individual gold medallist with his victory in the men's 10 metre air rifle in Beijing in 2008. — Reuters

MOURINHO HITS OUT AT MAN'S 'CRAZY' FIXTURE CONGESTION

LONDON: Manchester United manager Jose Mourinho complained about his team's ever-growing fixture list after their FA Cup victory over Wigan Athletic in the FA Cup on Sunday added to his problems. United face Southampton in the League Cup final on Feb. 26, so their Premier League derby against Manchester City must be rearranged and they also resume their Europa League campaign next month. "It's absolutely nonsense and I know that applies with many other clubs. Liverpool are going to play 16 matches, Chelsea will play 16 matches... and we are in this crazy situation," Mourinho told British media. "I think Southampton will have 15 days without football before the final and we are going to have in these 15 days two matches... so the calendar in the best country of world football is nonsense. "In a realistic way I think the Premier League is almost an impossible mission but I just think about winning the next match and the next match is not an impossible mission," Mourinho said. Ashley Young could leave before the transfer window closes today. — Reuters



KUWAIT WOMEN TEAM EXCEL ON DAY 2

AMIR'S SIXTH INTERNATIONAL SHOOTING GRAND PRIX

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Kuwait's women trap team snatched first place in the teams trap competition in HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah Sixth International Grand Prix with 182 targets by Sarah Al-Hawal, Shahad Al-Hawal and Asmaa Al-Qatami, while Qatar took second place with 175 targets by Amna Abdallah Kholoud Al-Khalaf and Noura Al-Ali. Meanwhile Oman's shooters ended in third place with 158, by shooters Fakhari Al-Qahafi, Reem Al-Housani and Rabah Salti. In the 50m Pistol team men Saudi Arabia was first, while Iraq ended in second place while Kuwait took third place. In the 10 meter Air rifle men, Bahrain took first place with 1844.6 points, followed by Saudi Arabia with 1841.7 while Oman was third with 1827.1 points. Meanwhile, competition of third day include the 10m pistol men, skeet 75 targets men and skeet 75 targets women in addition to official pre event training of

10m pistol women. On her part Kuwait's shooter Shahad Al-Hawal said she was happy winning the gold medal in the women's individual trap, and dedicated it to HH the Amir in appreciation of his support of the shooting sport, and to Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah who is considered the godfather of all shooters in Kuwait. Shahad said competition was very difficult during the first day due to having all shooters wanting to win medals. Kuwait's shooter Saud Mane Al-Ajmi who won the gold medal in the 50m pistol men event said he is even happier because competition was very strong by Omani and Saudi shooters and that he won first place with a small difference between him and second place winner, but with concentration he was able to continue until the end. Secretary General of Kuwait and Arab Shooting Federations Obaid Al-Osaimi lauded the tournament and its events, saying that it is going along with a clear wish by all to reach the medals stages, and this

reflected positively on the general performance for the past two days, and hoped it continues as such for the rest of the event. He said Kuwaiti shooters are always up to their expectations and present the best they have and get medals as the case was this time, adding this has become familiar with Kuwait shooting that is going better and better due to HH the Amir's support. Meanwhile, Arab Shooting Federation (ASF) held its general assembly, during which Eng. Duajj Khalaf Al-Otaibi was re-elected President of the Federation for a third term, while the financial and administrative reports were approved. The assembly also prepared championships schedules for 2017 and 2018. Eng. Duajj Al-Otaibi thanked members of the general assembly for their confidence in him. He said members approved the Arab Championships schedules as two will be held in UAE and Morocco during 2017, while Egypt and Qatar will host two in 2018. He said times of the championships will be set later.



NO GREEN LIGHT FOR 2018 GAMES BUT NHL SEES POSITIVES

LOS ANGELES: While the National Hockey League has not yet committed to the 2018 Winter Olympics, commissioner Gary Bettman said on Sunday that being on a global stage was unquestionably a positive.

The league has participated in each Winter Olympics since 1998, but has long believed it puts more into its Olympic investment than it gets in return, raising doubts over its decision for next year's Games in Pyeongchang,

South Korea. "There's the worldwide stage that the Olympics provides except they don't promote NHL hockey," Bettman told Reuters before the start of the All-Star Game at Staples Center in downtown Los Angeles.

"They take the players and run their own tournament. It's great to have the world's best-on-best play but, in the final analysis, the restrictions that the IOC (International Olympic Committee) imposes are difficult when you're in our

situation, particularly where we are the only sports league or sport that has to stop its season to participate if we choose to participate (at the Games)."

With the NHL already unhappy at shutting down in the middle of the season to allow players to participate in the Olympics, the IOC further antagonized the league by announcing last year that it would no longer cover insurance and travel costs. While the IOC has had problems convincing NHL owners that

Olympic ideals are noble and worth pursuing, the players have bought in.

Russian captain Alex Ovechkin says he plans to compete in the 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Games no matter what the league decides, while the NHL Players' Association head Donald Fehr acknowledged playing in the Olympics is something the players want.

Asked for an update on possible player involvement at the 2018 Olympics, Bettman replied: "There's nothing new

on that regard," he said.

"It is incredible disruptive. What business in the prime of its selling season shuts down for three weeks? It affects the competitiveness of the league, it affects the schedule not just for those three weeks but for the rest of the season with compression. We disappear when football and baseball are gone and it's just us and basketball. It's very, very difficult to manage a season with that type of disruption." — Reuters

CLOSING EAGLE LIFTS RAHM TO FIRST US PGA TOUR TITLE

LA JOLLA: Spain's Jon Rahm claimed his first US PGA Tour title in style Sunday, rolling in an eagle putt from the fringe at the final hole to win the Farmers Insurance Open at Torrey Pines.

Rahm had broken free of the group tied for the lead at 10-under with a birdie at 17. At the par-five finishing hole on the South Course, he reached the back fringe with his second shot. Rahm's effort from 60 feet snaked toward the hole and into the cup to cap a seven-under 65.

His 13-under total of 275 proved to be enough for a three-shot victory as the bevy of golfers on his heels stalled late.

Taiwan's Pan Cheng Tsung and American Charles Howell shared second on 10-under 278. England's Justin Rose closed with a two-under 70 to head a group on 279 alongside Americans Keegan Bradley (67), Pat Perez (70), Patrick Rodgers (72) and Tony Finau (71).

Rahm, 22, had opened with a bogey, but after birdies at the third, fifth and 11th he put himself among the leaders with an eagle at the 13th.

"Thanks to 13, I got myself into it," said Rahm, whose second shot from a fairway bunker left him an 18-footer for eagle.

Rahm said his thought process all day was far different from his mindset at last

year's National, where he finished third after leading or sharing the lead over the first two rounds. There, he said, he was second-guessing himself on the greens, afraid of over-hitting and costing himself pars.

"Today it was just completely different," Rahm said. "I was just focused on making putts and hitting the right shots."

Pan, a 25-year-old also chasing a first US tour title, had reached 10-under for the tournament after birdies at eight, nine and 10, but he couldn't find another birdie.

Howell earned his share of second with a birdie at 18 that capped a 68 and put him in the clubhouse at 10-under before Rahm's late-round heroics.

J.J. Spaun was 10-under after a birdie at 17, but found the water en route to a double-bogey at 18, while Finau's challenge effectively ended with a bogey at 15.

Brandt Snedeker, the defending champion gunning for a third title at Torrey Pines, just couldn't get much going even though he's an old hand at storming finishes on the picturesque course hugging the Pacific coast. Snedeker was seven shots adrift after 54 holes when he won in 2012, and rallied from six back last year. With a share of the 54-hole lead this time around, Snedeker shot a one-over 73 to join a group sharing ninth on 280. — AFP



HOUSTON: Workers attach a sign to the front of NRG Stadium as preparations continue for the NFL Super Bowl 51 football game Sunday, in Houston. — AP

AFC HOLDS ON TO DEFEAT NFC 20-13 IN PRO BOWL

ORLANDO: The Pro Bowl has long been more about showmanship than competition. Clearly, that memo missed Lorenzo Alexander. The Buffalo Bills linebacker could have just sat on a late interception for the win, but instead opted to return the ball 20 yards and then lateraled it to Aqib Talib, who came within 13 yards of the end zone in the AFC's 20-13 win over the NFC in the NFL's all-star game Sunday night.

"I was serious about that last drive," Alexander said. "You're playing fast, playing hard, having a good time, but we wanted to win. We took it very serious."

That much was obvious on the final drive when Alexander, named the game's defensive MVP, got tight end Jimmy Graham on a hard hit over the middle as the NFC drove the ball downfield for what could have been the rallying game-winning drive. A couple of plays later, the ball went off Graham's hands and right to Alexander, sealing the game.

But even on that play, the increased competitive spirit was obvious when quarterback Kirk Cousins stuck with the play after throwing the interception and knocked the ball out of Talib's hands on a jarring hit to save the touchdown. While many of the 60,834 had already left Camping World Stadium, those who stuck around saw a thrilling end.

"It was fun and it was competitive," Alexander said. "It got a little chippy there late in the game, but that's part of it when you have competitive people." In the recent past, the Pro Bowl hadn't produced a competitive environment. But perhaps the return of the traditional AFC vs. NFC matchup combined with playing in front a larger crowd than when the game was played in Hawaii, amped up the intensity just a bit. The winners took home \$61,000, while the NFC team members settled for \$30,000.

"This game was definitely more competitive than last time I played in it. I can say that," Talib said. "Guys played a lot harder this year." The Pro Bowl had been played the last three years with a format in which teams were drafted among the players by designated captains.

In a first half defined by big plays and key interceptions, the AFC was able to come up with one more play to take a 14-7 lead into halftime and a 20-7 edge early in the fourth quarter. The NFC should have had 17 points in the first half, but a decision to not kick a chip-shot field goal and an interception in the end zone denied the squad of points during the first two quarters.

Andy Dalton's 23-yard touchdown pass to Kansas City tight end Travis Kelce, named the game's offensive MVP with three catches for 36 yards, put the AFC ahead 14-7 with 1:40 remaining in the second quarter. The touchdown was set up by a 36-yard punt return by the Chiefs' Tyreek Hill to the NFC 38.

"I thought the level of play was really good. It was really competitive," said Dalton, the Cincinnati quarterback who completed 10 of 12 passes for 100 yards and one touchdown. "It came down right to the end."

It was a relatively low-scoring game defined by big defensive stops, including a goal-line stand when Zach Brown stuffed Dallas rookie running back Ezekiel Elliott at the 1-yard line in the first quarter.

The play seemed to set the tone as both defenses gave up little against the run and put pressure on all of the quarterbacks, which has not always been the case in the Pro Bowl.

New Orleans' Drew Brees completed 10 of 19 passes for 112 yards and one touchdown to Seattle's Doug Baldwin to lead the NFC. Kansas City's Alex Smith, the starter for the AFC, completed six of eight passes for 74 yards, including a 26-yard TD toss to Tennessee's Delanie Walker early in the second quarter. — AP



SAN DIEGO: Jon Rahm, of Spain, holds the trophy after winning the Farmers Insurance Open golf tournament Sunday, at Torrey Pines Golf Course in San Diego. — AP

CHEVROLET ALGHANIM INVITES FOOTBALL FANS IN KUWAIT TO BE PROS FOR ONE DAY

KUWAIT: Yusuf A. Alghanim & Sons Automotive, the exclusive distributor of Chevrolet vehicles in Kuwait, is proud to announce that it will turn the football fans in Kuwait into "professional" footballers for a day through the 2017 Chevrolet Fan Cup, a global competition where winners will play at Manchester United's Old Trafford Stadium, the "Theatre of Dreams."

The 2017 Chevrolet Fan Cup will bring together 64 passionate fans for a first-of-its-kind tournament at Old Trafford. The exclusive experience will put fans in the boots of Manchester United players, including game-day preparations and the matches.

"We have the unique ability to enable fans to make the most of life's possibilities through football," said Tim Mahoney, chief marketing officer, Global Chevrolet. "Around the world, in communities and on the pitch, we connect fans to the people, places and experiences that matter most to them. The Chevrolet Fan Cup is a perfect example of how we are enabling fans make their dreams come true in the form of the ultimate global fan competition at Manchester United's Theatre of Dreams."

Until 28 February, Chevrolet will seek out fans around the world to become one of the lucky 64 who will travel to Manchester in May for the 2017 Chevrolet Fan Cup. Football enthusiasts can enter by filling out a form and uploading a video clip or photo at <http://ae-en.chevroletarabia.com/about-us/football/chevrolet-fan-cup.html>

cup.html of them showing their passion for football. Deadline for entries is February 28, 2017 at 23:59. All entries will be reviewed by a Chevrolet Panel. The winners will be selected and contacted.

While in Manchester, the winners will attend Manchester United's English Premier League match against Crystal Palace, meet team legends and be trained at the club's famed soccer school. The highlight of their experience will be the professional match-day experience, including dressing in the players' locker room and walking through the home club's tunnel before competing against each other in a tournament on the Old Trafford pitch.

"Walking onto the pitch at Old Trafford is something most fans have dreamt of at some point in their lives but only a small number actually get to experience it," Richard Arnold, Manchester United Group Managing Director said. "The Chevrolet Fan Cup can make this dream a reality. It is a unique opportunity to connect to the club, giving our supporters the chance to tread on the same ground where some of the game's best have played, in a stadium that has been the setting for some of football's most memorable moments."

Chevrolet stands with the fans of Manchester United and global football, connecting with them and sharing their passion for the game. To see how Chevrolet is uniting fans, visit www.ChevroletFC.com, or subscribe to www.youtube.com/user/ChevroletFC.

LINCICOME WINS PLAYOFF FOR LPGA BAHAMAS CROWN

MIAMI: Brittany Lincicome birdied the first playoff hole Sunday to defeat fellow American Lexi Thompson and win the LPGA Tour's season-opening Pure Silk Bahamas Classic. Lincicome birdied the par-5 18th and Thompson missed left on a long effort to match her, giving Lincicome the victory, her second in extra holes after losing her first four LPGA playoffs.

"It was pretty incredible," Lincicome said. "Just the leaderboard all week has been amazing, obviously a lot of Americans up at the top, obviously friends of mine, so to come down to the final stretch, I played with Lexi yesterday, and it was an awesome day. We had so much fun, and to obviously have the playoff today is a bummer, but it's just incredible." It was Lincicome's seventh career LPGA triumph and the first since she captured her first major title at the 2015 ANA Inspiration at Rancho Mirage, California, by beating Stacy Lewis in a playoff. Thompson and Lincicome finished 72 holes over the Ocean Course at Paradise Island on 26-under 266, one off the all-time 72-hole LPGA record of 27-under par set by Swedish star Annika Sorenstam at the 2001 Standard Register Ping event.

The final round became a title shootout between four Americans—Lincicome, Thompson, Lewis and Gerina Piller.

Deadlocked for the lead with Thompson at 26-under, Lincicome made bogey at the par-3 17th, falling level with Piller a shot back.

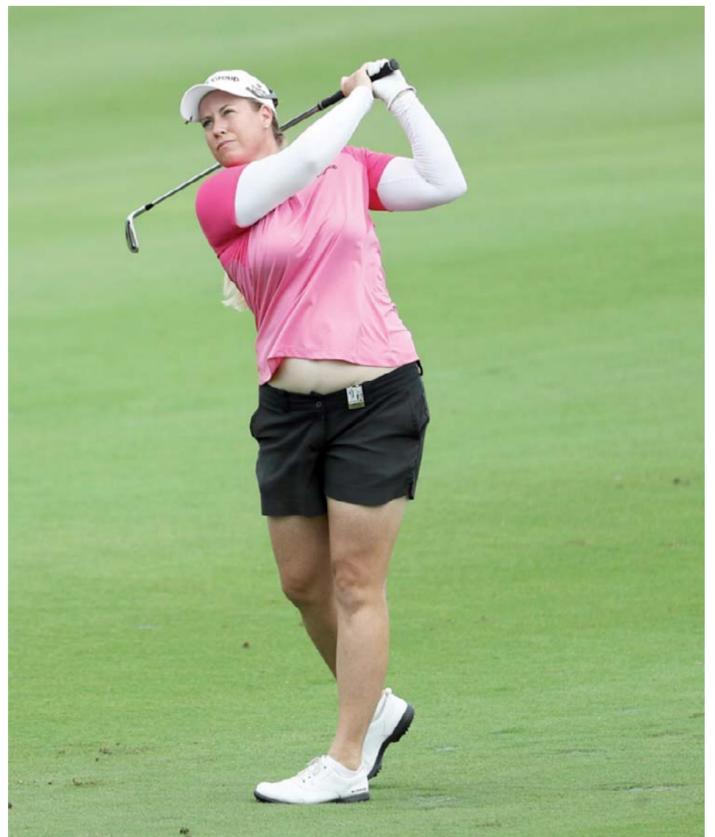
Lincicome answered with a birdie at the par-5 18th to finish on 68 and reach the clubhouse level with Thompson as rain struck. Thompson's approach on 18 landed in a greenside bunker but she recovered for a closing par to shoot 70 and force the playoff. Lewis was third on 267, one stroke ahead of Piller, after both closed with 71.

"You know, I played well all week, and my putter definitely saved me, and I made a lot of birdies out there, just a lot of positives to take from the week," Thompson said.

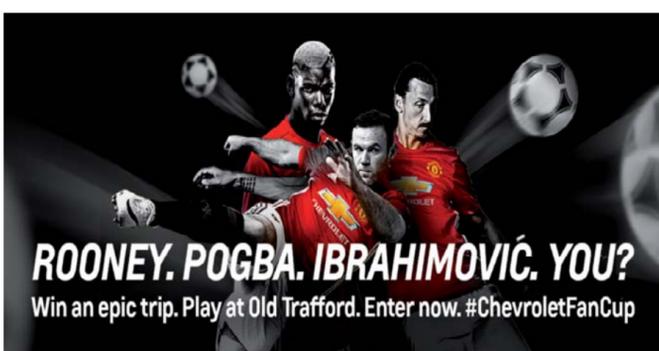
US teen Nelly Korda shared fifth with Thailand's Pornanong Phatlum on 271, making this the first LPGA event with five US players in the top five since the 2011 Canadian Women's Open won by Lincicome. Only two Americans won LPGA events last year, Thompson and Brittany Lang. Lincicome birdied five of the first seven holes to reach 26-under, opening with a birdie, running off three in a row starting at the par-3 third and closing with a birdie at the par-5 seventh.

She began the back nine with a birdie to reach 27-under, the all-time LPGA record low total, but stumbled with a bogey at 14 to stand on 26-under.

Thompson, who shared the lead with Lewis at 23-under when the day began, birdied the first and par-4 fifth but went birdie-bogey to close the front nine and again at 11 and 12 before a birdie at the par-5 15th lifted her to 26-under.—AFP



PARADISE ISLAND: Brittany Lincicome of the United States hits a shot on the fourteenth hole during the final round of the Pure Silk Bahamas LPGA Classic on Sunday in Paradise Island, Bahamas. — AFP



INDIA'S COURT APPOINTS ANTI-CORRUPTION TROUBLESHOOTER TO OVERSEE BCCI

NEW DELHI: India's Supreme Court appointed a top anti-corruption troubleshooter yesterday as head of a team to oversee the running of the powerful cricket board after sacking its top officials for failing to implement reforms.

Former government auditor Vinod Rai, who exposed major corruption scandals under the previous government, will head the new committee of administrators to run the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI).

He will be joined by the prominent historian Ramachandra Guha, banker Vikram Limaye and former Indian women's cricket captain Diana Edulji. It was not immediately clear how long the

four would be in place or their exact titles. "I think it's a huge, huge responsibility put on my shoulders and being the only cricketer-male or female-I think I have to really put my head into it and think about its future," Edulji told the CNN News18 network.

The appointments follow a court order to sack BCCI president Anurag Thakur and his deputy from their positions on January 2 over their failure to implement reforms recommended by a panel headed by former judge Rajendra Mal Lodha.

The court then asked two lawyers, known as amicus curiae (friends of the court), to suggest nine names to run the

board after ruling that government employees, ministers and anyone aged over 70 cannot be part of the organisation. The judges however later trimmed the proposed new team from nine to four and rejected a suggestion from a government lawyer that a top official from the federal sports ministry be included in the line-up.

'PEOPLE OF INTEGRITY'

Former India skipper Bishan Singh Bedi said he hoped the new team would improve the functioning of the board, which would benefit the game as a whole. "I have not the slightest doubt in my mind that they are the right people

for the job. All four of them are people of integrity," Bedi, who has been one of the board's most outspoken critics, told AFP.

Rai, who was the Comptroller and Auditor General of India between 2008-2013, is hailed for bringing accountability in the functioning of government after exposing scams in the allocation of coal mines and 2G mobile spectrum bidding by the previous centre-left government. Rai's expose became one of the focal points of the election campaign by the right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in 2014, which ended with its leader Narendra Modi taking power with a huge majority.

Rai has faced criticism in some quar-

ters that he was too close to the BJP and worked for its benefit during his stint as India's top auditor.

Cricket's massive popularity in India has helped the BCCI become by far the wealthiest of all of the sport's national boards. Charges of corruption and nepotism have dented the image of the board in recent years, leading many activists to urge the court to intervene to reform the privately-run organisation.

The board has been embroiled in a series of scandals, including accusations of corruption in the Indian Premier League (IPL) and a betting scandal involving an IPL team linked to its former head Narayanaswami Srinivasan. —AFP

PAKISTAN TO HOST T20 LEAGUE ON HOME SOIL

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan will host the final of its domestic Twenty20 tournament on home soil in March, the country's cricket board (PCB) said yesterday, a big lift for a nation which has largely been shunned by international teams since 2009 due to security risks.

Last year, the inaugural Pakistan Super League (PSL), based on the franchise model of the Indian Premier League and Australia's Big Bash League, became a success though all the matches were played in the United Arab Emirates. The PCB said at the time that the real test would be to bring the game back home.

In 2009, gunmen attacked a bus carrying the Sri Lankan team from their hotel to Lahore's Gaddafi stadium for a test match, injuring six players and killing six security personnel and two civilians.

The incident forced Pakistan to play their home matches in the UAE and the country has since remained starved of international cricket at home, apart from Zimbabwe's limited-overs tour in 2015.

"We will host the final in Lahore on March 7," the PCB's executive committee chairman Najam Sethi told Reuters. "We are going full steam ahead, and have all the

green signals." Last week, Giles Clarke, the head of the International Cricket Council's (ICC) Pakistan Task Force, arrived in the country on a two-day fact-finding mission on security. "We've been able to see very significant work that has been invested in, and invested very wisely in how safety and security will be made possible for visiting international cricket teams," Clarke said.

"There's a considerable amount of perception that needs to be changed and information that needs to be shared. But I am most impressed by the efforts of the authorities to make Lahore a safe city."

A senior PCB official said the PSL final would be hosted in Lahore "for sure, but only if there is no big security related incident from now to Feb. 9," when the league kicks off in the UAE.

Last year, the PCB sold five franchises for \$93 million and attracted players from 11 different countries, including big names like West Indies batsman Chris Gayle and former captains Kumar Sangakkara of Sri Lanka and England's Kevin Pietersen. National television viewing figures were higher than for the 2015 World Cup, with 55 percent of Pakistan's TV-watching public tuning into the tournament at peak times. —Reuters



AUCKLAND: Australia's Marcus Stoinis (R) plays a shot as wicketkeeper Tom Latham (L) of New Zealand looks on during the one-day international (ODI) cricket match between New Zealand and Australia at Eden Park in Auckland yesterday. — AFP

REMARKABLE STOINIS CENTURY NOT ENOUGH FOR AUSTRALIA

AUCKLAND: Marcus Stoinis scored his maiden one-day century but it was not enough to give an undermanned Australia an astonishing victory in the opening match of their one-day series against New Zealand at Eden Park yesterday.

Stoinis, who also took three wickets in New Zealand's 286 for nine from 50 overs, guided Australia from 54-5 in the 13th over to within sight of victory as he grabbed the game by the scruff of the neck.

The 27-year-old, playing his second one-day international, shared in an 81-run seventh-wicket partnership with James Faulkner (25) and 48 with Pat Cummins (36) for the eighth before Stoinis exploded for 31 runs in 11 balls to put his side into a position where they needed 19 runs from the final 24 balls.

Such was his dominance he and last man Josh Hazlewood shared a 54-run partnership, without the tall fast bowler facing a single delivery. Hazlewood, however, was run out while backing up too far by New Zealand captain Kane Williamson on the final ball of the 47th over to dismiss the visitors for 280, giving New Zealand a six-run victory.

Stoinis was left stranded on 146 not out, having hit nine boundaries and 11 sixes.

Australia were already missing David Warner (rested), Usman Khawaja (in Dubai preparing for the tour of India) and Steve Smith (injured) but then lost stand-in captain Matthew Wade before play began with a back injury. New Zealand had been well in control of the match as make-shift wicket-keeper Tom Latham repaid the faith of the selectors with three catches and two stumpings.

Latham, who was a wicketkeeper earlier in his career, took the gloves ahead of the uncapped Tom Blundell as the selectors looked to build more flexibility in their squad ahead of the Champions Trophy in England later this year.

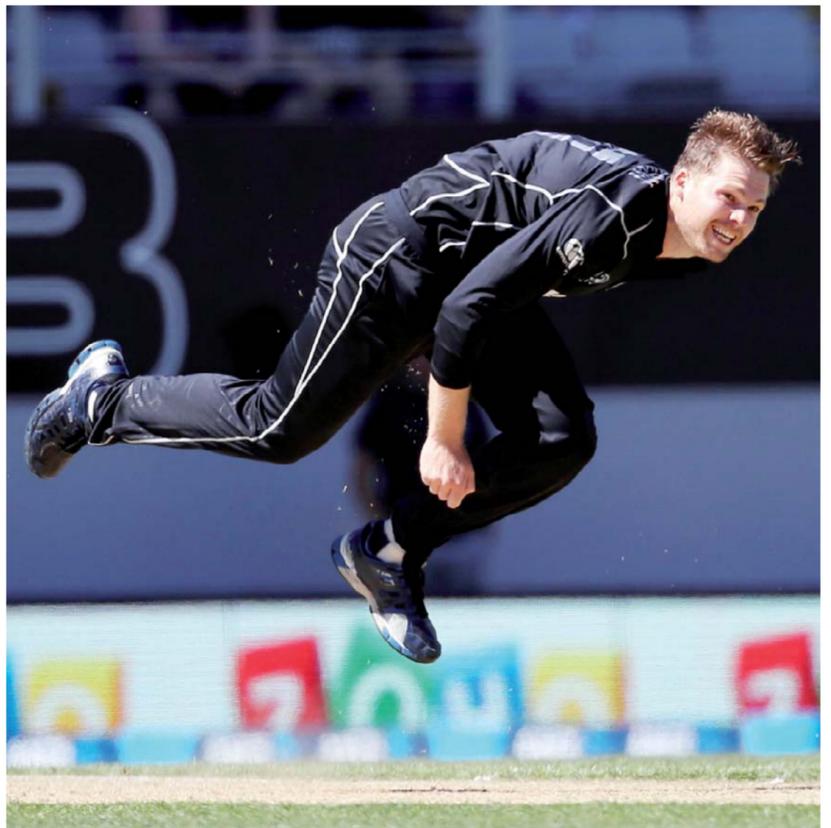
The hosts had been humbled in a 3-0 series loss in Australia before Christmas but showed a marked improvement in their fielding and bowling as they put the visitors under pressure from the start of their run chase.

New Zealand's innings was anchored by Neil Broom's 73, while Martin Guptill added 61 at the top of the order. The three-match series continues with further matches in Napier on Feb. 2 and Hamilton on Feb 5. —Reuters

SCOREBOARD			
Scoreboard at close of play in the first One Day International between New Zealand and Australia yesterday in Auckland, New Zealand.			
New Zealand Innings		Australia Innings	
M. Guptill b Stoinis	61	A. Finch c Neesham b Boult	4
T. Latham c Handscomb b Starc	7	T. Head c Munro b Boult	5
K. Williamson c Maxwell b Stoinis	24	S. Marsh st Latham b Santner	16
R. Taylor b Head	16	P. Handscomb c Latham b Southee	7
N. Broom c Starc b Faulkner	73	G. Maxwell c Latham b Ferguson	20
C. Munro c Finch b Stoinis	2	S. Heazlett c Latham b Ferguson	4
J. Neesham c Head b Hazlewood	48	M. Stoinis not out	146
M. Santner c Maxwell b Cummins	7	J. Faulkner b Munro	25
T. Southee c Faulkner b Cummins	0	P. Cummins st Latham b Santner	36
L. Ferguson not out	3	M. Starc c Neesham b Santner	3
T. Boult not out	16	J. Hazlewood run out (Williamson)	0
Extras (b-8 lb-5 w-16)	29	Extras (lb-2 w-12)	14
Total (for 9 wickets, 50 overs)	286	Total (all out, 47 overs)	280
Fall of wickets: 1-13 T. Latham, 2-87 K. Williamson, 3-128 R. Taylor, 4-130 M. Guptill, 5-134 C. Munro, 6-210 J. Neesham, 7-246 M. Santner, 8-251 T. Southee, 9-269 N. Broom.		Fall of wickets: 1-9 A. Finch, 2-10 T. Head, 3-18 P. Handscomb, 4-48 S. Marsh, 5-54 G. Maxwell, 6-67 S. Heazlett, 7-148 J. Faulkner, 8-196 P. Cummins, 9-226 M. Starc, 10-280 J. Hazlewood.	
Bowling: M. Starc 10-0-59-1(w-2); J. Hazlewood 10-0-48-1(w-1); P. Cummins 9-0-67-2(w-1); J. Faulkner 6-0-29-1; M. Stoinis 10-0-49-3(w-2); T. Head 5-0-21-1(w-2).		Bowling: T. Southee 10-0-63-1; T. Boult 9-0-58-2(w-1); L. Ferguson 10-0-44-2; M. Santner 10-1-44-3(w-1); J. Neesham 5-0-49-0(w-4); C. Munro 3-0-20-1(w-2).	
		Result: New Zealand won by 6 runs	



Eoin Morgan



AUCKLAND: Lockie Ferguson of New Zealand bowls during the one-day international (ODI) cricket match between New Zealand and Australia at Eden Park in Auckland yesterday. — AFP

SKY, ARMSTRONG DENY SECRET MOTOR CHEATING: REPORT

NEW YORK: Team Sky, which has produced four of the past five Tour de France champions, and doping-disgraced Lance Armstrong denied using secret motors in bicycles, a CBS television report said Sunday.

A segment on the show "60 Minutes" examined the possibility of motorized cheating in pro cycling with three-time Tour de France winner Greg LeMond, admitted dope cheat ex-rider Tyler Hamilton and Hungarian designer Istvan Varjas, who makes hidden motors for bikes, saying they believe such cheating exists. "I know the motor is still in the sport," LeMond said. "There's always a few bad apples because it's a lot of money." Jean Pierre Verdy, a former French Anti-Doping Agency testing director, told CBS he had been disturbed by speeds on mountain climbs, saying informants among riders and team managers told him that about 12 riders used

motors in the 2015 Tour de France.

"They are hurting their sport, but human nature is like that. Man has always tried to find that magic potion," Verdy said. Varjas said he told French police he sold secret-motor cycles to an unknown client just before the 2015 Tour, delivering the bikes to a locked storage room. He noted one motor design can be hidden inside the hub of the back wheel but would boost the normal wheel weight by about 800 grams (1.7 pounds).

Weighty 2015 Tour issue

In the 2015 Tour de France, peloton bikes were weighed before a time trial stage, with CBS reporting French authorities said Team Sky was the only squad with heavier bikes, each about 800 grams more.

"Weight is everything," LeMond said. "If your bike weighs a kilo more, you

would never race on it."

Britain's Chris Froome, riding for Sky, won the 2013, 2015 and 2016 Tour de France crowns. In 2015, he was "King of the Mountains" for his times in the difficult climbing stages that often prove decisive. No Tour winner since 1970 had won the mountain crown as well.

A Team Sky spokesman told CBS the team never used mechanical assistance, saying time trial bikes might be heavier to allow for better aerodynamics and all Sky bikes were checked and cleared by the International Cycling Union (UCI).

CBS reported, citing unnamed sources, that UCI would not allow French investigators in 2015 to remove Team Sky wheels and weigh them alone to uncover if they were enhanced.

LeMond said UCI must do more to combat motorized cheating. "This is fixable," LeMond said. "I don't trust it until they figure out how to take the motor

out. I won't trust any victories of the Tour de France."

Armstrong, an admitted dope cheat who was stripped of seven Tour de France titles from 1999-2005, denied to CBS through his lawyer ever using a motor, although his victory run began just after Varjas claims he sold his first secret-motor bike to an anonymous purchaser with a promise not to make more or talk of it for 10 years.

"If they offer you \$2 million dollar to don't do nothing, can you refuse it? I don't think (so)," he told CBS.

A 'WINNING' DIFFERENCE

Armstrong's ex-teammate, Hamilton, said he never knew of any motors used by US Postal riders.

CBS purchased a 1999 US Postal cycle and had Varjas install a motor, paying him \$12,000 for parts and labor, then had Hamilton ride it.

"It's not super obvious," he said. "I could see how teams are doing it."

The silent motor made with military-grade metal is powered by a lithium battery and operated by a secret button, providing a limited power boost for 20 minutes. "That's the difference between winning and losing for sure," Hamilton said. "For sure." A remote control can connect the motor to heart rate, the motor starting when a rider's heart rate rises too high, Varjas said.

Varjas said he knew motors were being used by pro riders but said it's not his problem, adding "If the money is big, why not?"

Varjas claimed Michele Ferrari, banned from cycling for his role in chemical doping programs, has bought hidden-motor bikes in the past three years, but CBS said Ferrari told them he tested one but never bought one from Varjas.—AFP

NADAL SKIPS DAVIS CUP

MADRID: Rafael Nadal yesterday pulled out of Spain's Davis Cup clash with Croatia this weekend as he recovers from his Australian Open exertions. Nadal, beaten in five sets by Roger Federer in Sunday's Melbourne final, will be replaced in the World Group first-round tie by Feliciano Lopez.

The Spanish tennis federation said its medical staff preferred that Nadal sit out the trip to Osijek given "the little recovery time" available to the world number six.

The federation noted that Nadal "had played in a lot of matches after four months out of action" in January, which at 30 years of age was harder to recover from

than in the past.

Five-time Davis Cup champions Spain are making their return to the World Group after a two-year absence. Lopez, the world number 33, joins Roberto Bautista Agut, Pablo Carreno Busta and Marc Lopez against Croatia, who lost to Argentina in last year's final.

Nadal reached his 21st Grand Slam final in Melbourne after a run of beating Alexander Zverev, Gael Monfils, Milos Raonic and then Grigor Dimitrov in a near five-hour semi-final.

On Sunday, the Spaniard succumbed 6-4, 3-6, 6-1, 3-6, 6-3 to Federer in a classic conclusion to the tournament.—AFP



PORT-GENTIL: Morocco's midfielder Mbarek Boussoufa (R) challenges Egypt's midfielder Tarek Hamed during the 2017 Africa Cup of Nations quarter-final football match between Egypt and Morocco in Port-Gentil on Sunday.—AFP

EGYPT STRIKE LATE TO REACH NATIONS CUP SEMI-FINALS

PORT GENTIL: Egypt's Mahmoud Kahraba scored a dramatic late goal to snatch a 1-0 win over their nemesis Morocco on Sunday and a place in the African Nations Cup semi-finals.

The seven times winners were on the back foot for much of the last eight game against their north African rivals but grabbed the winner from an 87th minute corner. Morocco failed to clear the bouncing ball and substitute Kahraba hooked it home from close range to book a semi-final against Burkina Faso tomorrow.

Ghana meet Cameroon in the other semi-final in Franceville on Thursday. The victory was the first for Egypt against Morocco for 31 years and ended the hopes of the latter's coach,

Frenchman Herve Renard, of collecting a third Nations Cup trophy. It will be all the more disappointing for Renard given that his fancied side created more than enough chances to win. The first half was an intriguing tactical battle as Morocco pressed their opponents but gave away too many midfield fouls. There was little way through for Egypt whose only chance came after 15 minutes when Morocco's Medhi Benatia missed the ball from a corner and Mohamed Trezeguet behind him was gifted a chance to shoot, forcing a good save from goalkeeper Munir.

A similar defensive lapse by Egypt almost saw them concede their first goal of the tournament

when Romain Saiss completely missed a chance in front of goal and when the ball bounced back to him his header shaved the bar and bounced over. At the start of the second half, Egypt had an opportunity when Mohamed Salah broke free of his marker and hit a half-volley, only to see Munir make a superb one-handed save. Then Morocco's Mbark Boussoufa curled a shot from outside the box onto the bar in the 55th minute and five minutes later target man Aziz Bouhaddouz missed from close range. Morocco kept up the pressure with more half chances in the final minutes before being caught out at a corner and seeing their Nations Cup hopes end somewhat against the run of play.—Reuters

MORE LIFE YET IN FEDERER'S DANCING FEET AFTER 18TH SLAM

MELBOURNE: Roger Federer needed his exhausted legs for one last big effort Sunday night - going out dancing to celebrate his remarkable 18th Grand Slam title at the Australian Open.

And after seeing the sun rise over Melbourne, then celebrating some more with his children as they woke up in his family's hotel suite, the man many call the greatest tennis player ever looked ahead from this stunning comeback title and spoke of adding yet another at this year's Wimbledon.

The 35-year-old Federer surprised himself with this victory, seeded No. 17 and in his first tournament back from a six-month injury layoff. So he wasn't going to let the achievement go without a fitting celebration. "I was home by sunrise, which was good," the still-beaming Swiss star said a day after his five-set win over Rafael Nadal. "It was nice to see the sun rise over Melbourne and get into the room. It was a long night but it was a lot of fun. Everyone was in such a good mood. It was a special day, a special ... couple of weeks really, and it finished off in a great way - being silly and having fun and forgetting about everything. All of the pressure just went away and we were just all celebrating. It was great."

Federer said he felt OK, but he was tired for the traditional championship photo shoot. "My legs hurt like mad and my back's stiff now, too, because I couldn't take any treatment, plus I was dancing," he said. "I'm still on the high. I'm going to crash eventually but that's OK."

FUN DANCER

Federer, who confessed to being more of "a fun dancer" than a good one, said he was thrilled his two-year-old twin boys Leo and Lennart got to experience their father winning a Grand Slam for the first time, while seven-year-old daughters Myla Rose and Charlene Riva were "super excited" to see his trophy.

"As I walked in they woke up, so that was a bit of a weird moment," he said. "But still it was so great because they

were in such a good mood when they woke up and I walked in with the trophy."

They weren't the only ones to grasp the significance of perhaps Federer's most unlikely Grand Slam win, his first since Wimbledon in 2012.

"People seemed genuinely really happy for me that I won a slam again, particularly this one (because) maybe it's a bit of a fairytale after the comeback to come back this way," he told a packed media gathering. "On so many levels I just felt like a lot of people were happy and that's almost more important than me being happy."

"I was aware it was a big match but maybe not quite like this."

Federer said he had never entertained thoughts that he could win his comeback tournament, figuring he could reach the quarterfinals and set a positive tone for the rest of the season. "I just knew the draw was going to be that much more difficult because I was the 17th seed, so in the early rounds you're going to get tougher draws," he said. "I thought I could possibly be dangerous for a top guy, maybe beat one, and then that would probably be it, because the body would probably start aching, which it did, or my level would drop, which it didn't. That was a big surprise to me, that my level was consistent."

Federer said he would take time to reflect and let his body recover before his next tournament in Dubai from Feb. 27. After that he'd play Indian Wells and Miami before a European clay court schedule he hadn't yet fully planned. He said he was aiming to play the French Open before moving to the grass court season and Wimbledon, saying: "I know I'll have a better shot there."

Federer also said he'd "have a good chance to do well" at the U.S. Open, and is still hoping to add another Australian Open title next year. "I hope to be back next year of course," he said. "That's why I took the six months off to hope I can still be playing for a couple of years." — AP

DORTMUND LEAK LATE EQUALIZER

BERLIN: Borussia Dortmund conceded a late goal in Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang's low-key Bundesliga return on Sunday in a 1-1 draw at Mainz which cost them third place in the table. Aubameyang, the German league's top scorer with 16 goals, was back in Dortmund's starting line-up following Gabon's group-stage exit from the Africa Cup of Nations, but he had just two shots on goal in Mainz. Dortmund coach Thomas Tuchel had lamented their shaky defence after last Saturday's scrappy 2-1 win at Werder Bremen and they again looked unstable at the back.

This was Dortmund's fourth draw in their last five league games. "If you don't want to defend consistently, then something like that can happen," said Dortmund's frustrated captain Marcel Schmelzer. "We thought we were a step further on, so it is bitter to have let a win slip out of our hands." Last season's runners up are now fourth-fourteen points adrift of leaders Bayern Munich, who won 2-1 at Werder Bremen on Saturday thanks to goals by Arjen Robben and David Alaba.

Borussia took the lead with just three minutes gone in Mainz. Midfielder Jean-Philippe Gbamin lost possession, which Dortmund's Germany winger Andre Schuerrle snapped up to provide the final pass for Marco Reus to rifle home. Mainz's Japan striker Yoshinori Muto had the ball in the net on 15 minutes, but the goal was ruled offside. The hosts snatched a point seven minutes from time when midfielder Danny Latza was left unmarked to head home a cross at the far post as Mainz pushed for the winner in the frantic final stages.

Earlier, midfielder Janik Haberer and ex-Bayern Munich striker Nils Petersen netted for Freiburg in Sunday's shock 2-1 win over Bundesliga high-fliers Hertha Berlin.

"It's unpleasant to play against us," said Petersen. "We defended well and we have the quality up front to use our few chances. We're all pulling in the right direction-big compliment to the team." Having pushed league leaders Bayern all the way in last weekend's 2-1 home defeat at the Schwarzwald Stadion, hosts Freiburg earned a deserved win on Sunday to climb to eighth in Germany's top flight. Haberer, who had given Freiburg a shock lead against Bayern before Robert Lewandowski netted twice, put the hosts ahead against Hertha when he drilled home Vincenzo Grifo's pass across goal on 39 minutes.—AFP



SAN DIEGO: Serbia's Marko Gobeljic (11) fights for the ball with United States' Steve Birnbaum (15) during a friendly soccer match Sunday in San Diego.—AP



IMPHAL: India's Laishram Sarita Devi shares a moment with her son after winning her fight against Hungary's Zsafia Bedo during their IBC Pro Boxing match on Sunday at the Khuman Lampak Indoor Stadium in Imphal, capital of North Eastern Indian state of Manipur.—AFP

INDIA'S DEVI OUTPUNCHES BEDO IN PROFESSIONAL DEBUT

NEW DELHI: India's Laishram Sarita Devi made a winning start to her professional boxing career, silencing the taunts of her Hungarian opponent who had vowed to leave her in tears.

Devi, who became famous after she tearfully refused to accept a medal at the Asian Games, won the five-round contest against Zsafia Bedo by a unanimous decision in front of her home fans in the state of Manipur. Bedo, a veteran of 59 professional bouts, had vowed to reduce Devi to tears once again ahead of their contest in the northeastern Indian city of Imphal.

But the 29-year-old Hungarian was totally outfought by her Indian opponent, who was cheered ringside by her family and fans.

"The victory was sweet as I outplayed an experienced boxer. The sacrifice made over

the past decade has paid off," the 31-year-old was quoted as saying by the Hindustan Times. Devi's quest to become India's top female boxer hit a roadblock in 2014 when she refused to accept a bronze medal at the Asian Games, earning her a one-year ban by the sport's world federation.

Devi accused judges of pandering to locals by declaring South Korea's Park Ji-Na the winner on points in their semi-final, denying her a shot at gold.

But the Commonwealth Games silver medalist has moved on as she seeks a spot on the national stage alongside Vijender Singh, her Indian male counterpart who has won all four fights since turning professional. "The Asian Games incident was very painful, but I had to erase those sad memories. That was a big reason I decided to turn pro," said Devi.—AFP

CRAZY TO REST SO MANY PLAYERS IN FA CUP, SAYS SHEARER

LONDON: As the number of Premier League clubs knocked out of this season's FA Cup by lower division opponents reached six on Sunday, debate intensified over whether the competition was being devalued by leading teams resting so many players. Hull City and Watford joined Bournemouth, Liverpool, Stoke City and West Bromwich Albion in losing to sides from the second or third tier in this year's competition, most of them making several changes to their strongest lineups.

(second-tier) sides like Newcastle United, Brighton & Hove Albion and Leeds United followed suit against supposedly inferior opposition by suffering embarrassing defeats, the latter pair going out to non-League (fifth-tier) Lincoln City and Sutton United.

Leeds manager Garry Monk acknowledged he should not have made as many as 10 changes for a 1-0 humbling at Sutton, whose captain and goalscorer Jamie Collins said his side were given a huge boost when they saw the visitors' team sheet.

Many managers, however, were influenced by the fact that there is a full programme of matches in the Premier League and Championship coming up in midweek. That was no excuse, according to former England captain Alan Shearer, twice an FA Cup finalist with Newcastle United. "Fans care about trophies," he told the BBC. "I don't get the resting of players and never have done."

"Liverpool as an example changed the team (for the 2-1 defeat by Wolverhampton Wanderers on Saturday). They're not even in Europe. They've got

16 (Premier) league games left this season in four months.

JUST CRAZY

"It's just crazy, I don't understand it. I'm all for bringing one or two young kids into the team but not six or seven of them. "They (the clubs) are cheating the fans. Newcastle fans travelled 250 miles down to Oxford expecting their team to win. And he (manager Rafa Benitez) puts a weakened team out. It's very, very disappointing." Fellow BBC pundit Phil Neville, who won the FA Cup three times with

Manchester United, disagreed, however. "I was at home (on Saturday) and loving all the upsets," he said. "Every team's making changes and I think it's making the FA Cup better. "A lot of Premier League teams are playing at home and so they're making a lot of changes. It's been fantastic for the Cup and I'm all for playing the kids. You find out whether they're good enough. "And Lincoln and Sutton are not thinking the FA Cup's been diminished. They're ecstatic they're in the next round. "I think the FA Cup's alive and well more than ever." — Reuters

MOURINHO REJECTED 'BIG OFFER' TO GO TO CHINA

LONDON: Jose Mourinho turned down a "big offer" to go to China, the Manchester United manager disclosed in an interview published yesterday.

The 54-year-old Portuguese boss did not disclose which club made the proposal but said he would not criticise anyone who made a highly lucrative move to the developing Chinese Super League.

Last week saw Mourinho cast doubt over the Old Trafford future of England captain Wayne Rooney, who recently became United's all-time leading goalscorer, by saying "the money is huge" in China, amid reports of Asian interest in the striker.

"I have already refused a big offer to go to China, but I don't criticise anyone who decides to do it," Mourinho told the monthly GQ men's magazine.

"It's their choice, their life. Only they can decide what they need for their future. Other managers in the Premier League have been critical, but I am no critic."

Fellow high-profile managers Luiz Felipe Scolari and Sven-Goran Eriksson are already

in the Chinese Super League, while this month saw Argentina striker Carlos Tevez join Shanghai Shenhua from Boca Juniors.

His arrival came a fortnight after that of Brazilian star Oscar, who joined cross-town Shanghai rivals SIPG for £50 million (\$63 million, 60 million euros) from Chelsea that smashed the Asian transfer-fee record.

Former Chelsea manager Mourinho said he was "worried" about the prospect of losing players to China and urged them to think about more than money.

"If you are negotiating a new contract with one of your players, and you offer him £5 million per year and they offer £25 million, then you have a big problem," Mourinho admitted.

"Maybe the player takes £5 million because he prefers football. Or £25 million because he prefers money."

"I am worried, because they can offer contracts that are impossible to offer in Europe. But in the end the player who wants to go is a player that maybe you don't want to keep," he added. — AFP

LAST-GASP SILVA RESCUES MONACO

PARIS: Bernardo Silva struck an injury-time equaliser as Monaco salvaged a deserved point in a 1-1 draw at reigning champions Paris Saint-Germain to keep the visitors top of Ligue 1. Edinson Cavani scored his 21st league goal of the season with an 81st-minute penalty at the Parc des Princes, but Portugal international Silva fired home in stoppage time to thwart the hosts. Monaco moved back above Nice, who were 3-1 winners over Guingamp earlier on Sunday, on goal difference with Unai Emery's PSG remaining three points behind in their quest for a fifth straight title.

"It's not the best result, but it's not the worst," said Emery. "We will keep going as our objective is to win the title."

"It's difficult and today we had a good opportunity which we lost but there will be lots of chances." Julian Draxler returned from a calf problem in place of Angel Di Maria, who scored twice in Tuesday's 4-1 win at Bordeaux in the League Cup semi-finals, while Adrien Rabiot came in for the injured Marco Verratti in Paris. Monaco will meet PSG in the final in Lyon on April 1, and coach Leonardo Jardim recalled Valere Germain to partner Radamel Falcao in attack with Fabinho shaking off illness to start after coming off the bench in Wednesday's 1-0 defeat of Nancy.

"We always work to win," said Jardim. "Perhaps after trailing 1-0, a draw is not a bad result but our idea was to come here and take three points." Fabinho forced PSG goalkeeper Kevin Trapp to tip over in a lively first half, albeit one with limited chances as Pep Guardiola scouted his side's upcoming opponents-Manchester City are set to face Monaco in the Champions League last 16. Monaco keeper Danijel Subasic was called into action just before the break, first parrying a low drive from Lucas before scrambling to his feet to block a follow-up effort from Cavani.

The visitors nearly caught PSG out within 30 seconds of the restart as Falcao spun inside the area before drawing a save from Trapp before Thomas Lemar drilled the rebound against Rabiot.

However, Trapp hobbled off shortly after with an apparent hamstring problem sustained making a save from a swerving Lemar strike and was replaced by Alphonse Areola.

LATE FIREWORKS

A devilish low ball across the face of goal from Lemar then flashed between the legs of Jemerson and away to safety as Monaco looked the likelier to break the deadlock. But PSG were awarded a penalty

when Djibril Sidibe tugged Draxler back as he sought to get on the end of a cross, with Cavani calmly converting to give the hosts the lead.

But Monaco, who arrived in the capital averaging over three goals a game and unbeaten in their last seven trips to the Paris in the league, kept pressing and were rewarded when Silva's low drive from outside the area skipped past Areola.

Earlier, Mario Balotelli secured a first win in four games for Nice as they ended a run of three successive draws with victory at home to Guingamp. Alassane Plea struck after 11 minutes to give Nice the lead at the Allianz Riviera and Jean-Michael Seri, back from Africa Cup of Nations duty with the Ivory Coast, added a second before half-time.

Jimmy Briand pulled a goal back for Guingamp on the hour but Balotelli, who was targeted with racial abuse in last week's game at Bastia, sealed the win three minutes from time.

Nice coach Lucien Favre admitted it had been a struggle at times and insisted his side would continue to take things step by step. "We scored three goals at key times. Guingamp didn't have many chances but we sat back and suffered. We have to keep taking it match by match and we have a big one at Monaco next Saturday," said Favre.

Lyon slumped to a 2-1 home defeat against Lille on Saturday as Yassine Benzia punished his former side with his first goals of the season, while Bafetimbi Gomis netted a hat-trick as Marseille thrashed Montpellier 5-1 on Friday. — AFP

Live Matches on TV (Local Timings)

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE	
Arsenal v Watford	22:45
beIN SPORTS	
Middlesbrough v Albion	22:45
beIN SPORTS	
Sunderland v Tottenham	22:45
beIN SPORTS	
Burnley v Leicester	22:45
beIN SPORTS	
Swansea v Southampton	22:45
beIN SPORTS	
Bournemouth v Crystal Palace	22:45
beIN SPORTS	
Liverpool v Chelsea	23:00
beIN SPORTS	

ITALIAN CUP 2016/2017	
Inter Milano v Lazio	22:45
beIN SPORTS	



MADRID: Real Madrid's Mateo Kovacic, left, runs with the ball through Real Sociedad defenders during a Spanish La Liga soccer match between Real Madrid and Real Sociedad at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid, Sunday. Kovacic scored once in Real Madrid's 3-0 victory. — AP

RONALDO FIRES REAL MADRID FOUR POINTS CLEAR AT TOP

MADRID: Cristiano Ronaldo shrugged off the boos of his own supporters to fire Real Madrid to a 3-0 win over Real Sociedad on Sunday as Zinedine Zidane's side took advantage of slip ups by Barcelona and Sevilla to open up a four-point lead at the top of La Liga. Ronaldo teed up Mateo Kovacic for the opener in the 38th minute to cool tensions at the Bernabeu after supporters had grown impatient with the team's uninspired display and the Portuguese secured victory with a strike of his own in the 51st. Substitute Alvaro Morata then put the finishing touch to the win by adding the third in the 82nd minute. Ronaldo had been one of the scapegoats for Real's recent stuttering run which saw them win one of their last four games and exit the King's Cup in midweek to Celta Vigo.

He was whistled after giving the ball away early in the game and responded by shouting back at the crowd although all was forgiven when he latched onto Kovacic's through ball and coolly chipped it into the net. Real Sociedad had made things difficult for Real on a rainy evening in the Spanish capital and could have levelled before the break when forward Juanmi burst into the area but skewed wide. The Basque side's resistance waned after Ronaldo's goal and they had defender Inigo Martinez sent off in the 74th minute for two bookings.

Morata, who had an earlier goal wiped out for offside, headed in Lucas Vazquez's cross shortly after Sociedad had been reduced to 10 men and Ronaldo also had a second goal ruled out in the 90th minute for offside.

Real top the standings on 46 points, four clear of Barcelona, who were held to a 1-1 draw at Real Betis on Sunday, and Sevilla, who were beaten 2-1 at Espanyol, and have a game in hand on both their title rivals.

However, even without six first-team regulars through injury, Real took a huge step towards a first La Liga title for five years against an in-form Sociedad, who remain just one point off the top four in fifth. "After a few difficult days we were back to being ourselves tonight. It was a complete performance against a strong opponent," said Real boss Zinedine Zidane. "We can say it has been a good night for us because our rivals have drawn or lost."

Mateo Kovacic opened the scoring with the only real chance of the first-half as he timed his late run from midfield perfectly for Ronaldo's through ball and slotted low beyond Geronimo Rulli. The roles were reversed six minutes into the second-half as this time Kovacic's pass split the Sociedad defence and Ronaldo coolly chipped the onrushing Rulli for his 20th goal of the season. Sociedad's uphill task was made impossible 15 minutes from time when Inigo Martinez was sent-off for a second bookable offence. And Alvaro Morata made the 10 men pay as he bulletted home Lucas Vazquez's cross for the third eight minutes from time. — Agencies

WEST HAM FANS OFFERED DEAL TO GET PAYET OFF THEIR BACKS

LONDON: After selling Dimitri Payet to Olympique de Marseille for 25 million pounds (\$31.2 million), West Ham United are offering fans a cut-price deal to get the French forward off their backs as well.

"Bring back your Payet shirt to any of the club shops & you will get a new replacement for £25," the Premier League club's vice-chairman Karen Brady said on Twitter on Monday in response to a query.

Basic short-sleeved 2016-17 West Ham team shirts without a player's name on the back usually retail at 55 pounds each but are currently reduced to 36.66 in a sale at the club's online store.

French international Payet, who stood out for the host nation at Euro 2016, had become a fan favourite at the Hammers after he

joined from Marseille in 2015 for a reported 10.7 million pounds.

The relationship broke down when he told the East Londoners he no longer wanted to play for them and sought a return to Marseille in the current transfer window.

Co-owner David Sullivan on Sunday accused the player of lacking respect. "The club would like to place on record its sincere disappointment that Dimitri Payet did not show the same commitment and respect to West Ham United that the club and fans showed him, particularly when it rewarded him with a lucrative new five-and-half-year deal only last year," he said. The Hammers last week signed Scotland winger Robert Snodgrass from struggling Hull City in a 10.2 million-pound deal. — Reuters



MARSEILLE: Olympique de Marseille's new forward Dimitri Payet poses with his jersey during a press conference yesterday at Robert-Louis Dreyfus Stadium in Marseille, southern France. Dimitri Payet made a record-breaking return to Olympique Marseille yesterday leaving a bitter taste at West Ham United after going on strike to force a transfer. — AFP



PARIS: Monaco's Portuguese midfielder Bernardo Silva (C) celebrates after scoring a goal during the French L1 football match between Paris Saint-Germain and Monaco at the Parc des Princes stadium in Paris on Sunday. — AFP

Sports

Kuwait women shooting team excel on Day 2



West Ham fans offered deal to get Payet off their backs



TUESDAY, JANUARY 31, 2017

INDIA'S COURT APPOINTS ANTI-CORRUPTION TROUBLESHOOTER TO OVERSEE BCCI Page 17



ATLANTA: New York Knicks guard Courtney Lee (5) shoots a three-point basket to tie the game in the second overtime of an NBA basketball game against the Atlanta Hawks, Sunday, in Atlanta.— AP

HAWKS SOAR IN OT, WARRIORS WIN

LOS ANGELES: Paul Millsap totaled 37 points and 19 rebounds in 60 minutes and Atlanta outlasted New York for a 142-139 quadruple overtime victory on Sunday. Millsap matched a team record for minutes and also scored the go-ahead basket with 11.4 seconds remaining in the fourth overtime. Kent Bazemore added 24 points and Dennis Schroder contributed 23 and a career-high 15 assists. Dwight Howard collected 19 and 13 rebounds before fouling out in the second overtime.

MAVERICKS 105, SPURS 101
Seth Curry scored a career-high 24 points and hit the deciding layup with 17.3 seconds remaining as Dallas snapped a seven-game losing streak to the Spurs. Harrison Barnes added 19 points for the Mavericks, who trailed 59-49 at halftime. Wesley Matthews had 17 points, and Dirk Nowitzki totaled 15 points and 10 rebounds. Dallas won in San Antonio for the first time since Nov. 26, 2010.

WARRIORS 113, TRAIL BLAZERS 111
Kevin Durant scored 33 points to go with 10 rebounds and six assists as Golden State beat Portland. Klay Thompson added 27 points for the Warriors, who won their third straight game and 10th in the past 11 outings. Golden State was without Stephen Curry, who had the stomach flu.

MAGIC 114, RAPTORS 113
Nikola Vucevic scored 25 points and Orlando held off slumping Toronto. D.J. Augustin added 21 points as Orlando scored 19 straight points to end the first half. Jeff Green added 16 points and C.J. Watson finished with 15. Kyle Lowry scored 33 points for the Raptors, who lost for the sixth time in seven games.

PACERS 120, ROCKETS 101
Paul George scored 33 points and Indiana limited James Harden to 15 points in a double-digit win over Houston. George topped 30 points for a season-high fourth straight game as

Indiana won for the ninth time in 13 games. Myles Turner added 18 and 10 rebounds while Jeff Teague collected 17 and 15 assists.

WIZARDS 107, PELICANS 94
Bradley Beal scored 27 points and Washington pulled away to beat New Orleans. Markieff Morris added 12 of his 21 in the fourth quarter as Washington won for the 11th time in 13 games. John Wall collected 18 points and 19 assists.

BULLS 121, 76ERS 108
After a tumultuous week that included back-to-back losses and a couple rounds of public finger-pointing, Chicago made sure it did not leave for six-game road trip with a third straight defeat. The Bulls, who played without power forward Taj Gibson, took control late in the first quarter. Chicago fought off a couple comeback bids and sealed the victory in the fourth against the Sixers, who played without rookie center Joel Embiid.— Reuters

NBA results/standings

Dallas 105, San Antonio 101; Chicago 121, Philadelphia 108; Indiana 120, Houston 101; Washington 107, New Orleans 94; Orlando 114, Toronto 113; Cleveland 107, Oklahoma City 91; Atlanta 142, NY Knicks 139 (OT).

Eastern Conference			Western Conference					
Atlantic Division			Northwest Division					
W	L	PCT	GB					
Boston	29	18	.617	-	Utah	30	19	.612
Toronto	29	19	.604	0.5	Oklahoma City	28	20	.583
NY Knicks	21	28	.429	9	Denver	21	25	.457
Philadelphia	17	29	.370	11.5	Portland	21	28	.429
Brooklyn	9	38	.191	20	Minnesota	18	29	.383
Central Division					Pacific Division			
Cleveland	32	14	.696	-	Golden State	41	7	.854
Indiana	25	22	.532	7.5	LA Clippers	30	18	.625
Chicago	24	25	.490	9.5	Sacramento	19	28	.404
Milwaukee	21	26	.447	11.5	LA Lakers	16	34	.320
Detroit	21	26	.447	11.5	Phoenix	15	32	.319
Southeast Division					Southwest Division			
Atlanta	28	20	.583	-	San Antonio	36	11	.766
Washington	27	20	.574	0.5	Houston	35	16	.686
Charlotte	23	25	.479	5	Memphis	28	21	.571
Orlando	19	30	.388	9.5	New Orleans	19	29	.396
Miami	18	30	.375	10	Dallas	17	30	.362

LEBRON JAMES FIRST TO SCORE 20,000 POINTS FOR CAVALIERS

LOS ANGELES: Cleveland superstar LeBron James became the first player to score 20,000 points in a Cavaliers jersey on Sunday, pouring in 25 in the NBA champions' 107-91 victory over the Oklahoma City Thunder. James added 14 rebounds and eight assists as the Cavs withstood Russell Westbrook's 24th triple-double of the season and his first against Cleveland. Westbrook scored 20 points, grabbed 12 rebounds and handed out 10 assists. But he struggled much of the day connecting on just seven of 26 from the field and coughing up four turnovers in the face of strong defending by Cleveland's Iman Shumpert.

Cleveland led by as many as 19 in the third quarter, but the Thunder pulled within 82-75 on a three-pointer from Cameron Payne while Westbrook rested during the fourth quarter.

After Westbrook re-entered, the Thunder went scoreless on their next six possessions. A driving layup from Cleveland's Richard Jefferson pushed the lead back to double figures and Kyrie Irving's three-pointer stretched the lead back to 98-82 with 3:57 remaining.

Irving scored 29 points with 10 assists as the Cavs shook off

the early departure of Kevin Love. Love had played less than two minutes in the second quarter when he left with back spasms. "It's nothing to play with," James said of Love's back issues. James has battled back trouble of his own and knows how debilitating it can be.

"It's a terrible feeling when your back is hurt. It just limits you more than anything," he said. "I know it's very frustrating for him because he puts in a lot of work. He's in the weight room all the time and he's doing his thing to keep his body in shape, then this is happening to him so it's very frustrating. Hopefully things get better for him soon." James, who is eighth on the NBA's all-time scoring list with 27,938 career points, has nearly twice as many points as anyone else in a Cleveland uniform. Zydrunas Ilgauskas is second on the team's scoring list with 10,616 points. "I'm blessed I've played with some great teammates in this uniform the last three years and obviously my first seven in the league," James said. "Those guys set screens for me, they rebound the ball, kick it to me, they work their tails off for me to be able to put up 20,000 as a Cav." — AFP



CLEVELAND: LeBron James #23 of the Cleveland Cavaliers gets to the basket for a second half dunk in front of Jerami Grant #9 of the Oklahoma City Thunder at Quicken Loans Arena on Sunday in Cleveland, Ohio. Cleveland won the game 107-91.— AFP

Kuwait Times **BUSINESS**

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Gulf Bank head office, Kuwait City.

GULF BANK REPORTS KD 43M NET PROFIT FOR 2016

PROFIT INCREASES 10% OVER 2015, EARNINGS PER SHARE 15FILS

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank K.S.C.P. announced yesterday its financial results for the year ending 31 December 2016. The Bank recorded a net profit of KD 43 million (earnings per share of 15 fils), an increase of 10% over the previous year. The Board of Directors has recommended a cash dividend of 7 fils per share, an increase of 75 percent compared with 4 fils per share in the prior year.

Loan quality continued to improve; gross credit costs (specific provisions plus write-offs) declined by 16 percent to KD 72 million compared to KD 85 million in 2015. Non-performing loans (NPLs) declined to KD 93 million or 2.4 percent of total loans, levels that have not been seen since 2007.

Commenting on the results, Omar Kutayba Alghanim, Gulf Bank's Chairman said: "These past three years have marked significant milestones in the transformation of Gulf Bank, moving it solidly forward on the path of growth, and meeting a number of key strategic objectives. Today, I am pleased to announce that Gulf Bank has again achieved double-digit net income growth in a very competitive industry and challenging economic environment."

Alghanim continued: "The Bank enjoys a strong capital adequacy ratio of 18.5 percent which is well above the regulatory requirement

of 14 percent. The capital of the Bank was enhanced by our successful issuance of KD 100 million of Tier II capital in May 2016. The assets of the Bank were steady at KD 5,467 million



Gulf Bank Chairman Omar Kutayba Alghanim

while total shareholders' equity was up by 7 percent to KD 573 million. Customer loans ended the year at KD 3,446 million. In terms of profitability, the Bank's earnings per share for

the year ending 2016 was 15 fils compared to 13 fils for the year ending 2015. The return on average assets was 0.79 percent compared to 0.72 percent in 2015 and the return on average equity was 7.73 percent compared to 7.43 percent for the previous year."

Gulf Bank Rated "A" By Leading International Ratings Agencies

Gulf Bank continues to enjoy an "A" rating from the top three international rating agencies: Moody's Investors Services (A3); Fitch Ratings (A+); and Standard & Poor's - S&P (A-). During this year, all three rating agencies affirmed the Bank's ratings and its stable outlook and revenue generating ability.

Commenting on Gulf Bank's ratings, Alghanim continued: "The affirmation of Gulf Bank's stability and revenue generating ability by the three leading credit rating agencies confirms our continuous dedication to create value for our stakeholders and provide competitive services to our loyal customers."

Gulf Bank's growth and soundness was strongly acknowledged by the financial services and banking industry on both regional and international levels. Gulf Bank won The Asian Banker regional awards for: "Best Credit Card Product in the Middle East for Gulf Rewards", "Internet and Mobile Security Technology

KD 43 MILLION NET PROFIT, UP 10% FROM 2015

Shareholders' Equity	Total Assets	Operating Income	Capital Adequacy Ratio
573 MILLION KD	5.5 BILLION KD	168 MILLION KD	18.5%

MOODY'S A3

Fitch Ratings A+

STANDARD & POOR'S A-

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بنك الخليج GULF BANK

Implementation of the Year in Middle East and Africa", and "Enterprise Risk Technology Implementation of the Year in Middle East and Africa." Furthermore, at the end of the 2016, Gulf Bank was notified by Guinness World Records that it would win the 'largest prize linked to a bank account' in the world for its Al-Danah account's KD 1 million prize. Gulf Bank received the award during the annual Al-Danah draw that took place on 5 January 2017.

Alghanim concluded by saying: "I would like to thank our valued customers for their continued trust in Gulf Bank. I would also like to extend my sincere appreciation to our Shareholders, Board of Directors, the Central Bank of Kuwait and the Capital Markets Authority for their ongoing support throughout the year. Moreover, I would like to thank our staff for their dedicated service and for being part of the Gulf Bank family."

SAUDI GIVES FINAL APPROVAL TO VAT

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia is ready to implement a region-wide value added tax, the cabinet said yesterday, giving final approval to the measure which will take effect next year. Cabinet "decided to approve the Unified Agreement for Value Added Tax" to be implemented throughout the six-member Gulf Cooperation Council, the official Saudi Press Agency said. "A Royal Decree has been prepared," it said. A five-percent levy will apply to certain goods following a GCC agreement last June. The move is in line with an International Monetary Fund recommendation for Gulf states to impose revenue-raising measures including excise and value added taxes to help their adjustment to lower crude oil prices which have slowed regional growth.

The GCC countries have already agreed to implement selective taxes on tobacco, and soft and energy drinks this year. Regional residents had long enjoyed a tax-free and heavily subsidized existence.

Saudi Arabia, the world's biggest oil exporter, froze major building projects, cut cabinet ministers' salaries and imposed a wage freeze on civil servants to cope with last year's record deficit of \$97 billion. It also made unprecedented cuts to fuel and utilities subsidies. — AFP



MUSCAT: Omanis take photos on the tarmac during the unveiling of SalamAir, Oman's new low-cost airline, at the Muscat International Airport in the Omani capital on Sunday. — AFP

OMANI BUDGET AIRLINE SALAMAIR TAKES OFF

MUSCAT: Omani budget carrier SalamAir launched operations yesterday, becoming the latest Gulf airline competing for the region's low-cost travel market. The airline said it began operations with a domestic flight from the southwestern city of Salalah to the capital Muscat. In addition to the domestic market, SalamAir will fly to Dubai, as well as Makkah and Medina in Saudi Arabia, and Karachi in Pakistan, chairman Khalid Al-Yahmadi told reporters.

The carrier is to operate a fleet of three leased Airbus A320 single-aisle planes. Yahmadi said SalamAir could clinch between 20 and 30 percent of the Omani aviation market, currently dominated by the national carrier, Oman Air. A number of no-frills carriers are based in the Gulf region. These include flydubai, Air Arabia in Sharjah, flynas in Saudi Arabia and Jazeera Airways in Kuwait. — AFP

Chart 1: Real estate sales (KD mn)

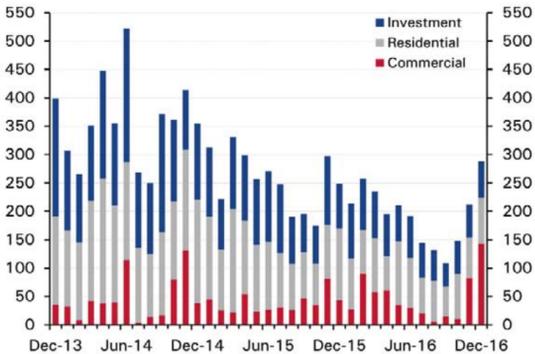
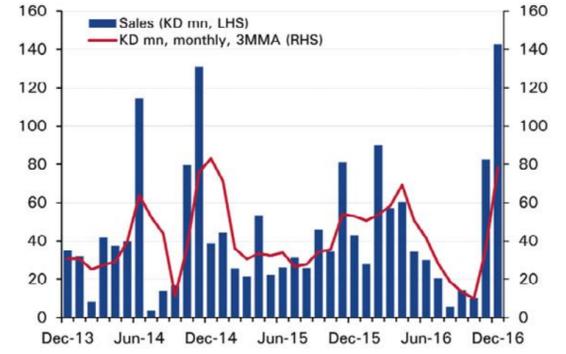


Chart 2: NBK real estate indices (% y/y)



Chart 7: Commercial real estate sales (2010=100)



Source: Ministry of Justice

Source: Ministry of Justice, NBK estimates

Source: Ministry of Justice

KUWAIT REAL ESTATE PRICES CORRECT IN 2016

NBK ECONOMIC REPORT

KUWAIT: Sluggish performance and orderly correction in prices best describe the real estate market in 2016. Commercial sales were strong however, and there were some early signs of stabilization toward the end of the year. The beginning of 2016 was marked by uncertainty in global equity markets, oil prices and the geopolitical environment. Locally, investors were unsure of the government's fiscal stance and the fate of its capital spending program. As a result, sales activity was the lowest in six years. Activity in the residential and investment sectors continued to trend downward for the second consecutive year. The commercial sector was the exception; it saw sales soar in 2016 following a weak performance the previous year. The overall weakness put pressure on prices, which have seen a gradual correction since the end of 2013. NBK's real estate indices were all down in 2016, despite some gains during the first quarter of the year.

The real estate market saw activity reduced by a quarter from the previous year. Total sales during 2016 amounted to KD 2.3 billion on 4,246 transactions, down 23 percent and 22 percent, respectively, from the year before; activity was almost halved from its peak year in 2014.

The weaker market coincided with a rise in oil market volatility. The Crude Oil Volatility Index (OVX) of the Chicago Board Options Exchange (CBOE) shows a clear increase in volatility since 2014. When oil volatility was in the low 20's between the end of 2011 and September 2014, expectations of a sudden change in the environment were low and real estate sales were recording double-digit growth. From October 2014 to April 2016, oil volatility almost doubled and real estate activity slowed. More recently, with efforts by OPEC and non-OPEC oil producers to reduce output, oil volatility eased towards the last quarter of the year and real estate sales started improving.

Residential sector
Residential sector sales were generally weak throughout 2016, for the second consecutive year. Sector sales totaled KD 944 million on 2,847 transactions, down 31 percent and 27 percent y/y, respectively. The majority of the land sales occurred in three main areas: Sabah Al-Ahmad Sea City, Fnaitees and Abu Fatira. As for the residential homes, sales were more or less evenly distributed across multiple residential areas. Saad Al-Abdullah, Salwa, Firdous, Sabah Al-Ahmad and Jabriya were among the most popular areas.

The softness in this sector was exacerbated by the surge in distribution of residential land plots by the housing authority. The Public Authority of Housing Welfare (PAHW) distributed more than 12,000 plots in 2016, in addition to 15,240 plots, homes and apartments distributed in 2015. This added significant supply to the market, from much slower distributions prior to 2015. PAHW has committed to significantly reducing the backlog of applications in the coming years through new housing projects like South Saad Al-Abdallah and Sabah Al-Ahmad in 2018, and Khairan in 2019.

As a result of the decline in residential sales since 2014, the NBK residential real estate price indices have come down from their peaks. The NBK residential home price index stood at 152.4 points in December 2016, retreating by 12 percent y/y. The index has been trending downward since the beginning of 2015, when it peaked at 186 in January 2015. It is now down 18 percent from the peak. Meanwhile, the residential land price index slid to 176 points in December 2016.

The index has been logging declines since June 2016, bottoming at -10 percent y/y in October. It has improved slightly since, to end the year at -7.3 percent y/y. The retreat in residential prices in Kuwait appears to follow a

Table 1: Real estate sales

	Monthly average		2016		December 2016		
	2015	2016	Oct	Nov	Dec	% m/m	% y/y
Sales (KD mn)	253.5	195	148.5	211.8	287.9	35.9	15.7
Residential property	113.4	79	79.9	71.4	81.5	14.1	-35.8
Investment property	102.2	68	58.6	57.9	63.8	10.2	-19.0
Commercial property	37.9	48	10.0	82.5	142.6	72.8	231.6
Number of transactions	452	354	366	365	383	4.9	-17.3
Residential property	323	237	254	244	273	11.9	-15.5
Investment property	120	108	106	112	98	-12.5	-24.0
Commercial property	8	8	6	9	12	33.3	9.1
Transaction size (KD '000)	566	547	405.7	580.3	751.7	29.5	39.9
Residential property	352	332	314.6	292.6	298.5	2.0	-24.0
Investment property	882	646	552.8	517.0	651.0	25.9	6.6
Commercial property	5,185	5,204	1666.7	9,166.7	11,883.3	29.6	203.9

similar regional pattern. The Bank of International Settlement (BIS) Dubai residential property index was the first index to peak in October 2014 and the fastest one to correct, losing 12 percent of its peak, over a period of 12 months. Simultaneously, the BIS Abu Dhabi residential property index peaked in November 2014 and remained stable and very close to that level since, shedding only 4 percent from its peak. The Qatari residential index was the last index to peak and correct. The index, published by the Qatar Central Bank, hit a maximum on November 2015, a year after its regional peers. The index is currently going through a quick correction, having lost 14 percent from peak to September 2016 (last published data point).

Investment sector

Kuwait's investment sector also registered a weak 2016. Sales totaled KD 817 million, down 33 percent from 2015; 1,300 transactions were

recorded, down 10 percent y/y. The year saw an increased appetite for small ticket investments (apartments) that represented 40 percent of the sector's transactions compared to 30 percent in 2015. Sales were mostly concentrated in Mahboula, Hawally and Salmiya.

An influx of investment apartments and buildings into the market coupled with moderate growth in the expat labor force took its toll on the investment sector in 2016. In fact, the real estate market witnessed an increase in vacant apartments in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis, as a result of a slowdown in expat labor force growth. The latter translated into declining investment building prices. As the market became tighter and vacant apartments became scarce between 2013 and 2014, the index peaked. Since then, vacant apartments are on the rise, exercising downward pressure on the prices of investment buildings. The NBK investment building index retreated throughout most of 2016 and

appears to be stabilizing late in 2016. In December the index stood at 188.6 points, down 10 percent y/y. The investment sector may be further pressured by higher utility prices which are expected by the second half of 2017. Depending on implementation, investment apartments may see their utility bills increase by 7-10 percent of the rental value on average. This could impose additional pressure on demand at a time when supply is increasing, and vacancies are on the rise. Nonetheless, we expect that the impact of the higher charges will be limited especially if users reduce consumption considerably to accommodate for the higher rates.

The commercial sector presented a stellar performance in 2016, despite the visible slowdown in the household sector. Commercial sales soared to KD 575 million, the highest on record, rising by 26 percent y/y. Transactions were almost unchanged from last year at 99 transactions. Almost half of the KD sales were for eight large transactions, out of which: three plots in Sabah Al-Ahmad Sea City sold for a total value of KD 104 million and two complexes in Salmiya sold for a total value of KD 105 million.

Utility price hikes could also affect interest in commercial properties. The new utility prices will be applied first on the commercial sector starting in May 2017. As per the new law, the electricity tariff on companies will rise from two fils per kilowatt hour (kWh) to 25 fils, irrespective of the level of consumption. To date, the final executive regulations' list has yet to be published by the Ministry of Electricity and Water. That list might include discounts on the utility prices published in the new law. Some pressure on activity and prices is possible; however the extent is still to be assessed after more implementation details are forthcoming.

ALAFCO REPORTS KD 5.2M NET PROFIT FOR Q1 2017



Ahmad Alzabin

KUWAIT: Vice-Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer of ALAFCO Aviation Lease and Finance Company (ALAFCO), Ahmad A Alzabin, announced that the company recorded a net profit of KD 5.2 million (\$17.1 million) for the first three months of the fiscal year ending 30th September 2017 - a 72 percent increase from the same period of the previous fiscal year.

Alzabin said in a statement released to the press after a meeting of the Board of Directors that ALAFCO's operating revenue increased by 28 percent year-on-year in the first quarter of FY 2017. The rise in opera-

tional revenues was the result of the company's increased operational performance, which came on the back of the acquisition of 14 aircraft during the previous year through sale and lease-back operations and through acquisition of aircraft with lease attached.

Additionally, Alzabin stated that ALAFCO will begin to receive the first batch of the new aircraft on its order book during the current fiscal year, and which form part of the agreements signed with Airbus and Boeing to acquire 117 new technology aircraft to be delivered over the next five years.

ROHIT RAMACHANDRAN JOINS JAZEERA AIRWAYS AS CEO

KUWAIT: Jazeera Airways yesterday announced that Rohit Ramachandran has joined the airline as its new Chief Executive Officer, effective yesterday. Ramachandran is an industry veteran, bringing with him over 20 years of aviation experience in both the commercial and operational side of the business.

Rohit has worked at global and regional airlines, including KLM, Singapore Airlines, and more recently Air Arabia and its JVs and subsidiaries where he was responsible for the commercial organization.

Jazeera Airways Chairman Marwan Boodai said, "As CEO, Ramachandran will be aiding the Board with the development of the airline's strategy, and working with the management team on implementation. We look forward to working with Ramachandran to take the airline to new heights."

Ramachandran said, "Kuwait has



Rohit Ramachandran

dynamic travel market that presents interesting and unique opportunities for Jazeera Airways as it embarks on ambitious new ventures both on the ground, in terms

of facilities, and in the air. I look forward to working with the management team and everyone at Jazeera Airways on realizing these opportunities."

Established in 2005, Jazeera Airways is a Kuwait Stock Exchange-listed company serving popular destinations in the Middle East.

The airline operates a fleet of Airbus A320 aircrafts with two class cabins comprising a Business Class and an Economy Class. Business Class travelers get both an upgraded experience and exclusivity, starting with exclusive check-in lines, business lounge access, up to 60 kilograms in free baggage allowance, and an exclusive on-board cabin.

The airline's Economy Class offers travelers free baggage allowance of 40 kilograms and free on-board meals with a changing menu every month.

EXCHANGE RATES

AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

ASIAN COUNTRIES	
Japanese Yen	2.660
Indian Rupees	4.500
Pakistani Rupees	2.916
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.038
Nepali Rupees	2.812
Singapore Dollar	214.740
Hongkong Dollar	39.443
Bangladesh Taka	3.848
Philippine Peso	6.144
Thai Baht	8.690

GCC COUNTRIES	
Saudi Riyal	81.654
Qatari Riyal	84.101
ani Riyal	795.218
Bahraini Dinar	813.070
UAE Dirham	83.367

ARAB COUNTRIES	
Egyptian Pound - Cash	19.700
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	16.242
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.229
Tunisian Dinar	133.620
Jordanian Dinar	431.200
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.040
Syrian Lira	2.182
Morocco Dirham	30.940

EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES	
US Dollar Transfer	306.000
Euro	329.410
Sterling Pound	386.330
Canadian dollar	234.030
Turkish lira	79.580

Swiss Franc	308.000
Australian Dollar	233.170
US Dollar Buying	304.800

GOLD	
20 Gram	243.78
10 Gram	124.81
5 Gram	63.25

DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	305.500
Canadian Dolla	232.980
Sterling Pound	384.965
Euro	328.400
Swiss Frank	306.830
Bahrain Dinar	809.855
UAE Dirhams	83.570
Qatari Riyals	84.790
Saudi Riyals	82.395
Jordanian Dinar	432.055
Egyptian Pound	16.386
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.036
Indian Rupees	4.493
Pakistani Rupees	2.913
Bangladesh Taka	3.864
Philippines Peso	6.131
Cyprus pound	167.770
Japanese Yen	3.655
Syrian Pound	2.425
Nepalese Rupees	3.805
Malaysian Ringgit	69.835

Chinese Yuan Renminbi	44.845
Thai Bhat	9.650
Turkish Lira	79.330

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
British Pound	0.377848	0.387848
Czech Korune	0.004139	0.016139
Danish Krone	0.040073	0.045073
Euro	0.322395	0.331395
Norwegian Krone	0.032760	0.037960
Romanian Leu	0.084764	0.084764
Slovakia	0.009167	0.019167
Swedish Krona	0.030627	0.035627
Swiss Franc	0.300007	0.311007
Turkish Lira	0.074503	0.084803

Australasia	America
Australian Dollar	0.222602
New Zealand Dollar	0.215753
Canadian Dollar	0.227380
Georgina Lari	0.138139
US Dollars	0.301750
US Dollars Mint	0.302250
Bangladesh Taka	0.003650
Chinese Yuan	0.043113
Hong Kong Dollar	0.037349
Indian Rupee	0.002738

Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002591	0.002771
Kenyan Shilling	0.002997	0.002997
Korean Won	0.000250	0.000265
Malaysian Ringgit	0.065510	0.071510
Nepalese Rupee	0.003083	0.003253
Pakistan Rupee	0.002716	0.003005
Philippine Peso	0.006071	0.006371
Sierra Leone	0.000068	0.000074
Singapore Dollar	0.209517	0.219517
South African Rand	0.016806	0.025306
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001680	0.002260
Taiwan	0.009665	0.009845
Thai Baht	0.008327	0.008877

Arab	
Bahraini Dinar	0.804702
Egyptian Pound	0.013187
Iranian Riyal	0.000085
Iraqi Dinar	0.000186
Jordanian Dinar	0.425719
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000148
Moroccan Dirhams	0.020121
Nigerian Naira	0.001268
Omani Riyal	0.787994
Qatar Riyal	0.083198
Saudi Riyal	0.080473
Syrian Pound	0.001297
Tunisian Dinar	0.130924
Turkish Lira	0.075403
UAE Dirhams	0.081847
Yemeni Riyal	0.000994

EUROZONE STEAMS INTO 2017 DESPITE POLITICAL RISKS

LONDON: The eurozone economy has kicked off the year robustly, data showed yesterday, presenting the European Central Bank with evidence that its massive cash stimulus is working but also posing difficulties about the way forward. There are risks ahead - some political - but for now the 19 member states of the eurozone are doing better than many expected.

German inflation looks set to come in strongly after five federal states clocked up annual price rises close to - and in three cases above - the ECB's just-under 2 percent target for the eurozone as a whole. Spain, the eurozone's fourth largest economy, reported its output grew last year at 3.2 percent, adding to

3.2 percent and 1.4 percent in the previous two years, signalling strong recovery from a banking-debt crisis and a recession. Manufacturing confidence in the Netherlands - the fifth largest economy - hit its highest level since 2008, while various economic sentiment indexes for the euro zone as a whole came in much better than expected. Bloc-wide economic sentiment, for example, hit a near six-year high.

Less heralded, there were also signs of growth among the currency bloc's smaller economies - Lithuania's year-on-year GDP was 3.0 percent in the fourth quarter, while Austrian inflation accelerated and its purchasing managers' index soared.

The data comes after a week in which other reports showed relatively strong performances continuing into this year from 2016 for heavyweights Germany and France. "2017 seems to have started on a very solid footing," said Jennifer McKeown, chief European economist at Capital Economics in London. "The economy is performing (well)."

HEADWINDS

All this will be good news for the ECB, which has so far pumped just over 1.5 trillion euros (\$1.6 trillion) into the euro zone economy to try to stave off deflation and kickstart some growth, along with providing negligible interest rates. But it will also add pressure on the ECB

to pull back on some of its largesse. German officials in particular take a dim view of the ECB's free spending and with inflation expected to be higher in Germany, Europe's biggest economy, than across the eurozone as a whole, the pressure will be on.

"If this price development is sustainable, the prerequisite for the withdrawal from the loose monetary policy is created," ECB policymaker and Bundesbank chief Jens Weidmann said last week.

The ECB, however, has indicated it is in no rush to turn off the taps. Part of this is because it wants to see sustainable improvement and does not believe it has evidence of this yet. Some inflation, for example, stems from rising energy prices

that will soon have played out in the comparative data.

But there is also a series of political events that could complicate and even derail the euro zone's progress. There are a lot of "ifs" involved, but the presidential election in France could result in an administration led by the anti-euro Marine Le Pen, while a similar anti-euro result featuring the 5-Star movement could occur in Italy.

Greece, meanwhile, has so far failed to get the latest tranche of its third international bailout. Two years ago it almost became the first country to fall out of the euro zone. The ECB will be mindful of all this despite the increasing growth. — Reuters

TRUMP TRAVEL BAN HITS TECH AND TRAVEL STOCKS

NEW YORK: US stocks fell yesterday, following global stock indexes lower, as energy and technology companies take sharp losses. Airlines skidded after President Donald Trump ordered impose a travel ban on seven Muslim-majority countries, which lead to protests and disruption at airports. Banks and basic materials companies also fell, and energy companies declined with oil prices.

KEEPING SCORE: The Dow Jones industrial average fell 141 points, or 0.7 percent, to 19,952 as of 10:18 a.m. Eastern time. The Standard & Poor's 500 index lost 19 points, or 0.8 percent, to 2,275. The Nasdaq composite dropped 70 points, or 1.2 percent, to 5,590 after closing at an all-time high Friday.

TRUMP TRAVEL TROUBLE: Late Friday Trump signed an executive order that suspended the US refugee program for 120 days and blocked travel to the US by citizens of seven countries. The move, which is being challenged in court, triggered protests and confusion at US airports, and airline stocks traded lower. American Airlines fell \$2.31, or 4.9 percent, to \$44.65. United Continental lost \$2.78, or 3.7 percent, to \$71.64 and Delta gave up \$1.67, or 3.4 percent, to \$48.03.

GET THE IODINE: Rite Aid stock plunged after Walgreens said it will cut the price it's paying to buy its rival to no more than \$7 per share from \$9. That came after the companies said they will sell more of Rite Aid's stores to get antitrust regulators to approve the deal. Walgreens said it may have to sell up to 1,200 Rite Aid stores, about a quarter of the company's total. Rite Aid sank \$1.12, or 16.2 percent, to \$5.81. Walgreens edged up 8 cents to \$81.58.

OFF THE PACE: Fitness tracker maker Fitbit dropped 93 cents, or 12.9 percent, to \$6.28 after the company posted weak fourth-quarter sales and said it will eliminate about six percent of its jobs, or about 110 positions.



NEW YORK: A pedestrian walks past the New York Stock Exchange, in lower Manhattan. Global stock markets fell yesterday after President Donald Trump's decision to impose a travel ban on seven Muslim-majority countries. — AP

GOLDMAN SACHS DOES NOT SUPPORT TRUMP TRAVEL BAN

NEW YORK: Goldman Sachs Group Inc CEO Lloyd Blankfein became the first major bank CEO to speak out against President Donald Trump's order to halt arrivals from several Muslim-majority countries. In a voicemail to employees on Sunday, Blankfein said the policy was not one that the bank endorsed. "This is not a policy we support, and I would note that it has already been challenged in federal court, and some of the order has been enjoined at least temporarily," Blankfein told employees.

Blankfein said Goldman would work to minimize potential disruptions to employees and their families caused by Trump's order, according to a transcript seen by Reuters. Most US corporate bosses have stayed silent on Trump's immigration curbs, underscoring the sensitivities around opposing policies that could provoke a backlash from the White House. While Apple Inc, Alphabet Inc's Google and Facebook Inc emailed their staff to denounce the order, many of their counterparts in other industries either declined to comment or responded with company statements reiterating their commitment to diversity.

JPMorgan Chase & Co's operating committee, which includes CEO Jamie Dimon, avoided directly denouncing the policy. In a note to staff over the weekend, the firm said it was reaching out all employees

affected and noted that the country was "strengthened by the rich diversity of the world around us." Other banks, including Morgan Stanley and Wells Fargo & Co, said they were reviewing the executive order and its implication on staff.

The US hedge fund industry was virtually silent on the immigration restrictions. Representatives for most major firms - including Bridgewater Associates, Renaissance Technologies, Millennium Management and Two Sigma Investments - did not respond to requests for comment over the weekend. Private equity firms, including Blackstone Group LP whose CEO Stephen Schwarzman chairs Trump's advisory panel of business leaders, also would not comment on the travel ban.

Trump's decision to select current and former Goldman bankers to high-profile positions in the administration has put the Wall Street firm back in the spotlight. Since the financial crisis, Goldman has worked to improve its image with ordinary people by focusing on its philanthropic and diversity initiatives, as well as its role in job creation.

Former Goldman president Gary Cohn left the bank in December to become the head of the White House National Economic Council. Other former Goldman bankers in the Trump administration include Treasury Secretary nominee Steven Mnuchin and White House adviser Steve Bannon. — Reuters

TOSSING AND TURNING: Mattress retailer Tempur Sealy said Mattress Firm is moving to terminate its supply contracts with the company.

Tempur Sealy said Mattress Firm wanted to make big changes to supply agreements and the two sides weren't able to reach an agreement. It expects the two companies to stop during business during the first quarter. Tempur Sealy said it made 21 percent of its net sales last year to Mattress Firm. Its stock fell \$17.68, or 28 percent, to \$45.51.

TECH TURMOIL: The travel ban also created broader uncertainty for companies and industries that rely on visa programs to hire workers, as well as some companies that do a lot of business overseas because of potential difficulties in global trade. IT consulting and outsourcing firm Cognizant Technology Solutions sank \$1.88, or 3.3 percent, to \$54.25 and Alphabet, Google's parent company, skidded \$17.61, or 2.1 percent, to \$827.42. Chip equipment maker Lam Research was off \$3.04, or 2.6 percent, to \$115.20.

ENERGY: Benchmark US crude lost 52 cents to \$52.75 a barrel in New York. Brent crude, which is used to price international oils, gave up 45 cents to \$55.75 a barrel in London. Chevron retreated \$1.44, or 1.3 percent, to \$112.35 and ConocoPhillips fell \$1.40, or 2.8 percent, to \$48.04.

BONDS: Bond prices held steady. The yield on the 10-year Treasury note remained at 2.48 percent.

CURRENCIES: The dollar fell to 114.34 yen from 115.09 yen. The euro fell to \$1.0654 from \$1.0698.

OVERSEAS: The DAX of Germany fell 1.2 percent and the French CAC-40 also shed 1.2 percent while Britain's FTSE 100 was 1 percent lower. Japan's Nikkei 225 fell 0.5 percent. — AP



CAIRO: In Nov 25, 2016 file photo, a vegetable vendor sells produce at a market in Cairo. Egypt is seeing a dramatic jump in the country's annual urban consumer price inflation. — AP

US CONSUMER SPENDING RISES SOLIDLY; INFLATION FIRMLY PENDING HOME SALES ROSE IN DECEMBER

WASHINGTON: US consumer spending rose solidly in December as households bought motor vehicles and a range of services amid rising wages, pointing to sustained domestic demand that could spur faster economic growth in early 2017.

There are also signs of inflation steadily firming. The strengthening economy, rising price pressures and a tightening labor market could allow the Federal Reserve to lift interest rates at least three times this year. The Commerce Department said yesterday that consumer spending, which accounts for more than two-thirds of US economic activity, increased 0.5 percent after an unrevised 0.2 percent gain in November. The increase was in line with economists' expectations. Consumer spending increased 3.8 percent in 2016 after a 3.5 percent rise in 2015. When adjusted for inflation, consumer spending increased 0.3 percent last month after rising 0.2 percent in November.

US stock index futures and prices for longer-maturity US Treasuries were lower. The dollar was firmer against a basket of currencies. The report was released ahead of the Fed's two-day policy meeting that begins today. The US central bank, which has forecast three rate hikes this year, is not expected to raise rates at this week's meeting. The Fed lifted its benchmark overnight interest rate in December by 25 basis points to a range of 0.50 percent to 0.75 percent.

The consumer spending, income and inflation data for December was included in the fourth-quarter gross domestic product report published last Friday. The economy grew at a 1.9 percent annual rate in the fourth quarter, restrained by a wider trade deficit. Private domestic demand, however, increased at a solid 2.8 percent rate. The economy grew at a 3.5 percent rate in the third quarter.

INFLATION TICKING UP

With domestic demand rising, inflation showed some signs of picking up last month. The personal consumption expenditures (PCE) price index rose 0.2 percent after edging up 0.1 percent in November.

In the 12 months through December the PCE price index rose 1.6 percent, the biggest increase since September 2014. That followed a 1.4 percent increase in November. Excluding food and energy, the so-called core PCE price index ticked up 0.1 percent after being unchanged in November. The core PCE price index increased 1.7 percent on a year-on-year basis after a similar gain in November.

The core PCE is the Fed's preferred inflation measure and is running below its 2 percent target. However, other inflation measures are above the PCE price indexes. The consumer price index (CPI) is currently at 2.1 percent on a year-on-year basis and the core CPI is up 2.2 percent. Consumer spending last month was buoyed by a 1.4 percent jump in purchases of long-lasting manufactured goods such as automobiles. Spending on services increased 0.4 percent.

Personal income advanced 0.3 percent last month after nudging up 0.1 percent in November. Wages and salaries rebounded 0.4 percent after slipping 0.1 percent in November. Income increased 3.5 percent in 2016 after rising 4.4 percent in 2015. Savings fell to \$768.4 billion last month, the lowest level since May 2015,



ROSWELL: This file photo shows an existing home for sale in Roswell. After nine straight weeks of increases, long-term US mortgage rates fell the week of Jan 5, 2017. — AP

from \$791.2 billion in November.

Meanwhile, more Americans signed contracts to buy homes in December. The increase possibly reflects more people scrambling to purchase homes as mortgage rates have been rising and increasing the costs of ownership. The National Association of Realtors said Monday that its seasonally adjusted pending home sales index rose 1.6 percent to 107.3, a slight rebound after declining in November. Pending sales rose in the West and South but dipped in the Northeast and Midwest.

Mortgage rates began to surge after Donald Trump's presidential win in November. Average 30-year fixed rate mortgages were 4.19 percent last week, after averaging a low 3.65 percent for

all of 2016. Pending sales contracts are a barometer of future purchases. A sale is typically completed a month or two after a contract is signed.

In terms of completed sales of existing homes, buying activity dipped in December as the number of available homes for sale fell to their lowest level since 1999. The inventory squeeze has caused prices to rise and potentially led more people to sign contracts in December out concerns that the number of listings could keep dropping. The Realtors said last week that sales of existing homes fell 2.8 percent last month to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 5.49 million. For all of 2016, sales posted an annual gain of 3.8 percent to 5.45 million. — Agencies

INDIA LIFTS ATM LIMIT FROM FEB 1 AS CASH CRUNCH EASES

NEW DELHI: Limits on ATM withdrawals will be partially lifted from February 1, India's central bank said yesterday, as a cash crunch sparked by the ban on high-value rupee notes eases.

The Reserve Bank of India capped cash withdrawals after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's shock decision in November to take all 500 and 1,000 rupee notes out of circulation — 86 percent of the currency in the cash-reliant nation. The move triggered long queues outside banks and ATMs which ran dry within hours as hundreds of thousands of people thronged to them every day to withdraw the initial daily limit of 2,000 rupees (\$29).

The RBI later increased the amount to 4,500 rupees, and then to 10,000 rupees earlier this month as long lines and crowds at banks eased. Limits placed on customers who have current accounts or overdraft accounts "stand withdrawn from February 01, 2017," the central

bank said in a statement. However restrictions on customers who have the more widely used savings accounts would "continue for the present" but could be scrapped "in the near future," the statement added.

Customers with saving accounts are currently allowed to withdraw a maximum 24,000 rupees a week, either through ATMs or over the counter. The RBI also said that banks could use "their discretion" to place their own daily cash withdrawal limits at ATMs as was the case before the November 8 announcement. The sweeping abolition was meant to bring billions in so-called "black", or undeclared, money back into the formal system. Many, especially in rural India, were left without enough cash to buy food or daily essentials but Modi repeatedly defended the scheme and urged all Indians to switch to non-cash payment methods. — AFP

TRUMP'S TRAVEL BAN WEIGHS ON GLOBAL MARKETS

LONDON: Global stock markets fell yesterday after President Donald Trump's decision to impose a travel ban on seven Muslim-majority countries. Investors are wary of what the move presages for global trade, not least because there is so much disagreement around the world over the move.

KEEPING SCORE: In Europe, Germany's DAX fell 0.8 percent to 11,725 while the CAC 40 in France shed 0.9 percent to 4,798. Britain's FTSE 100 was 0.7 percent lower at 7,132. US stocks were poised for a lower open too, with Dow futures and the broader S&P 500 futures down 0.3 percent.

The executive order signed by Trump on

Friday placed a 90-day ban on travel to the US by citizens of Iraq, Syria, Iran, Sudan, Libya, Somalia or Yemen. It imposed a 120-day suspension of the US refugee program and blocked Syrians from entry indefinitely. The move triggered protests and confusion at US airports and raised uncertainty about specific industries as well as triggering wider concerns over global trade.

"World leaders were quick to condemn President Trump's executive order to ban US travel from seven Muslim countries. The global reaction has been one of universal condemnation," Stephen Innes, a senior trader at OANDA, wrote in a commentary. "The increase in civil

unrest alone should be a concern for investors, and with a lack of clarity on the economic policy front, markets will be cantankerous early in the week as they're completely uncertain of what's next from President Trump on the geopolitical landscape."

"He's sticking to his pledges, adding to concerns that he goes all in and pins chunky import tariffs on China - and elsewhere - to encourage Americans to buy domestic," said Mike van Dulken, head of research at Accendo Markets.

Japan's Nikkei 225 index fell 0.5 percent to 19,368.85. The S&P ASX 200 in Australia dropped 0.9 percent to 5,661.50 and India's Sensex edged 0.1 percent lower to 27,849.92.

Most financial markets were closed in Asia yesterday for lunar new year holidays, but shares fell in Japan and Australia on uncertainty over the potential impact of President Donald Trump's travel ban on seven countries and other immigration actions.

Monthly data for December released yesterday showed retail sales fell 1.7 percent from a month earlier. Core inflation excluding volatile food items fell 0.2 percent, showing deflation still is weighing on the economy, discouraging the wage increases needed to spur more consumption and investment, and raising doubts over how much momentum the economy may have gathered late in the year, just as the Bank of Japan holds its first policy

meeting of 2017. Wall Street capped a week of milestones Friday with a day of listless trading that left US stock indexes mostly lower. The Dow was nearly flat at 20,093.78. The Standard & Poor's 500 index edged 0.1 percent lower to 2,294.69 and the Nasdaq composite eked out a 0.1 percent gain to 5,660.78, setting another all-time high. The market drifted between small gains and losses through much of the day as investors weighed company earnings and new data on the US economy showing annual growth of just 1.9 percent in the last three months of 2016, a slowdown from 3.5 percent in the previous quarter. For 2016, the economy grew 1.6 percent, the worst showing since 2011 and down from 2.6 percent in 2015. —AP

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report						
Monday 30 January 2017						
Index	Change	Closing	Last Closing	High	Low	
Price index	▼ -104.13	6,838.11	6,943.24	6,980.12	6,832.77	
Weighted Index	▼ -4.77	429.63	434.40	435.09	429.16	
KSX 15	▼ -12.93	993.24	1,006.17	1,008.24	991.75	

Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
MARIN	70	67	116550	7,809	4	67	▼ 0.0
IKARUS	53	51	1,814,231	95,516	46	51	▼ 2.0
IPG	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	370	▲ 0.0
NAPESCO	900	900	111	100	1	900	▲ 10.0
ENERGYH	62	57	3,835,770	229,208	147	59	▲ 1.0
GPI	62	57	4,957,419	297,435	120	58	▼ 4.0
ADAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	99	▲ 0.0
Oil & Gas			10,724,081	630,068	318	943.97	▲ 2.41

Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
KFOUC	315	305	1,377,300	431,210	54	310	▲ 20.0
BPCC	590	580	1,958,051	1,153,250	50	580	▲ 0.0
ALKOUT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	700	▲ 0.0
ALQURAIN	300	280	720,426	212,310	40	290	▼ 15.0
Basic Materials			4,055,777	1,796,769	144	1256.95	▼ 2.76

Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
SOKOUK	61	57	887,3799	522,395	193	58	▼ 4.0
KRF	85	81	8,933,468	740,750	106	83	▼ 2.0
URC	112	106	475,740	51,280	22	108	▼ 4.0
NRE	136	128	13,008,162	1,708,272	205	128	▼ 6.0
SRE	405	380	140,500	53,518	11	390	▼ 15.0
TAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	450	▲ 0.0
AREFC	186	180	190,000	34,653	14	186	▲ 6.0
MASSALEH	61	55	68,910	3,878	6	58	▼ 1.0
ARABREC	57	52	8,299,975	445,713	172	52	▼ 5.0
ERESCO	53	51	4,807,175	248,800	80	52	▲ 0.0
MABANEE	900	890	162,918	146,365	17	900	▲ 0.0
INJAZZAT	85	83	1,071,312	90,115	42	84	▲ 0.0
INVESTORS	35.5	32.0	21,682,832	735,587	266	32.5	▼ 2.0
IRC	44.5	42.0	882,720	37,578	31	42.5	▼ 1.0
ALTIJARIA	90	89	1,512,082	139,997	41	90	▼ 1.0
SANAM	60	58	239,050	14,248	10	58	▼ 4.0
AAYANRE	88	82	427,000	35,997	9	85	▼ 2.0
AQAR	69	66	221,905	15,050	9	68	▼ 1.0
ALQAQARIA	49.0	47.0	881,839	41,473	30	48.5	▼ 1.0
MAZAYA	136	130	15,294,073	2,036,433	280	132	▼ 2.0
ADNC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	11.0	▲ 0.0
THEMAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	106	▲ 0.0
TUJARA	71	66	5,002,420	339,488	86	66	▼ 1.0
TAAMEER	44.0	40.5	3,281,635	139,278	102	40.5	▼ 2.5
ARKAN	86	83	608,112	50,872	34	83	▼ 5.0
ARGAN	200	188	431,200	85,378	15	188	▼ 2.0
ABYAAH	39.5	37.5	38,131,885	1,485,283	333	38.5	▼ 0.5
MUNSHAAT	82	76	4,488,800	355,782	110	76	▼ 5.0
FIRSTDUBAI	88	81	5,321,273	453,568	168	81	▼ 2.0
KBT	64	60	10,614,979	664,759	123	61	▼ 4.0
REAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	216	▲ 0.0
MENA	29.5	28.0	8,591,838	318,981	207	28.0	▼ 2.5
ALMUDON	63	57	7,921,780	478,819	221	57	▼ 5.0
MARAKEZ	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	43.0	▲ 0.0
REMAL	68	63	4,518,521	292,774	97	64	▲ 0.0
AWJ	94	87	8,109,450	74,881	147	94	▲ 5.0
Real Estate			184,186,163	12,490,742	3,187	1105.31	▼ 33.33

Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
KINV	106	102	1,308,442	134,182	38	104	▲ 0.0
FACIL	180	178	138,920	24,812	6	180	▲ 0.0
IFA	53	48.5	5,518,419	277,277	102	49.0	▼ 3.0
NINV	148	142	11,911,870	1,721,070	257	144	▲ 6.0
KPROJ	580	560	1,856,325	1,054,182	31	560	▼ 10.0
COAST	64	58	23,235,440	1,424,959	333	58	▼ 4.0
SECH	88	81	15,457,955	996,708	239	81	▼ 5.0
SGC	100	94	51,184	5,061	3	100	▲ 1.0
ARZAN	48.5	46.5	856,155	40,767	38	47.0	▼ 2.0
MARKAZ	108	104	16,850	1,758	5	108	▼ 6.0
KMEPIC	43.0	40.5	2,401,025	99,998	52	41.5	▲ 0.0
ALAMAN	62	60	4,522,570	274,509	100	61	▲ 0.0
ALOLA	65	62	12,845,898	809,786	178	62	▼ 2.0
ALMAL	31.5	29.0	35,067,680	1,070,883	308	29.0	▼ 2.0
GIH	55	52	584,988	31,021	21	53	▼ 1.0
AAYAN	59	53	34,866,596	1,951,464	439	53	▼ 4.0
BAYANINV	63	58	4,051,967	244,787	112	59	▼ 3.0
OSOUL	74	72	849,062	61,909	22	74	▼ 1.0
KFIC	54	51	100,061	5,129	12	53	▼ 1.0
KAMCO	89	89	11,000	979	3	89	▲ 3.0
NIH	84	81	299,700	24,419	23	83	▲ 0.0
UNICAP	58	54	1,302,566	71,827	36	54	▼ 2.0
MADAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	12.5	▲ 0.0
ALDEERA	48.0	45.5	2,716,100	124,845	65	45.5	▼ 2.5
ALSALAM	64	60	2,650,288	163,066	77	60	▼ 4.0
EKTTITAB	55	50	7,927,154	420,392	158	50	▼ 5.0
ALMADINA	61	58	13,043,721	777,221	189	59	▼ 2.0
NOOR	84	80	3,482,914	213,924	86	81	▼ 3.0
TAMINV	295	280	36,100	10,310	5	285	▼ 16.0
EXCH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	158	▲ 0.0
TAIBA	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	75	▲ 0.0
KSHC	61	56	24,647,271	1,438,464	238	57	▲ 0.0
ASIYA	43.0	41.0	482,853	19,411	28	42.0	▼ 1.5
GNAHC	53	49.0	8,899,719	458,573	154	49.5	▼ 2.5
AMWAL	43.0	40.5	3,905,795	165,419	90	41.0	▲ 0.5
ALMUTIAZ	150	142	13,483,482	1,984,574	169	144	▼ 2.0
MANAZEL	63	48.5	4,775,746	240,461	131	48.5	▼ 3.5
NIND	168	160	8,153,383	1,319,513	148	160	▼ 4.0
BIHC	31.0	29.0	10,046,496	302,877	144	29.0	▼ 1.5
SENERGY	68	63	12,313,851	812,959	167	68	▲ 3.0
AGHC	77	74	1,872,889	140,955	43	75	▲ 1.0
KPPC	62	59	5,973,793	360,449	91	60	▼ 2.0
TAHSSILAT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	48.5	▲ 0.0
JEERANH	49.5	49.5	500	25	1	49.5	▲ 1.5
EKHOLDING	212	212	20,000	4,240	3	212	▲ 10.0
GFH	198	186	1,114,031	214,535	71	196	▲ 2.0
INOVEST	95	92	3,669,250	342,014	49	94	▲ 0.0
Financial Services			286,408,277	19,821,093	4,462	790.10	▼ 15.43

Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
ASC	226	224	12,500	2,801	6	224	▼ 4.0
OSOS	228	210	1,005,189	215,508	77	210	▼ 10.0
HAYATCOMM	124	114	1,185,976	146,456	52	114	▲ 0.0
Technology			2,203,665	364,785	135	922.75	▼ 29.73
SANAD	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	100	▲ 0.0
AFAQ	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	162	▲ 0.0
ALSHAMEL	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	460	▲ 0.0
EFFECT	48.0	45.5	6,376,935	300,500	158	46.0	▼ 0.5
AJWAN	74	74	100,000	7,400	1	74	▲ 0.0
MASAKAN	92	90	99,832	9,006	11	90	▼ 1.0
DALQAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	350	▲ 0.0
ALEID	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	90	▲ 0.0
MIDAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,220	▲ 0.0
FLEX	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	47.0	▲ 0.0
THURAYA	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	158	▲ 0.0
AMAR	57	57	4,500	257	2	57	▲ 0.0
Parallel Market			6,581,267	317,162	172	1252.31	▼ 3.49

For more information, call Global Investment House on 1 80 42 42, www.globalinv.net



TOKYO: A woman walks by an electronic stock board of a securities firm in Tokyo yesterday. Japan's Nikkei 225 index, top in center, fell on uncertainty over the potential impact of US President Donald Trump's travel ban on seven Muslim-majority countries and other immigration actions. —AP

National Bank of Kuwait Financial Markets Daily Report				
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KAMCO BEGINS PUBLIC OFFERING OF ITS ISLAMIC FUND UNITS

KUWAIT: KAMCO Investment Company, a leading investment company with one of the largest AUMs in the region, announced the Capital Markets Authority (CMA) has approved the establishment and public offering of its KAMCO Islamic Equity Fund (KIEF). The Fund has a targeted size ranging from \$18 million to \$550 million.

In light of obtaining CMA's approval, KAMCO has initiated the first round of subscriptions into the Fund for individual investors and corporates who are targeting attractive risk-adjusted returns in the long-term. The Fund seeks to outperform the stated benchmark by investing in equity securities of companies worldwide that comply with Sharia guidelines.

The Fund, managed by KAMCO in collaboration with an international investment service provider, Wellington Management International Limited, provides investors with the opportunity to partici-



pate in the Fund with a minimum initial subscription of 1,000 units at a per unit value of \$10 at establishment.

Salah Al-Wuheib, KAMCO Chief Assets Officer, said, "The newly launched Fund is in line with the Company's strategy

focusing on providing our valued clients with innovative products and outstanding service to achieve their investment targets. Our team of professionals is highly qualified in managing equity funds through extensive years of experience. In addition to that, we believe that the Fund will serve the local market's need for distinctive investment products with diversified returns on investment."

Al-Wuheib continued to explain that the decision to invest, on an international scale, in Islamic equity is driven by multiple persuasive factors. These factors include positive investment feasibility analyses, the strength of the sector, the attractiveness of international and regional markets, in addition to the



Salah Ahmed Al-Wuheib, KAMCO's Chief Assets Officer

growing demand for investment vehicles abiding by the provisions of the Islamic Sharia guidelines.

KIEF is an international Islamic equity fund with weekly subscription and redemption windows, making it more convenient for subscribers and investors. KAMCO Investment Company is a premier investment company, based in Kuwait with an office in the UAE and presence throughout the GCC region, regulated by the Capital Markets Authority with one of the largest private sector AUMs in the region.

Established in 1998 and listed on the Kuwait Stock Exchange (KSE) in 2003, KAMCO is a subsidiary of United Gulf Bank (UGB).

SURPRISE CEO RESIGNATION SHAKES UP DEUTSCHE BAHN

FRANKFURT AM MAIN: Deutsche Bahn chief Ruediger Grube resigned yesterday, Germany's state-owned rail operator said, surprising observers as it had widely been expected that his contract would be extended. "The supervisory board today unanimously approved Ruediger Grube's request to be removed as chair of the executive board, effective immediately," the company said in a statement.

DB said a successor would be announced "soon", while finance director Richard Lutz would stand in as CEO in the meantime. A source close to the supervisory board told AFP that board members had been planning to extend Grube's contract at the yesterday meeting. Citing its own sources close to the supervisory board, news agency DPA

said that Grube quit after the body offered him an extension of only two years.

He had wanted to stay on until the end of 2020 and had been willing to forego a salary increase, the sources said. Grube had led Deutsche Bahn since 2009, taking over from former CEO Hartmut Mehdorn after a scandal involving spying on employees' emails. The 65-year-old announced less than two weeks ago that Deutsche Bahn had returned to operating profit in 2016, booking a pre-tax profit of 1.8 billion euros (\$1.9 billion) after a 154-million-euro loss in 2015. DB, owned by the federal government in Berlin, employs some 300,000 people and boasts revenues of around 40 billion euros per year. It is expected to announce full results for 2016 on March 23. — AFP

RAED AL-HAQHAQ CONFIRMED AS DEPUTY CEO FOR BURGAN BANK

KUWAIT: Burgan Bank announced yesterday the approval of the nomination of Raed Al-Haqhaq to the position of Deputy CEO - Burgan Bank - Kuwait. Raed will be sup-



Raed Al-Haqhaq

porting the group CEO of formulating and executing strategic plans pertaining to Burgan Bank Kuwait and supporting the management team in Kuwait with the application of sound governance and execution of business strategies.

Al-Haqhaq has over 20 years' experience in the banking sector and one of the distinguished national leaders within the banking industry in Kuwait. Al-Haqhaq is a graduate of California State University, Sacramento, USA with a Bachelor of Science degree majoring in Strategic Management.

Al-Haqhaq began his career at the Kuwait Investment Authority and then moved to the International Investment Group. Joined Burgan Bank in 2000 and assumed leadership positions in Corporate and Private Banking groups and was appointed in 2005 as General Manager - Corporate Banking Group. In 2008, Raed was appointed as Chief Banking Officer in Burgan Bank- Kuwait.



MUMBAI: A salesman waits for customers inside a shop at the wholesale cloth market in Mumbai. India's economic growth was projected to slow to 7.1 percent this fiscal year in the first indicator of the impact of the government's recent currency move. — AP

ETIHAD AIRWAYS WINS ISLAMIC DEAL OF YEAR AWARD FOR SUKUK

ABU DHABI: Etihad Airways has been awarded the Islamic Deal of the Year by Global Transport Finance for its debut Sukuk. The Abu Dhabi-based national airline of the United Arab Emirates successfully completed a Sukuk issuance raising \$1.5 billion in November 2016 - the largest ever in the aviation industry in the Middle East and North Africa region (MENA).

The Sukuk represented a landmark debt capital market transaction for both the aviation sector and the Islamic markets. The ground-breaking funding from institutional investors across MENA and Europe was the first ever debt capital markets issuance by Etihad Airways.

The airline successfully optimized pricing and size of the Sukuk, reflected by investors' appetite which resulted in the final transaction - \$1.5 billion against an initial indication of US\$500 million. HSBC, J P Morgan and National Bank of Abu Dhabi were mandated as Joint Arrangers for the five-year issuance, with Abu Dhabi Islamic Bank, Dubai Islamic Bank and First Gulf Bank mandated as Joint Bookrunners.

James Rigney, Etihad Aviation Group Chief Financial Officer, said: "This historic transaction was the result of a solid plan put together by our Treasury team which generated great feedback from the markets."

James Hogan, Etihad Aviation Group President and Chief Executive Officer, added: "An innovative approach to business is at the heart of our strategy at Etihad Airways. I am delighted to see the high level of confidence in our business reflected by the ground-breaking Sukuk, and credit to James Rigney and his treasury team for creating a framework that developed a strong appetite from the markets, particularly during challenging times in the financial sector and for our industry."

Global Transport Finance (GTF) is a transportation finance publication for the commercial aviation, shipping and rail industries, reporting on the latest developments in aircraft, shipping and rail financing / leasing. The accolade was presented at GTF's annual awards event in London. Etihad Aviation Group (EAG) is a diversified global aviation and travel group comprising

four business divisions - Etihad Airways, the national airline of the United Arab Emirates, Etihad Airways Engineering, Hala Group and Airline Equity Partners. The group has minority investments in seven airlines: Airberlin, Air Serbia, Air Seychelles, Alitalia, Jet Airways, Virgin Australia and Swiss-based Darwin Airline, trading as Etihad Regional.



LONDON: (From left) Viktor Jordan, Etihad Airways Senior Manager Corporate Finance; Vasgen Edwards, NBAD Managing Director, Global Head of Aviation and Transport and Head of Client Relationships (Europe and Americas); Fawaz Husneineh, NBAD Managing Director, Head of Debt Capital Markets; and Souhail Mahjour, HSBC Director, Syndicate, Debt Capital Markets after receiving the Islamic Deal of the Year Award.

SPAIN'S ECONOMY GREW 3.2% IN 2016

MADRID: Spain's economy grew 3.2 percent last year, official figures showed yesterday, as the country continues to power ahead following a damaging crisis marked by sky-high unemployment and rising inequalities. The GDP growth figure, the same as that of 2015, is one of the best among European countries. According to the last available statistics on Eurostat, the eurozone average stood at 1.7 percent year-on-year in the third quarter.

Spain's growth was boosted by low petrol prices, high domestic demand as unemployment drops, exports and a booming tourism sector that beat all records in 2016. The eurozone's fourth largest economy posted 0.7 percent growth in the last quarter of 2016 com-

pared to the previous quarter, Spain's National Statistics Institute said. This represents its 13th consecutive quarter of growth since the end of 2013. This seals the country's return to form after a devastating crisis sparked by the bursting of a property bubble in 2008.

But according to official estimates, Spain's GDP growth is expected to slow in 2017 to around 2.5 percent. Spain also has to tackle its high deficit of 4.6 percent, which it has promised to reduce to 3.1 percent this year, in line with EU demands.

And while unemployment continues to drop, it still stands at 18.6 percent, well above the eurozone average and the second worst performer in the European Union after Greece. — AFP

SWISS VOTE ON MULTINATIONAL TAX PERKS IN FEB REFERENDUM

ZURICH: US medical implant maker Zimmer Biomet's decision on a potential \$40 million investment in its Swiss factory has been put on hold until the outcome of a referendum next month on tax reform. A long-standing tax break that has attracted thousands of companies to Switzerland is set to go and the issue for Zimmer and some 24,000 international firms is how the new regime will stack up against other low-tax jurisdictions.

That's not immediately clear as Switzerland's 26 regions, or cantons, set their business taxes. Consultants KPMG reckon the average Swiss corporate rate will be about 14 percent after the reform, above Ireland's 12.5 percent, but lower in some cantons. Switzerland has been in the European Union's firing line for years because cantons have a special tax status for foreign companies that means some pay virtually no tax over an effective federal tax of 7.8 percent.

The country agreed with Brussels in 2014 to abolish this status as it allows some foreign firms to pay far lower tax on overseas earnings, an attractive perk for multinationals looking to lower tax bills.

Most Swiss recognize the country needs tax reform to avoid being blacklisted as a low-tax pariah, but the new measures proposed to help companies offset the loss of the special status breaks have created deep divisions. Companies will get 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 will

also reduce corporate tax rates for all companies to reduce the fiscal burden and dissuade multinationals from leaving. Zug, for example, taxes special status firms at 8 percent to 11 percent and ordinary companies at 14.6 percent. After the reforms, it plans to tax all companies at 12 percent.

TOO GENEROUS

The No campaign comes from a coalition including the Social Democrat Party, Greens, trade unions and church leaders, as well as some from right-leaning parties that back the proposals.

They say the reforms overall will lead to lower tax revenue, and fear the public will bear the brunt through cuts in public services or higher personal taxes. The federal government has pledged to give cantons an extra 1.1 billion Swiss francs (\$1.1 billion) to help cover expected budget shortfalls.

But critics say the new tax breaks would punch a 3 billion franc hole in budgets. They estimate that in Zurich, citizens would face a 14 percent increase in income tax to cover an expected annual shortfall of 223 million francs. "No one is disputing that there is a need for reform, but with this proposal ordinary people are financing the big companies who are taking record dividends out of Switzerland," said Swiss lawmaker Jacqueline Badran. After parliament approved the measures last year, critics gathered the 50,000 signatures needed to trigger the Feb. 12 referendum, which can overturn the parliamentary vote. — Reuters

SOUTH AFRICA'S GORDHAN ALLEGES CAMPAIGN BY GUPTAS AGAINST TREASURY

JOHANNESBURG: South African Finance Minister Pravin Gordhan said in court documents yesterday that a trio of Indian-born businessmen was waging an "organized campaign" against him and the Treasury, the latest salvo in a legal and financial battle that has unsettled investors. The Gupta brothers, who deny allegations that they wield excessive influence over President Jacob Zuma, had themselves accused Gordhan in a court filing 10 days ago of conducting a vendetta against them and trying to damage their business.

The dispute is an unwelcome distraction for the finance minister, whose own relationship with Zuma has been tense, as he tries to persuade ratings agencies not to downgrade South Africa to "junk" status in response to stuttering economic growth. Gordhan said in his

affidavit that the Guptas' Jan 20 court filing was part of a "systematic and highly organized campaign by the Gupta family and its associates against the National Treasury, myself and other targets." He denied having a vendetta against them.

The Gupta brothers' lawyer was not available to comment. A previous filing by Gordhan last October had said that 6.8 billion rand (\$500 million) in payments made by the three brothers, and companies they control and other individuals with the same surname, had been reported to authorities as suspicious since 2012.

The Guptas said this statement was "riddled with factual and legal errors". Gordhan has asked a court for a declaratory judgment that he cannot interfere with decisions by South

Africa's major banks to cut their ties with businesses owned by the Guptas. He has said they repeatedly asked him to intervene to have their accounts reopened. Between December 2015 and April 2016, FirstRand, Standard Bank, Nedbank and Barclays Africa all terminated the accounts of companies controlled by the Gupta family's Oakbay Investments.

Allegations that the Guptas wielded undue influence over Zuma were investigated last year by the Public Protector, a constitutionally mandated anti-corruption watchdog.

It did not make conclusive findings but recommended that the president order a judicial inquiry to investigate the allegations, which has yet to happen. Zuma has said the Guptas are his friends, but denies anything improper about the relationship. — Reuters



TAMDEEN TO OPEN 11 STORES IN NEW AL-KOUT MALL

GROUP SIGNS LEASING AGREEMENT WITH AZADEA GROUP

KUWAIT: GLA Management, part of Tamdeen Group - Kuwait's leading mixed-use property developer - has signed an agreement with the Azadea Group to open 11 new stores including new-to-market brands at the new Al-Kout Mall which is part of AL-KOUT, the largest mixed-use waterfront destination in Kuwait.

Azadea will unveil some of its most recognized brands within the mall, located in the Ahmadi Governorate, across a total leased area of 4,500 sqm. The new mall will be home to Bershka, Calzedonia, I Am, KIKO Milano, Massimo Dutti, Oysho, Stradivarius, Sunglass Hut, Uterque, Zara and Zara Home.

New brands will be introduced to Kuwaiti residents for the first time which highlights the uniqueness of the new mall for potential consumers from neighboring areas. For example, KIKO Milano, Italian cosmetics brand, has revolutionized the rules of cosmetics and won over the most demanding beauty addicts. Christian Wistrom, General Manager - Leasing, GLA Management, said: "Kuwait's retail landscape continues to evolve to adapt to the changing economic situation and we too explore new ways to keep pace with our customers' needs. Azadea Group's 11 new retail brand concepts will further enrich our tenant mix, enabling a more robust shopping experience for our mall visitors."

"The new Al-Kout Mall is already more than 70 percent leased out of its total of 260 planned stores, and is expected to be fully leased ahead of the project completion date by year-end."



Commenting on the new partnership, Azadea Group Country Manager for Kuwait, Dany Abou Jamra said: "This collaboration with Al-Kout Mall embraces our expansion plans through a great retail space, introducing new possibilities for exciting lifestyle shopping experiences for customers." He also added:

"Overall, we are certain that this new destination will only bring forth successful results, adding more strength to our presence in Kuwait." Azadea Group owns and operates more than 50 leading international franchise concepts in fashion and accessories, food and beverage, home furnishings, sporting goods, multi-



media and beauty and cosmetics across the Middle East and Africa spread across 13 countries overseeing more than 650 stores. "These brands from Azadea perfectly complement the diverse world-class offerings at the new Al-Kout Mall," Wistrom further added.

Al-Kout Mall's distinctive architectural design showcases a unique spacious environment with exquisite wide open spaces, a new leveled shopping format and a serene ambience. When completed, the mall will be an integral part of the AL-KOUT development reflecting the architectural and cultural heritage of Kuwait spread over 300,000 sq mtrs fea-

turing six different experiences in entertainment, shopping and hospitality.

AL-KOUT is the largest waterfront landmark and lifestyle experience in Kuwait. Encompassing six different experiences, AL-KOUT, when completed will become a destination of choice for residents and visitors alike. The new Al-Kout Mall, combined with Souq Al-Kout, significant for its traditional design, serves as the community hub of southern Kuwait with its stunning views of the marina and Nag'at Al-Kout, the traditional fishing wharf where fishermen ply their trade. This unique blend of traditional and modern shopping is the centerpiece of 1.6 kms of beachfront which is part of the project.

In addition, the award winning, 5-star Rotana Hotel has become the hotel of choice for business travelers. The immaculate beachfront of Sahel Al-Kout offers uninterrupted views of the Arabian Gulf and blends seamlessly with the state-of-the-art luxurious yacht club, Marsa Al-Kout, with its excellent marina facilities for over 150 boats. GLA Property Management is a professional retail real-estate firm and part of the Tamdeen Shopping Centers Company, a subsidiary of Tamdeen Real Estate, which belongs to Kuwait's Tamdeen Group. It currently manages 150,000 sq.mtrs of space for the Tamdeen Shopping Centers Co (K.S.C.C). Up to an additional 100,000 sq.mtrs of retail real estate is in the development pipeline. The company is known for its passion to build great places that deliver great experiences.



KUWAIT: Sulaiman Al-Adasani cutting the ribbon.

FANTASY WORLD NOW OPEN AT BOULEVARD

KUWAIT: Fantasy World has opened a new store at Boulevard Mall located in Salmiya. This comes in line with the brand's on-going commitment to be closer to customers as well as listening and adhering to their needs. Fantasy World's employees as a family came together at their latest store and inaugurated the store opening its gates to their customers, this being a mode of convenience to the shoppers with respect to one more additional location specially to the people living in the nearby areas.

Speaking on this occasion Harvey Dulku- Fantasy World's Retail Director, said "We are happy to announce that we have opened our new store that is located at Boulevard. Customer satisfaction is embedded in our core brand values, hence expanding and opening new stores enables us to come closer to our customers. Expansion plans is one of our top priorities at Fantasy World ever since we completed 20-years in Kuwait. We are planning to open more locations in Kuwait to make Fantasy World accessible to everyone living in Kuwait."

The new store at Boulevard ensures to capture the true essence of Fantasy World through its interiors, look and feel design elements. Customers who seek unique and innovative gift items from The Edge section can now visit the Boulevard store as well. Fantasy World aims to entertain and engage the stores audience with Latest, Best and the Trendiest toys and other interactive technological gadgets.

For the past 20 years, Fantasy World has continuously surpassed market expectations in the country. The brand is

committed to employ a dedicated team to assist customers in finding what they need and want upon entering the uniquely designed store. Fantasy World provides its customers with a valuable and memorable experience of trying and experiencing first-hand newly launched toys and gizmos to ensure complete engagement and enjoyment.

All customers are invited to visit Fantasy World at Boulevard to experience the latest toys, gadgets and more. Customers can also understand what is new by following Fantasy World on its many social media platforms including Facebook (fantasyworldtoyskuwait), Instagram (fantasyworldtoys) and YouTube (fantasyworldkuwait).

Fantasy World welcomed its first customer in Kuwait on April 28, 1996. Importing some of the finest toys from Europe, the United States and The Far East and retailing them at an 10,000 square foot free standing building resembling a castle at the Al Rai business district in Kuwait, the US-designed store was the region's first upscale toy store concept.

Organized as per departments you can browse Amazing Minds, Early Years, Boys World, Girls World, Tweens & Lifestyle, Outdoor & Sports that cover all kids from infants to twelve-year-olds, all of Fantasy World's toys meet American and European safety standards. From humble beginnings, the Fantasy World brand grew to become a leader of branded and specialty toys in Kuwait. Fantasy World now has five stores in Kuwait at different locations and is recognized as the first choice for toys and offers the latest, best and widest range of branded toys.

\$12,000 IN FUNDING AWARDED TO KUWAIT WATER ASSOCIATION

FORD CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL GRANTS

KUWAIT: Ford Motor Company yesterday announced the latest recipients of its Conservation and Environmental Grants, with \$120,000 being made available to the successful entries. Accepted from Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen, the touted projects focused on three main areas: Environmental Education, Protection of the Natural Environment and Conservation Engineering.

Environmental education

Taking home the top prize in Environmental Education, and a \$15,000 purse to implement her project, is Lina Nayel Al-Tarawneh's "Green Mangroves" in Qatar. The proposed outcome of the grant will see hands-on learning occur through free weekly kayak trips to Purple Island, where expeditions catering to school children and individuals, will help raise awareness, and inevitably save the mangroves in the Alkhor region.

Groupe d'ornithologie du Maroc (Gomac), came second securing \$12,000 in funding for the preservation of the last significant coastal natural wetland area between the Mohammedia and El Jadida regions in Morocco. The aim of Gomac is to increase local awareness on the importance of the Dar Bouazza Wetlands, which is currently endangered by human activity.

Completing the top three for Environmental Education is an entry from Egypt social development NGO Torathiyat, focused on air and water pollution around rural Giza. The program - promoting eco-friendly products, correct disposal of bio-waste, and an overall attempt at improving the quality of life for local communities through small-scale interventions - will benefit from the grants scheme to the tune of \$9,000.

Natural environment

Agricultural engineer Ait Hamou Abderrahmane sought to save the traditional beehives of Morocco, by developing and managing them in accordance with organic production methods. Having been drawn to the alarming environmental phenomenon of declining bee numbers, the \$15,000 grant offered to Abderrahmane's cause will help in converting the country's apiaries from traditional, seemingly random, production to an innovative organic model, which can potentially increase bee numbers in the region.

Arc en ciel scooped second place, and with it \$12,000 in funding. The Lebanese Conservation Volunteers (LCV) project, is looking at climate change and how the increasing threat of urbanisation is wreaking havoc on Lebanon's biodiversity. In order to fight those threats, Arc en ciel, a former recipient of various Ford Grants, is form-

Ford Motor Company



Conservation and Environmental Grants

ing a team of conservation volunteers to keep Lebanon's forests safe. The team will receive intensive theoretical and practical training on conservation.

Tunisia supplied the \$9,000-worthy pitch in the Natural Environment segment, where Sarra Arbaoui aims to improve plant salt tolerance using microorganisms - a green biotechnology for adaption to climate changes. In Arbaoui's project, the focus will be on the adaption of plant species to salt stress.

Conservation engineering

Lebanon provided the top idea for Conservation Engineering, through the American University of Beirut's Nature Conservation Centre's initiative. The Local Conservation and Development with Open and Collaborative Science (LCDOCS) conducts consensus building workshops and provide the scientific resources and training to assess and monitor the results from its Green Map database. With its \$15,000 funding, LCDOCS will develop Green Maps, which will be comprised of sites of natural significance and degraded environmental resources in 70 communities across the country.

In Kuwait, headed by Dr Saleh Al-Muzaini and Ahmad Al-Kofahi, Kuwait Water Association (KWA) will receive \$12,000 for its second-placed entry, titled Periodic Statistical Study in Educational Facilities for Measuring the Water Consumption in Kuwait. Kuwait has the highest water consumption level in the world, with a daily average of around 500 liters per capita. KWA will collect and analyse data obtained from

schools and provide the government with its findings in the hope a better level of water conservation can be observed in the future. Rounding out the top three, and the final award of the main three categories, is Morocco's fight against plastic bags. A program of education and awareness for the benefit of students, led by Aicha El Moutaouakkel and with the help of a \$9,000 grant, the project hopes to eventually, once and for all, eliminate the use of plastic bags for the sake of the environment.

Special categories

In the latest edition of the program, there are two further winners, each of a \$6,000 Ford Grant. Christopher Narinder Singh Poonian from the University of Nottingham in the United Kingdom put forward the idea of working with the Bedouin fishing communities of Egypt's South Sinai to conserve their coral reef fisheries using cultural and traditional knowledge. The project, which ties the old with the new, is a worthy recipient of the Best in Community Engagement grant.

The Best in Research grant went to Sarra Arbaoui, who added the \$6,000 Special Categories win to her third-place Natural Environment grant, giving her green biotechnology for adaption to climate change a full \$15,000 in funding for the future. Salt tolerance in crops allows for more effective use of poor quality irrigation water and marginal soil, but also helps mitigate yield loss. While her attention is currently on Tunisia, this could be something the whole world might one-day benefit from.

"Ford Motor Company is dedicated to preserving the environment for future generations and providing ingenious environmental solutions that contribute to a sustainable planet," said Jacques Brent, president Ford Middle East and Africa. "Initiatives such as Ford's Conservation and Environmental Grants program evidence a commitment to encourage, support and reward the actions of individuals, groups and non-profit organizations in achieving the same goal."

In its 16 years of existence, Ford Grants has become one of the largest corporate initiatives of its kind in the region, created to empower individuals and non-profit groups that are donating their time and efforts to preserve the environmental well-being of their communities.

Since its inception, the Ford Motor Company Conservation and Environmental Grants program has received support and recognition from various governmental and non-governmental environmental authorities from around the Middle East, including the World Wide Fund for Nature, the Emirates Wildlife Society, the Arab Forum for Environment and Development (AFED) and UNESCO Doha.

KASPERSKY LAB'S INTERACTIVE PROTECTION SIMULATION TRAINING GOES ONLINE

Kaspersky Lab announces the availability of its Kaspersky Interactive Protection Simulation Online training (KIPS Online). KIPS Online is a valuable addition to previously available and highly regarded KIPS Live offline cybersecurity training. Both live and online versions offer actionable security intelligence training for top-level business executives around the world. KIPS Online brings cybersecurity awareness and real, actionable insight where it is needed most: to top-level management of large corporations. Based on 20 years of Kaspersky Lab's cybersecurity experience, Kaspersky Interactive Protection Simulation solves two essential senior management awareness challenges:

The need to be prepared for swift, high-level reaction on cybersecurity incidents and a lack of time.

Slava Borilin, Security Awareness Program Manager, Kaspersky Lab, comments: "General corporate cybersecurity awareness requires knowledge about threats, attack scenarios and the means to avoid compromise. But at the highest management level, the most important key to successful incident response and mitigation is teamwork. We took this into account when we started working on KIPS, by choosing a non-standard route - using entertaining, but very relevant and insightful games that typically take only two hours. The goal is not to train managers on

the threat landscape - we don't want to replace security officers.

The goal that KIPS fulfills is to help managers cooperate better in the event of a cybersecurity threat and to save money on incident recovery costs. With KIPS Online we bring the much required flexibility to the training process and the ability to involve senior management at large multi-national corporations." According to Kaspersky Lab's Corporate IT Security Risks survey, 51 percent of enterprises agreed that it is difficult to demonstrate the return-on-investment when it comes to IT security. At senior management level, quick and coordinated action helps save on IT Security costs, and one of the main goals of KIPS Live and KIPS

Online is to demonstrate this capability.

Spreading awareness

During the training, participants are tasked with operating an interactive facility and the goal of different teams is to retain financial health while dealing with cybersecurity challenges. The game scenario features real-life challenges that extend beyond the issues faced by interactive operators. Prior to the global launch, in December 2016 Kaspersky Lab conducted a global KIPS Online tournament, inviting enterprise customers and media around the world to take part, with a total of 270 teams from 40 countries attending the game. This was the major test-drive for the KIPS Online platform, that turned out to

be highly successful. KIPS Winter Series also successfully proved the capability of KIPS Online to engage large teams (up to several hundred people). Kaspersky Lab's goal is to spread awareness, which is why special kits are available for security service providers and other institutions to conduct the training independently. KIPS Online and KIPS Live are part of the Security Awareness Training family of Kaspersky Lab services and can be requested from Kaspersky Lab and its resellers globally. To learn more about Kaspersky Interactive Protection Simulation, visit the company's corporate website, or refer to the detailed description in its blog. You can learn more about KIPS Winter Series tournament in a blog post by Eugene Kaspersky.

SOPHOS INTRODUCES PHISH THREAT ATTACK SIMULATOR

Sophos (LSE:SOPH), a global leader in network and endpoint security, yesterday launched Sophos Phish Threat, an advanced phishing attack simulator and training solution that is fully integrated with the company's cloud-based security management platform, Sophos Central. With centralized management and automated campaign analysis, Phish Threat dramatically reduces the time and resources required to affect real change in employee behavior when faced with sophisticated and rapidly evolving cybercrime techniques. Phishing remains one of the most common attack vectors for hackers who exploit end-user behavior as the weakest link in a company's cyber-defenses.

Traditional online security training programs are academic, blind to the current attack land-



Bill Lucchini, Sophos

scape and disconnected from the rest of IT security management, making it burdensome for IT managers to effectively integrate anti-phishing into routine risk assessments. Sophos Phish Threat automates the entire training process and provides visual analytics to identify vulnerable users. The Sophos Phish Threat attack simulator and training platform is managed alongside other Sophos security solutions within Sophos Central to provide rapid risk detection and incident response.

"Phishing has evolved in lockstep with the 'Malware-as-a-Service' phenomenon," commented Bill Lucchini, senior vice president and general manager for the Sophos Cloud Security Group. "For years, criminals have disguised attacks in email and today Sophos Labs sees phishing emails as a primary delivery method for ransom ware payloads.

Preventing users from succumbing to phishing attacks can seem like an uphill battle. However, with Sophos Phish Threat, IT managers now have sophisticated, integrated threat intelligence that combines the strength of Sophos security technologies with a product that tests, trains and analyzes human vulnerabilities. This creates a very powerful solution for businesses struggling to keep ahead of organized cybercrime and unwary end-users."

Sophos acquired the Phish Threat technology in late 2016 from penetration test and risk assessment consultancy Silent Break Security and has

since integrated the product into the Sophos Central platform. "I noticed a discrepancy between the way cyber-attacks were being conducted in the wild and what the private sector was calling a penetration test," commented Brady Bloxham, founder and former CEO of Silent Break Security. "We built Phish Threat to replicate the mindset of a real attacker, using the complicated methods and techniques in use today. This means assessments are modeled after potential attacks that organizations may face from real hackers.

Phish threat

We also wanted to make it more transparent and easier for IT to collate and analyze results - something we hadn't found in other tools." Bloxham and the core engineers who initially developed the technology have joined the Sophos Cloud Security Group. Sophos Phish Threat enables IT managers to create authentic phishing simulation and training sessions, and initiates course corrections for their employees. This helps end-users better recognize what a phishing attack looks like and learn from their mistakes should they get lured into taking the bait. As attacks change with current events, changing seasons and attacker methodologies, Sophos Phish Threat constantly updates its testing framework to reflect real-world threats.

IT managers can craft bespoke simulation campaigns for office locations worldwide, just as many cybercriminals are now designing threats tailored by geography. "Today's phishing attacks are so prevalent and so convincing that organizations of all types and sizes come to us asking how they can just stop employees from clicking on those emails and prevent an attack from slipping onto the network," said Karl Bickmore, CEO at Snap Tech IT, a Sophos partner based in Phoenix, Ariz. "Being able to stop a zero-day attack with next-generation endpoint security such as Sophos Intercept X is a valuable line of defense, but being able to reduce the number of security threats that reach your network in the first place by simply educating employees can dramatically reduce risk and improve security confidence across an organization."

"Consumer confidence has been rocked by the high profile data breaches that have occurred in recent months, and many of our customers are asking how they can effectively introduce higher standards of security awareness in their business without introducing complicated solutions that require close management and constant updates in order to be effective," added Shane Swanson, COO at ARRC Technology, a Sophos partner based in Bakersfield, California.

"By adding Phish Threat to Sophos Central, Sophos has made it easy for our customers to integrate an additional component of security without adding to the management overhead. It increases the trust our customers have in our team and our solutions." Several flagship Sophos products are already available through the Sophos Central management platform including the next-generation XG Firewall, Sophos Endpoint Security, Sophos Intercept X, Sophos Email Security, Sophos Server Protection and Sophos SafeGuard Encryption. Sophos Phish Threat is the latest addition to the Sophos Central management platform. Pricing and availability details can be requested from Sophos Partners worldwide.

JAPANESE ARCADE PIONEER AND FATHER OF PAC-MAN HAS DIED

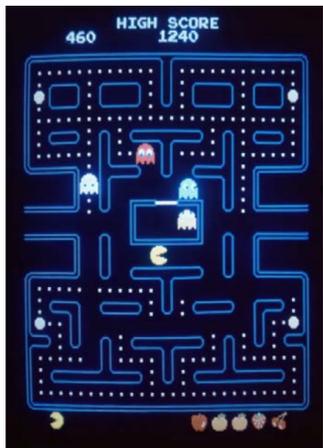
TOKYO: Masaya Nakamura, the "Father of Pac-Man" who founded the Japanese video game company behind the hit creature-gobbling game, has died. He was 91. Nakamura, who died on Jan. 22, founded Namco, part of Bandai Namco, in 1955. It started out as just two mechanical horse rides on a department store rooftop but went on to pioneer game arcades and amusement parks. Bandai Namco, formed in 2005 from a merger of two game companies, confirmed yesterday that Nakamura had died.

Pac-Man, designed by Namco engineer and video game maker Toru Iwatani, went on sale in 1980, at a time when there were few

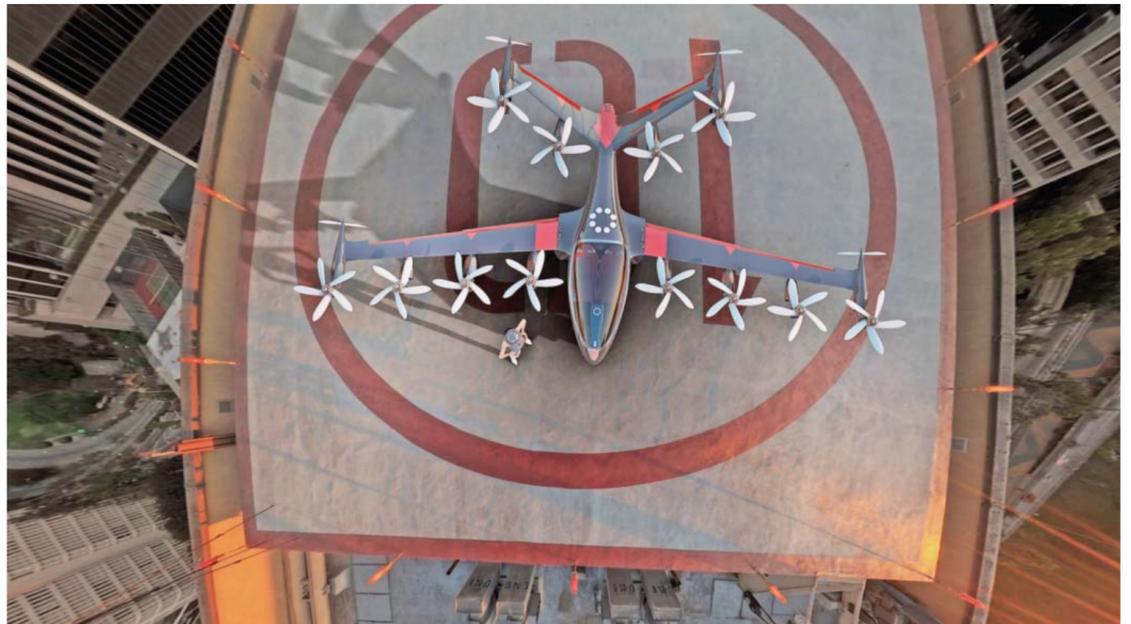
rival games, such as Space Invaders. The plucky yellow circle with the huge mouth was a huge hit. It's estimated to have been played more than 10 billion times: Guinness World Record has named it the world's most successful coin-operated arcade game. The game was non-violent but just challenging enough to hook players into steering the Pac-Man for hours through its mazes on the hunt for ghostly tidbits. The iconic Pac-Man adorns T-shirts and other merchandise and inspired animation shows, a breakfast cereal and even the nickname for Filipino boxer Manny Pacquiao.

The idea for Pac-Man's design came from the image of a pizza with a slice carved out. Nakamura reportedly chose the word "Pac," or "pakku" in Japanese, to represent the sound of the Pac-Man munching its prey. "Pac-Man is a gamer friendly game with tons of cute characters and that's why it was loved for such a long time," Iwatani said in 2015 at a New York red carpet premiere of "Pixels," that featured Pac-Man creatures and featured him in a cameo role. The game started out as an arcade item and then was at first played on the Nintendo Family Computer home console. It since has been adapted for cellphones, PlayStation and Xbox formats.

Other hits from Namco include driving simulation games like "Ridge Racer" and a drumming game. Nakamura was a key player in Bandai Namco's global growth. His pet saying was that his company delivered varied and total entertainment. He took pride in having fun and games for his job. The company reported Nakamura's death but would not comment on its cause or other personal details, citing his family's wishes. A private wake and funeral were held for the family, but a separate memorial is being planned, Bandai-Namco said. — AP



TOKYO: In this file photo, this close up view of a monitor shows the electronic video game Pac-Man. — AP



WASHINGTON: This image provided by Joby Aviation shows the conceptual design of the Joby S2 Electric VTOL PAV aircraft. — AP photos

ENTREPRENEURS RACE TO DEVELOP FLYING CAR

'A COMMUTERS DREAM COME TRUE'

WASHINGTON: Even before George Jetson entranced kids with his cartoon flying car, people dreamed of soaring above traffic congestion. Inventors and entrepreneurs have long tried and failed to make the dream a reality, but that may be changing. Nearly a dozen companies around the globe, including some with deep pockets such as European aircraft maker Airbus, are competing to be the first to develop a new kind of aircraft that will enable commuters to glide above crowded roadways. A few of the aircraft under development are cars with wings that unfold for flight, but most aren't cars at all. Typically they take off and land vertically like helicopters. Rather than a single, large main rotor, they have multiple small rotors. Each rotor is operated by a battery-powered electric motor instead of a conventional aircraft piston engine.

It's no sure bet that flying-car dreams will turn into reality. There are many obstacles, including convincing regulators that the aircraft are safe, figuring out how to handle thousands of new low-flying aircraft over cities without collisions and developing batteries that will keep them aloft long enough to be useful. But entrepreneurs are moving forward. They see a vast potential market for "air taxis" and personally owned small aircraft to transport people from the fringes of metropolitan areas to city centers as urban areas grow more congested and people spend more time stuck in traffic. They envision tens of thousands of one or two-person flying taxis delivering passengers to the rooftops of office buildings in city centers and other landing pads during rush hours.

"In as little as 10 years, products could be on the market that revolutionize urban travel for millions of people," said Zach Lovering, the leader of Airbus' project to develop an autonomous flying taxi called the Vahana. The name means the mount or vehicle of a Hindu deity. Uber released a 98-page report in Oct making the business case for air taxis, which the company sees as the future of on-demand transportation. Uber doesn't have any plans to develop a flying car itself, but the online transportation network is advising several companies that have aircraft in the works. "The role we want to play is as a catalyst for the entire industry," said Nikhil Goel, an Uber project manager for advanced programs.

Some of the aircraft are drones that will be pre-programmed for each flight and monitored or operated from the ground or a command center. Others are designed for human pilots. It's unclear yet how much the aircraft will cost, although prices are likely to vary significantly. Some of the aircraft are designed to be individually owned, while others are envisioned more for commercial use. Designers hope that if demand is high, prices can be kept affordable through economies of mass production. Several recent developments could make these aircraft possible.

Risk-based approach

Advances in computing power mean the rotors on multi-copter drones can be adjusted many times per second, making the aircraft easy to control. Drones have also benefited from advances in battery and electric motor technology. Some companies, like Chinese drone maker EHang, are scaling-up drones so that they can carry people. Another aircraft under development, Santa Cruz, California-based Joby Aviation's S2, looks more like a conventional plane except that there are 12 tilt rotors spread along the wings and tail. And some, like the Vahana, a cockpit mounted on a sled and flanked by propellers in front and back, don't really look like any aircraft in the skies today.

"In terms of what you can make fly in a reliable



WASHINGTON: This artist rendering provided by Airbus shows a vehicle in their flying car project, Vahana.

manner, the solution speed gateway that (computer) chips have gone through recently have literally opened the door to a whole new world of flying machine possibilities," said Charles Eastlake, an Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University professor emeritus of aerospace engineering. But he also cautioned: "My best engineering guess is that people actually using autonomous air taxis in the next 10 or 15 years is possible, but definitely not certain. The challenges are big." Key for many of the designs will be the development of longer-lasting lightweight batteries. Currently available batteries could probably keep an air taxi aloft about 15 to 30 minutes before it would have to land, experts said. Depending on how fast the aircraft flies, that probably isn't quite enough to transport passengers between nearby cities or across metropolitan areas, experts said. Another hurdle will be winning Federal Aviation Administration certification for any radical new kind of aircraft when approval of even small changes in aviation technology can take years. The FAA said in a statement that it is taking a "flexible, open-minded, and risk-based approach" to flying cars.

FAA officials have discussed with several manufacturers the certification of aircraft that will be

flown with a pilot in the beginning, and later converted to an autonomous passenger aircraft. While further research is needed to ensure that autonomous aircraft are safe, "we believe automation technology already being prototyped in low-risk unmanned aircraft missions, when fully mature, could have a positive effect" on aviation safety," the agency said. Reducing noise is another challenge since air taxis will be taking off and landing in densely populated areas. So is creating enough landing pads to handle lots of aircraft at the same time. A new air traffic control system would also likely be needed.

"It's pretty clear that the existing air traffic control system won't scale to the kind of density at low altitudes that people are talking about," said John Hansman, a Massachusetts Institute of Technology professor who chairs the FAA's research and engineering advisory committee. NASA is developing an air traffic control system for small drones that perhaps could be expanded to include flying cars. "There's no question we can build the vehicle," Hansman said. "The big challenge is whether we can build a vehicle that would be allowed to operate in the places where people want to use it." — AP



CALIFORNIA: Technical University of Munich load their pod WARR into the tube for the first test of the day in the SpaceX Hyperloop competition in Hawthorne, California. — AFP

SMOKE 'EM IF YA GOT 'EM, AS LEGALIZED MARIJUANA TAKES HOLD

PORTLAND: It's a green Monday in Maine. The first tangible results of state voters' decision to legalize marijuana are being felt as possession and home growth of marijuana becomes legal. Voters narrowly passed the ballot question in November, and the waiting period between the vote and legalization has expired. Contentious aspects linger, including what rules should govern businesses that will sell marijuana, such as retail stores and social clubs. The Legislature has been hammering out those details, and they will take months to fully craft, meaning it will be months before marijuana businesses open in the state.

But it's legal to smoke it as of yesterday. It's also legal to gift it, grow it and possess up to 2.5 ounces of it. "It's huge. No longer will we be punishing adults for using a safer substance than alcohol," said David Boyer, campaign manager for the ballot question. "We're not making criminals out of thousands of Mainers who choose to use marijuana." The marijuana legalization vote was close, passing by only about 4,000 votes, and opponents of the spread of marijuana have vowed to continue to push for restrictions in the state.

Legalization also sparked a row between legislators and Republican Gov. Paul LePage. Lawmakers



MAINE: This file photo shows medical marijuana, a pipe, rolling papers and two joints in Belfast, Maine.—AP

on Jan 26 unanimously approved legislation delaying the retail sale of marijuana until February 2018. But LePage at first declined to sign off on such a delay because of concerns he has about funding and oversight. He ended up signing it on Jan 27. LePage's signing of the bill also closed a loophole that could have allowed Mainers under 21 to possess pot. Cities and towns have also considered moratoriums on the establishment of marijuana businesses, and some have already approved such temporary bans.

Many local officials have said they don't want to get into the business of issuing marijuana licenses until the state rules are firmly in place. Scott Gagnon, chairman of Mainers Protecting Our Youth and Communities, has said that legalization will bring a "huge cultural change for Maine" and that cities and towns are right to be cautious about whether they will allow sales within their borders. Massachusetts, California and Nevada also legalized recreational marijuana with a referendum last year. Maine also has a long-standing medical marijuana program, and supporters of recreational pot have vowed that broader legalization will not interfere with it.—AP

STORMS PREVIEW SEA-RISE DAMAGE TO CALIFORNIA ROADS

THOUSANDS EVACUATE AS WEATHER WORSENS

SAN FRANCISCO: Ocean rise already is worsening the floods and high tides sweeping California this stormy winter, climate experts say, and this month's damage and deaths highlight that even a state known as a global leader in fighting climate change has yet to tackle some of the hardest work of dealing with it. The critical steps yet to come include starting to decide which low-lying cities, airports and highways, along with threatened landmarks like San

think-tank, estimated \$100 billion in property was at risk from ocean rise in California, two-thirds of it in the low-lying San Francisco Bay region. That's far more than the state takes in from income taxes each year.

Experts say the real cost of raising, shielding or evacuating vulnerable spots, which include mass-transit systems, power plants and sewage plants, could be far higher. "Astronomical. The San Francisco airport? What would it cost to

of sea-rise primarily will make worse the flooding and erosion from big storms like this month's in California. "Probably until mid-century, short-term events ... are going to be more damaging than sea-level rise itself," Griggs said. In Jan, a series of powerful storms brought more than a foot of rain to parts of the San Francisco Bay, triggered record 34-foot waves off the state's central coast, killed at least five people and prompted the evacuations of thousands around the state.

The dead included a cab driver who slid off a wet road and into a swollen estuary off Oakland's airport, which along with San Francisco's bayside airport is one of the big sites expected to be hit more and more often by flooding as the Pacific Ocean rises a foot over the next 30 years. Brown, who declared an emergency in much of the state this month because of flooded towns and highways, crumbled roads and rockslides, has vowed to fight if the fossil-fuel friendly Trump administration goes after California's landmark programs to reduce climate-changing carbon emissions. Brown's administration in 2015 also sought to speed up planning for dealing with sea rise and other climate change.

On a sparkling afternoon after three storms brought some of the heaviest rain and surf to California in decades, ecologist Fraser Shilling stood on a highway bridge north of San Francisco, looking over sprawling miles of floodwater and salty bay water swallowing the highway's exit ramp, and drowning salt marshes and fence posts as far as the eye could see. State Route 37 is a busy highway for tens of thousands of commuters and truckers in and out of California's wine country. Shilling, a co-director of the Road Ecology Center at the University of California, Davis, had forecast it wouldn't be seeing this kind of regular high water for at least another 20 years.

Wake-up call

"This is the new normal," says Shilling, who believes sea-rise already is changing conditions on the ground more than some state agencies realize. "And all of our infrastructure is not accommodating the new normal." Pumps and bulldozers labored to clear water from another stretch of the state highway, two weeks after the storms. State and local governments acknowledge that low-lying sites like State Route 37 will be hit by sea-rise worsened floods and tides more and more, before the bay claims them completely.

But authorities are stymied by the financial and political difficulties of raising billions to elevate or protect the highway, or reroute it through pricey vineyards inland. As it is now, substantial state funding isn't expected for this particular highway until 2088, long after parts of it are expected to be regularly submerged. "Our biggest challenge is how to fund and build it before it goes underwater," said Kate Miller, executive director of the transportation authority for Napa County.

California might not really start funding its rescues from sea rise until a major part of the public is inconvenienced, said state Sen. Jerry Hill, a Democrat from San Mateo County. Hill's prediction of what would free the funds: If a low-lying stretch of US Highway 101 near San Francisco's old Candlestick Park floods, and much of the Bay Area suddenly could not get to work. "That will be the wake-up call, when the rubber hits the road," he said. "When the water hits the tailpipe."—AP



CALIFORNIA: In this photo, a field remains flooded along Highway 37 near Novato, California.—AP photos



CALIFORNIA: In this photo a pump removes water from a flooded area along Highway 37 near Novato, California.—AP

Francisco's Embarcadero, to hoist above the rising water and which to abandon - and where to start getting the many billions of dollars for those climate rescues.

"People always tell us we're ahead of the curve" on climate change, said Larry Goldzband, head of a regional San Francisco Bay commission that late last year stepped up regional efforts to identify and prioritize communities and infrastructure at risk from rising sea level. As proud as Californians are of their climate-change efforts, "I always think, 'Man, if we are ahead of the curve, I feel sorry for the rest of the country,'" Goldzband said. A 2009 study by the Pacific Institute, a California-based environment

replace that?" asked Gary Griggs, director of the Institute of Marine Sciences at the University of California, Santa Cruz. Griggs is part of a scientific working group requested by Gov. Jerry Brown to examine whether new evidence on melting and potential ice-sheet collapse in the Antarctic, whose ice holds almost 90 percent of the Earth's fresh water, means sea-level rise may be even higher than the 3 feet projected for California by the end of the century.

Wave kills five

The Pacific off California has risen just about 8 inches overall in the past century. For the next three decades or so, the accelerating pace



TENNESSEE: In this photo, equipment measures the flow of water where water from the Gallatin Fossil Plant empties into the Cumberland River in Gallatin, Tennessee.—AP

CLAIMS COAL-FIRED PLANT POLLUTED RIVER

NASHVILLE, Tennessee: Environmental groups are taking the Tennessee Valley Authority to trial over waste ash from an aging coal-fired power plant northeast of Nashville, saying it polluted the Cumberland River in violation of the Clean Water Act. In a bench trial starting yesterday in federal court in Nashville, the Tennessee Clean Water Network and Tennessee Scenic Rivers Association say the pollution is due to the TVA's faulty storage of coal ash, a byproduct of burning coal for energy.

The nation's largest public utility, which powers 9 million customers in parts of seven Southern states, says it has abided by the law and hasn't sullied drinking water sources. But the environmental groups contend coal ash storage ponds at the 1950s-era Gallatin Fossil Plant have been illegally seeping toxic pollutants into the groundwater and the Cumberland River for years. The groups also say in the lawsuit filed in 2015 that state regulators didn't require sufficient changes at the plant to safeguard against contamination, according to court documents.

TVA spokesman Scott Brooks said decades of data show the plant hasn't had any impact on potable water sources, adding the utility heeded all regulations and permits. The plant sits on a bend of the river, which stretches almost 700 miles from eastern Kentucky headwaters through Tennessee to meet up with the Ohio River in western Kentucky. Nearby residents have private wells and the Cumberland River supplies drinking water to Nashville, about 40 miles away, among other areas.

In 2015, state environmental officials informed Albert Hudson, whose home is near the plant, that his well water met US Environmental Protection Agency drinking water standards. But they also said the water showed levels of the harmful chemical hexavalent chromium - typically resulting from an industrial process - were slightly above EPA risk levels.

The Southern Environmental Law Center, representing the other environmental groups, cites test of two water wells - including Hudson's - in court documents along with results that found the chemical in the Cumberland River near where the plant takes in water. Hudson is slated to testify for the environmental groups. At

certain levels, the chemical has been found to cause cancer in lab animals when they drink it in water, according to the National Institutes of Health and the EPA.

Toxins

The environmental groups said numerous other materials in the coal ash ponds could also harm human health. But Brooks said monitoring data show no impact on river water from plant operations. Additionally, he said, the utility tested Hudson's well again and it met drinking water standards for Tennessee, save for unrelated fecal coliform. He also said there are other potential sources of the hexavalent chromium, including natural occurrences. Trial is expected to last about a week. The environmental groups say toxins are being spread to groundwater and the river via numerous area sinkholes.

The TVA disputes that those are, in fact, sinkholes and continues to investigate the geology of the area. The utility also says it's investing billions of dollars in safer ways to store coal ash and other waste from burning coal across its operations. That includes converting all of its wet coal-ash storage to dry storage, a decision made after a 2008 coal ash disaster at TVA's Kingston Fossil Plant. More than 5 million cubic yards of sludge from the plant spilled into the Emory and Clinch rivers that year, destroying homes in a nearby waterfront community.

"The Kingston failure happened in an instant," said Beth Alexander, a Nashville-based attorney of the Southern Environmental Law Center. "But the Gallatin failure has unfolded over years, out of sight." TVA is awaiting the outcome of the state and federal cases before determining how to store the coal ash in the long term. One option the environmental groups prefer is excavating the site and sending ash to dry, lined landfills - a proposal TVA has said could be costly and not potentially any more environmentally friendly than storing ash onsite where the utility can monitor it.

"We all agree that protecting our environment is a top priority," Brooks said. "TVA is committed to environmental stewardship and has a mandate to act with the interest of our 9 million consumers of TVA power in mind ... The plaintiffs appear to have a much more narrow focus."—AP

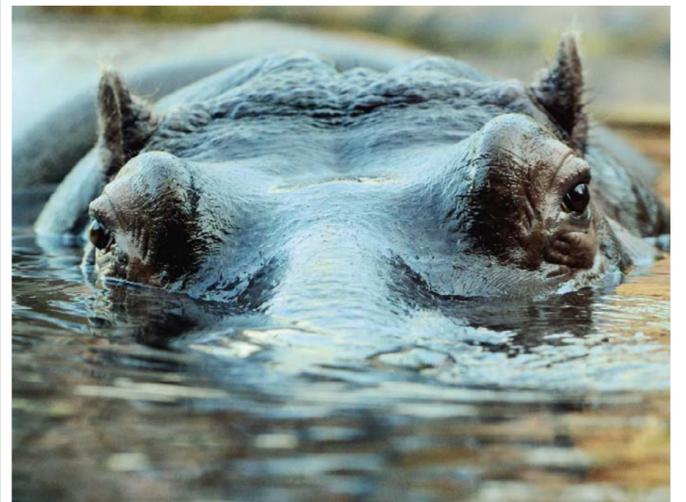


RUSSIA: This picture shows a travelling zoo keeper holding a two and a half months old liger cub, Tsar, a crossbreed between a lion and a tigress, in the town of Kamensk-Shakhtinsky in Russia's Rostov region.—AFP

RARE LION-TIGER HYBRID BORN IN RUSSIAN ZOO

ROSTOV-ON-DON, Russia: An extremely rare cross between a tiger and a lion has been born in a travelling zoo in southern Russia, one of only a few dozen of the animals believed to exist. Named Tsar, the two-month-old liger cub, is the offspring of a tigress Princess and lion Caesar, zoo director Erik Airapetyan said. "They have lived together for a long time and know each other well. When the tigress was on heat, she didn't have any other choice," he said.

The cub has the beige fur of a lion and the stripes of a tiger and is currently being fed on milk from one of the zoo's goats. Ligers can grow to be the biggest cat in the animal kingdom, weighing more than 400 kilograms. A liger called Hercules in the United States is currently listed in the Guinness Book of World Records as the biggest feline in the world, at a weight of 418 kilograms and length of 3.33 meters.—AFP



BERLIN: A hippo swims in the zoo in Berlin.—AFP



AMSTERDAM: In this file photo, a woman rides her bicycle across a bridge over Prinsengracht canal in front of autumnally colored trees in the center of Amsterdam.—AP photos



FRANKFURT: In this file photo, two cyclists pedal through an alley of small trees in Frankfurt, Germany.



BOSTON: In this file photo, trees are reflected in still water on the Esplanade along the Charles River in Boston.

WHERE ARE THE TREES? NOT PARIS, NEW 'GREEN VIEW INDEX' FINDS

'ENHANCING THE CRITICAL ROLE TREES PLAY'

BOSTON: Where are the trees? More important, where aren't the trees? A lab at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology is helping some of the world's cities answer both questions in an attempt to make them more pleasant places to live and work. In an effort to enhance the critical role trees play in urban environments - providing cooling shade, alleviating air and noise pollution, and easing the effects of climate change - the school's Sense able City Lab has developed an online platform that maps out the canopy in some major cities to make it easier for urban planners and ordinary citizens to see where more are needed.

The project, called Treepedia, uses Google Street View to create what the MIT team calls the Green View Index. Trees block shortwave radiation and increase water evaporation, creating more comfortable microclimates and mitigating air pollution, lab director Carlo Ratti said. But they also just make people feel better, Ratti said, channeling Harvard biologist E O Wilson's biophilia theory that humans innately seek out connections with nature. "We as humans have a natural willingness and desire to be in green spaces," he said.

The interactive website gives bird-eye views of 15 cities, with trees represented by green dots. Users can zoom into a particular neighborhood or individual street to see ground-level images. The City of Lights apparently isn't the city of trees. Of the cities mapped so far, Paris scores lowest with a Green View Index score of 8.8 percent. North American cities tend to score higher than European cities. Singapore, however, ranks the highest with a 29.3 percent score, slightly ahead of Vancouver, British Columbia.

The other cities mapped so far are Amsterdam; Boston; Frankfurt, Germany; Geneva, Switzerland; London; Los Angeles; New York; Sacramento, California; Seattle; Tel Aviv, Israel; Toronto; and Turin, Italy. More cities are being added. "In the future, the goal of this project is to start a conversation so that cities can see how they compare with one another and how they can learn from each other," Ratti said. He also hopes ordinary citizens will use the web-

site to check out their own homes, and advocate with municipal officials for more trees in their neighborhoods.

The project was inspired by the World Economic Forum's Global Agenda Council on the Future of Cities, which included increasing tree canopy cover on a list of top 10 urban innovations. "We hope that this endeavor will give citizens a greater appreciation of their city's green canopy and appreciate that the green canopy can assist in responding to climate change," council manager Alice Charles said in a state-

ment. The project's maps aren't perfect. It appears as if there are no trees in some of the world's most famous parks.

New York's Central Park, Boston Common and London's Hyde Park appear as large black swaths of nothing - probably because Google Street View vehicles can't get into those areas. Ratti hopes to eventually fill those gaps using satellite data, but adds that cataloging street trees is the project's primary goal. "Streets are important, because that's where we spend most of our time," he said.—AP



NEW YORK: In this file photo, trees line a quiet streetscape in the St. Nicholas Historic District, also known as Strivers Row, in the Harlem section of New York.

TELESCOPE CAMERA BOOSTS ASTEROID SIGHTINGS IN TUCSON

TUCSON, Arizona: A customized telescope camera near Tucson is playing an important role in discovering asteroids and other objects zipping by Earth. Upgrades helped the Catalina Sky Survey record 924 of the sightings in 2016, reported the Arizona Daily Star. No other survey has spotted as many, according to Lindley Johnson, who leads NASA's Planetary Defense Coordination Office. NASA's planetary defense office is looking to find 90 percent of objects at least 140 meters in size near Earth.

Co-investigator Steve Larson designed the new \$500,000 cameras for two telescopes. He said that while he suspected they would help, he was surprised by the results after the first cam-

era was commissioned. "It tripled our average rate of discoveries," he said. "It was startling to us that it worked so well." The second camera recently spotted its first asteroid. In addition to the cameras, the survey also refurbished a telescope to help follow up on sightings.

Principal investigator Eric Christensen says objects in space can cause various degrees of damage when they hit Earth, depending on their size. Collisions can happen "on the time scale of tens of millions, if not hundreds of millions, of years," he said. The University of Arizona's Lunar and Planetary Laboratory runs the survey. Christensen said its 11 employees are paid from a \$1.7 million annual NASA budget.—AP

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Kuwait Times
248 33 199

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AIS 3rd Grade Students Visit Newspaper

AIS students pose for a group photo



A family newspaper

Kuwait Times was delighted to welcome the third grade students from the American International School on a field trip to visit the newspaper in Industrial Shuwaikh. Students and their teachers toured the printing press and newspaper offices and learned

about the establishment of Kuwait Times in 1961 as well as about the printing process and various aspects of journalism and publishing in Kuwait.

— Photos by Joseph Shagra and Yasser Al-Zayyat



Anyone have a question



Lining up



Reading the newspaper



Let them read



Inside the printing press





Learning about design



Visiting the Editorial Department



Exploring the machine



Exploring the printing press



Explaining how the press works



Learning about the printing press



We love Kuwait Times!



Touring the printing press



Asking a question



Visiting the Kuwait Times newspaper



Thumbs up!



Snack time



Touring the newspaper



Having fun



Taking a break for snack time

OSN MOVIES
ACTION

- 01:00 Pusher
- 03:00 Area 407
- 05:00 Heatstroke
- 07:00 Jupiter Ascending
- 09:15 Nick Of Time
- 11:00 Dracula Untold
- 13:00 Swelter
- 14:45 Jupiter Ascending
- 17:00 Nick Of Time
- 18:45 Dracula Untold
- 20:30 Divergent
- 23:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles

ANIMAL PLANET HD

- 00:00 Dr. Dee: Alaska Vet
- 00:55 Gator Boys
- 01:50 River Monsters (Best Of Series 1-5)
- 02:45 Bondi Vet
- 03:10 Bondi Vet
- 03:40 Dr. Dee: Alaska Vet
- 04:35 Tanked
- 05:25 Weird Creatures With Nick Baker
- 06:15 Gator Boys
- 07:02 River Monsters (Best Of Series 1-5)
- 07:49 Dr. Dee: Alaska Vet
- 08:36 Gorilla School
- 09:00 Gorilla School
- 09:25 Pit Bulls & Parolees
- 10:15 Dr. Dee: Alaska Vet
- 11:00 O'Shea's Big Adventure
- 12:05 Tanked
- 13:00 Pit Bulls & Parolees
- 13:55 Bondi Vet
- 14:20 Bondi Vet
- 14:50 Dr. Dee: Alaska Vet
- 15:45 Gator Boys
- 16:40 O'Shea's Big Adventure
- 17:35 Tanked
- 18:30 River Monsters (Best Of Series 1-5)
- 19:25 Rugged Justice
- 20:20 Up Close And Dangerous
- 21:15 Tanked
- 22:10 O'Shea's Big Adventure
- 23:05 Rugged Justice

BBC FIRST

- 00:30 Orphan Black
- 01:20 Casualty
- 02:15 Undercover

- 06:55 Tattoo Disasters
- 07:20 Catch A Contractor
- 08:15 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
- 09:05 Impractical Jokers
- 09:30 Ridiculousness
- 09:55 Tosh.0
- 10:20 Key And Peele
- 10:45 Workaholics
- 11:10 The It Crowd
- 11:35 Ridiculousness
- 12:00 Tattoo Disasters
- 12:25 Tattoo Disasters
- 12:50 IdiotSitter
- 13:15 Workaholics
- 13:40 The It Crowd
- 14:05 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol

- 14:55 Ridiculousness
- 15:20 Tattoo Disasters
- 15:45 Tattoo Disasters
- 16:10 IdiotSitter
- 16:35 Ridiculousness
- 17:00 Impractical Jokers
- 17:30 Workaholics
- 17:55 Tosh.0
- 18:25 Workaholics
- 18:50 Urban Tarzan
- 19:15 Urban Tarzan
- 19:39 The It Crowd
- 20:03 Tattoo Disasters
- 20:27 Tattoo Disasters
- 20:50 IdiotSitter
- 21:13 Important Things With Demetri Martin
- 21:37 Ridiculousness
- 22:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
- 22:30 The Meltdown With Jonah And Kumail
- 22:54 The Jim Gaffigan Show
- 23:18 Broad City
- 23:42 Broad City

Discovery Family

- 00:15 Destroyed In Seconds
- 00:40 Ultimate Survival
- 01:30 Nextworld
- 02:20 Baby Animals
- 02:45 Baby Animals
- 03:10 World's Toughest Expeditions With James Cracknell
- 04:00 Destroyed In Seconds
- 04:25 Destroyed In Seconds
- 04:50 Ultimate Survival
- 05:40 How It's Made
- 06:05 How It's Made
- 06:30 Storm Chasers
- 07:20 Mythbusters
- 08:00 Do You Know?
- 08:15 Doki

- 11:25 A.N.T. Farm
- 11:50 A.N.T. Farm
- 12:15 Good Luck Charlie
- 12:40 Good Luck Charlie
- 13:05 Shake It Up
- 13:30 Shake It Up
- 13:55 Disney Mickey Mouse
- 14:00 Welcome To The Ronks
- 14:15 Gravity Falls
- 14:40 Hank Zipzer
- 15:05 Star Darlings
- 15:10 Austin & Ally
- 15:35 Austin & Ally
- 16:00 Jessie
- 16:25 Jessie
- 16:50 Rolling To The Ronks
- 17:15 Frozen: Magic Of The Northern Lights
- 17:20 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
- 17:45 Elena Of Avalor
- 18:10 Bunk'd
- 18:35 Descendants Wicked World
- 18:40 Girl Meets World
- 19:05 Bizaardvark
- 19:30 Liv And Maddie
- 19:55 Best Friends Whenever
- 20:20 Disney Mickey Mouse
- 20:25 The Next Step
- 20:50 Austin & Ally
- 21:15 Star Darlings
- 21:20 Shake It Up
- 21:45 Backstage
- 22:10 Liv And Maddie
- 22:35 Crackle
- 22:40 The Next Step
- 23:05 Best Friends Whenever
- 23:30 Make Mermaids
- 23:55 Tsum Tsum Shorts

Disney Junior

- 00:00 Sofia The First
- 00:30 Sofia The First
- 00:55 PJ Masks
- 01:20 Henry Hugglemonster
- 01:35 The Hive
- 01:45 Loopedidoo
- 02:00 Henry Hugglemonster
- 02:15 Calimero
- 02:30 Art Attack
- 02:50 Zou
- 03:05 Loopedidoo
- 03:20 Henry Hugglemonster
- 03:35 Calimero
- 03:50 Zou
- 04:05 Art Attack
- 04:30 The Hive
- 04:40 Loopedidoo
- 04:55 Henry Hugglemonster
- 05:10 Art Attack

- 11:35 Gold Rush
- 12:25 Deadliest Catch
- 14:05 How Do They Do It?
- 14:30 The Liquidator
- 14:55 The Liquidator
- 15:20 Alaska: The Last Frontier
- 16:10 Boy To Man
- 17:00 Deadliest Catch
- 17:50 Fast N' Loud
- 18:40 Wheeler Dealers
- 19:30 How Do They Do It?
- 19:55 How Do They Do It?
- 20:20 Boy To Man
- 21:10 The Liquidator
- 21:35 The Liquidator
- 22:00 The Island With Bear Grylls
- 22:50 Bear Grylls: Mission Survive
- 23:40 Venom Hunters

XD

- 00:00 Programmes Start At 6:00am KSA
- 07:00 Danger Mouse
- 07:25 Gravity Falls
- 07:50 The 7D
- 08:00 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
- 08:15 Counterfeit Cat
- 08:40 Supa Strikas
- 09:10 K.C. Undercover
- 09:35 Star Wars Freemaker Adventures
- 10:00 Lab Rats: Bionic Island
- 10:25 Lab Rats: Bionic Island
- 10:50 Danger Mouse
- 11:20 Supa Strikas
- 11:45 Supa Strikas
- 12:10 Counterfeit Cat
- 12:35 Pair Of Kings
- 13:00 Pair Of Kings
- 13:30 Future-Worm!
- 13:55 Lab Rats
- 14:20 Lab Rats
- 14:45 Atomic Puppet
- 15:10 Disney Mickey Mouse
- 15:15 Marvel's Avengers: Ultron Revolution
- 15:40 Supa Strikas
- 16:05 Lab Rats
- 16:30 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
- 16:55 Danger Mouse
- 17:25 K.C. Undercover
- 17:50 Future-Worm!
- 18:15 Gravity Falls
- 18:40 Lab Rats: Bionic Island
- 19:05 Disney Mickey Mouse
- 19:10 Supa Strikas
- 19:35 Supa Strikas
- 20:00 Atomic Puppet
- 20:25 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
- 20:55 K.C. Undercover
- 21:20 Counterfeit Cat
- 21:45 Mighty Med
- 22:10 Pickle And Peanut
- 22:40 Disney Mickey Mouse
- 22:45 Marvel's Avengers: Ultron Revolution
- 23:10 Ultimate Spider-Man: Web Warriors
- 23:35 Booster

itv HD CHOICE

- 00:15 Coronation Street
- 00:40 Coronation Street
- 01:10 The Chase
- 02:00 Emmerdale
- 02:30 Coronation Street
- 03:00 Coronation Street
- 03:30 Come Dine With Me Couples
- 04:25 Endeavour
- 06:15 Grantchester
- 07:10 The Chase
- 08:05 Come Dine With Me Couples
- 09:00 Endeavour
- 10:30 Callie-Anne Cooks Into The Wild
- 11:00 Grantchester
- 11:55 The Chase
- 12:50 Come Dine With Me Couples
- 13:45 Emmerdale
- 14:15 Coronation Street
- 14:45 Coronation Street
- 15:15 The Chase
- 16:10 Come Dine With Me Couples
- 17:00 Murdoch Mysteries
- 17:50 Together
- 18:20 Together
- 18:50 Grantchester
- 19:45 Emmerdale
- 20:15 Coronation Street
- 20:45 Coronation Street
- 21:10 Come Dine With Me Couples
- 22:00 Murdoch Mysteries
- 22:50 Together
- 23:20 Together
- 23:50 Emmerdale

HQ HD

- 00:00 Ultimate Guide To The Presidents
- 01:00 The Universe
- 02:00 Ultimate Guide To The Presidents
- 03:00 Cities Of The Underworld
- 04:00 America's Book Of Secrets
- 04:50 Ancient Aliens
- 05:40 Ultimate Guide To The Presidents
- 06:30 The Universe
- 07:20 Ultimate Guide To The Presidents
- 08:10 The Universe
- 09:00 Cities Of The Underworld
- 10:00 America's Book Of Secrets
- 11:00 Ancient Aliens
- 12:00 Ultimate Guide To The Presidents
- 13:00 The Universe
- 14:00 Ultimate Guide To The Presidents
- 15:00 Cities Of The Underworld
- 16:00 America's Book Of Secrets
- 17:00 Ancient Aliens
- 18:00 Ultimate Guide To The Presidents
- 19:00 The Universe
- 20:00 Ultimate Guide To The Presidents
- 21:00 Cities Of The Underworld
- 22:00 America's Book Of Secrets
- 23:00 Ancient Aliens

H HD HISTORY

- 00:30 American Pickers
- 01:20 Time Team
- 02:10 The Curse Of Oak Island
- 03:00 Hunting Hitler
- 03:50 Storage Wars
- 04:15 American Pickers
- 05:05 Pawn Stars
- 05:30 Pawn Stars
- 06:00 Mountain Men
- 07:00 Ice Road Truckers
- 07:50 Shipping Wars
- 08:15 Shipping Wars
- 08:40 Counting Cars
- 09:05 Counting Cars
- 09:30 Pawn Stars
- 09:55 Pawn Stars
- 10:20 Storage Wars
- 10:45 Storage Wars
- 11:10 American Pickers
- 12:00 Gold Hunters: Legend Of The Superstition...



RIDE ALONG ON OSN MOVIES COMEDY HD

- 12:50 Time Team
- 13:40 Swamp People
- 14:30 Ax Men
- 15:20 Mountain Men
- 16:10 Ice Road Truckers
- 17:00 Counting Cars
- 17:25 Counting Cars
- 17:50 Pawn Stars
- 18:15 Pawn Stars
- 18:40 Hunting Hitler
- 19:30 The Curse Of Oak Island
- 20:20 Ax Men
- 21:10 American Pickers
- 22:00 Mountain Men
- 22:50 Leepu And Pitbull
- 23:40 Swamp People

OSN MOVIES DRAMA

- 00:00 God's Pocket
- 02:00 Don't Wake Mommy
- 04:00 Cake
- 06:00 Selma
- 08:15 Before I Disappear
- 10:00 A Mother Betrayed
- 12:00 Don't Wake Mommy
- 14:00 Cas & Dylan
- 16:00 The Yellow Handkerchief
- 18:00 A Mother Betrayed
- 20:00 Touched With Fire
- 22:00 Odd Thomas

OSN MOVIES HD FAMILY

- 00:00 One Christmas Eve
- 02:00 Houdini On The Trail Of Mursuliani
- 03:45 The Tale Of The Princess Kaguya
- 06:00 Step Dogs
- 08:00 Capture The Flag
- 10:00 One Christmas Eve
- 12:00 Step Dogs
- 14:00 Hey Arnold! The Movie
- 16:00 Santa Claws
- 18:00 Captain Sabertooth And The Treasure Of Lama Rama
- 20:00 Strange Magic
- 22:00 Batman Unlimited: Animal Instincts

OSN MOVIES HD COMEDY

- 00:15 London Has Fallen
- 02:00 Cop Car
- 04:00 Home
- 06:00 The Two Faces Of January
- 08:00 The Duff
- 10:00 Home
- 12:00 The Good Lie
- 14:00 With This Ring
- 16:00 The Cobbler
- 18:00 The Benefactor
- 20:00 Hail, Caesar!
- 22:00 The Dressmaker

OSN MOVIES HD FESTIVAL

- 00:30 Maps To The Stars
- 02:30 Interstellar
- 05:30 The Keeping Room
- 07:30 Instinct
- 10:00 The Village
- 12:00 Interstellar
- 15:00 We Are Many
- 17:30 The Fugitive
- 20:00 And Justice For All
- 22:00 Manglehorn

OSN MOVIES HD KIDS

- 00:30 Egon And Donci
- 02:30 Bamse And The City Of Thieves
- 03:30 Jungle Book: Mowgli's Adventure
- 05:15 Virus Attack The First Antivirus
- 07:00 Pim And Pom: The Big Adventure
- 08:30 Bolts And Blip
- 10:15 The Boxcar Children
- 12:00 Egon And Donci
- 13:30 Jungle Book: Mowgli's Adventure
- 15:15 Blackie And Kanuto
- 17:00 Barnyard
- 19:00 The Boxcar Children
- 21:00 Justice League: Attack Of The Legion Of Doom
- 23:00 Blackie And Kanuto

OSN MOVIES PREMIERE

- 01:00 People Places Things
- 03:00 Hector And The Search For Happiness
- 05:00 Make Your Move
- 07:00 Sleeping Beauty
- 09:00 Shadow Witness
- 11:00 Perfect Match
- 13:00 A Royal Night Out
- 15:00 Draft Day



DIVERGENT ON OSN MOVIES ACTION

- 03:20 In Plain Sight
- 04:10 Orphan Black
- 05:00 Casualty
- 06:00 The Musketeers
- 07:00 Casualty
- 08:00 Casualty
- 08:55 Death In Paradise
- 09:50 Stella
- 10:35 The Musketeers
- 11:30 Casualty
- 12:30 Death In Paradise
- 13:25 Stella
- 14:20 The Musketeers
- 15:15 Casualty
- 16:15 Death In Paradise
- 17:10 Stella
- 18:05 The Musketeers
- 19:00 Doctors
- 19:30 Doctors
- 20:00 Death In Paradise
- 21:00 Call The Midwife
- 22:00 Silent Witness
- 23:05 Silent Witness

- 08:35 Dick 'n' Dom Go Wild
- 09:00 Too Cute! Pint-Sized
- 09:45 How It's Made
- 10:05 How It's Made
- 10:30 Nextworld
- 11:20 Mythbusters
- 12:10 Storm Chasers
- 13:00 Too Cute! Pint-Sized
- 13:50 Ultimate Survival
- 14:40 How It's Made
- 15:05 How It's Made
- 15:30 Storm Chasers
- 16:15 Mythbusters
- 17:00 Doki
- 17:20 Dick 'n' Dom Go Wild
- 17:45 Do You Know?
- 18:00 Guinness World Records
- 18:25 Guinness World Records
- 18:50 Guinness World Records
- 19:40 Nextworld
- 20:30 How It's Made
- 20:55 How It's Made
- 21:20 Mythbusters
- 22:10 Australia Smashes Guinness World Records
- 22:35 Australia Smashes Guinness World Records
- 23:00 Guinness World Records
- 23:50 Destroyed In Seconds

Disney Channel HD

- 00:00 Binny And The Ghost
- 00:25 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
- 00:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
- 01:10 Hank Zipzer
- 01:35 Binny And The Ghost
- 02:00 Violetta
- 02:45 The Hive
- 02:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
- 03:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
- 03:40 Hank Zipzer
- 04:05 Binny And The Ghost
- 04:30 Violetta
- 05:15 The Hive
- 05:20 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
- 05:45 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch

- 05:35 Loopedidoo
- 05:50 Calimero
- 06:05 Art Attack
- 06:30 Henry Hugglemonster
- 06:45 Zou
- 07:00 Art Attack
- 07:30 Henry Hugglemonster
- 07:45 Loopedidoo
- 08:00 Zou
- 08:15 Calimero
- 08:30 Loopedidoo
- 08:45 Henry Hugglemonster
- 09:00 Minnie's Bow-Toons
- 09:05 PJ Masks
- 09:15 Goldie & Bear
- 09:30 Jake And The Neverland Pirates
- 09:45 Miles From Tomorrow
- 09:55 The Lion Guard
- 10:20 Doc McStuffins
- 10:35 Goldie & Bear
- 10:50 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
- 11:00 PJ Masks
- 11:15 Jake And The Neverland Pirates
- 11:30 Minnie's Bow-Toons
- 11:35 Sofia The First
- 12:00 Sofia The First
- 12:30 Doc McStuffins
- 12:55 Doc McStuffins
- 13:20 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
- 13:50 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
- 14:15 Gummi Bears
- 14:40 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
- 15:10 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
- 15:35 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
- 16:00 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
- 16:30 Little Mermaid
- 16:55 Unburgaleivable
- 17:00 Miles From Tomorrow
- 17:30 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
- 17:55 The Lion Guard
- 18:20 Goldie & Bear
- 18:50 PJ Masks
- 19:15 Sofia The First
- 19:40 Doc McStuffins
- 20:05 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
- 20:30 Little Mermaid
- 21:00 Sofia The First
- 21:30 Sofia The First
- 22:00 Unburgaleivable
- 22:05 Goldie & Bear
- 22:35 Miles From Tomorrow
- 23:00 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
- 23:25 Gummi Bears
- 23:55 Minnie's Bow-Toons

Discovery Channel HD

- 00:30 Fast N' Loud
- 01:20 Wheeler Dealers
- 02:10 Gold Rush
- 03:00 Deadliest Catch
- 04:40 Fast N' Loud
- 05:30 The Liquidator
- 06:00 How Do They Do It?
- 06:30 How Do They Do It?
- 07:00 Deadliest Catch
- 07:50 Wheeler Dealers
- 08:40 Fast N' Loud
- 09:30 Boy To Man
- 10:20 The Liquidator
- 10:45 How Do They Do It?
- 11:10 How Do They Do It?

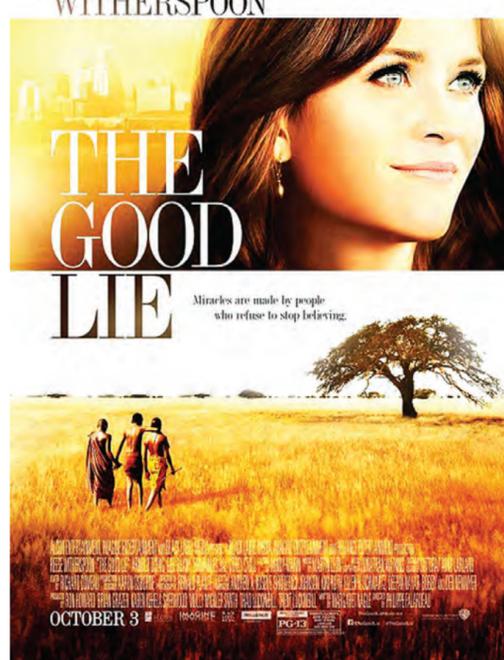
EHD

- 00:00 E! News
- 00:15 Live From The Red Carpet
- 02:15 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
- 03:05 LA Clippers Dance Squad
- 03:55 LA Clippers Dance Squad
- 04:50 LA Clippers Dance Squad
- 05:40 LA Clippers Dance Squad
- 06:30 Celebrity Style Story
- 07:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
- 07:55 E! News
- 08:10 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
- 09:10 E! News
- 10:10 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
- 11:10 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
- 12:05 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
- 13:00 E! News
- 13:15 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
- 14:10 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
- 15:05 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
- 15:30 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
- 16:00 E! News
- 16:15 WAGs Miami
- 17:15 Live From The Red Carpet
- 19:05 Maria's World
- 20:00 E! News
- 21:00 Live From The Red Carpet
- 23:00 Fashion Police

food network

- 00:00 Restaurant Stakeout
- 01:00 Mystery Diners
- 01:30 Mystery Diners
- 02:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 02:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 03:00 Man Fire Food
- 03:30 Man Fire Food
- 04:00 Chopped
- 05:00 Guy's Grocery Games
- 06:00 Barefoot Contessa
- 06:30 Barefoot Contessa
- 07:00 The Kitchen

REESE WITHERSPOON



THE GOOD LIE ON OSN MOVIES HD

CLASSIFIEDS



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KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (26/01/2017 TO 01/02/2017)

SHARQIA-1		
xx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE	11:45 AM	
xx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE	1:45 PM	
AL ATR - Kuwaiti Film	3:45 PM	
KAABIL- HINDI	5:45 PM	
xx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE	8:30 PM	
WEAPONIZED	10:30 PM	
xx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE	12:30 AM	
SHARQIA-2		
MONSTER TRUCKS	1:00 PM	
MONSTER TRUCKS	1:30 PM	
FRI		
MONSTER TRUCKS	3:30 PM	
MONSTER TRUCKS	5:45 PM	
MONSTER TRUCKS	8:00 PM	
xx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE	10:15 PM	
xx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE	12:15 AM	
SHARQIA-3		
RESIDENT EVIL: The Final Chapter	11:30 AM	
RAEES- HINDI	1:45 PM	
RESIDENT EVIL: The Final Chapter	4:30 PM	
RAEES- HINDI	6:45 PM	
RESIDENT EVIL: The Final Chapter	9:45 PM	
RESIDENT EVIL: The Final Chapter	12:05 AM	
MUHALAB-1		
RAEES- HINDI	12:45 PM	
BALLERINA	1:45 PM	
FRI		
BALLERINA	3:45 PM	
RAEES- HINDI	5:45 PM	
RAEES- HINDI	8:45 PM	
xx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE	11:45 PM	
MUHALAB-2		
RESIDENT EVIL: The Final Chapter	12:15 PM	
KAABIL- HINDI	2:30 PM	
RESIDENT EVIL: The Final Chapter	5:15 PM	
KAABIL- HINDI	7:30 PM	
RESIDENT EVIL: The Final Chapter	10:15 PM	
RESIDENT EVIL: The Final Chapter	12:30 AM	
MUHALAB-3		
MONSTER TRUCKS	11:45 AM	
MONSTER TRUCKS	2:00 PM	
MONSTER TRUCKS	4:15 PM	
MONSTER TRUCKS	6:30 PM	
xx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE	8:45 PM	
xx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE	10:45 PM	
xx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE	12:45 AM	
FANAR-1		
MONSTER TRUCKS	12:45 PM	
MONSTER TRUCKS	3:00 PM	

MONSTER TRUCKS	5:15 PM	
MONSTER TRUCKS	7:30 PM	
MONSTER TRUCKS	9:45 PM	
MONSTER TRUCKS	12:05 AM	
FANAR-2		
RESIDENT EVIL: The Final Chapter	11:45 AM	
RESIDENT EVIL: The Final Chapter	2:00 PM	
AL ATR - Kuwaiti Film	4:45 PM	
RESIDENT EVIL: The Final Chapter	6:45 PM	
RESIDENT EVIL: The Final Chapter	9:00 PM	
RESIDENT EVIL: The Final Chapter	11:15 PM	
FANAR-3		
DANGAL - Hindi	12:00 PM	
KAABIL- HINDI	3:15 PM	
DANGAL - Hindi	6:15 PM	
KAABIL- HINDI	9:30 PM	
RESIDENT EVIL: The Final Chapter	12:30 AM	
FANAR-4		
xx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE	12:00 PM	
xx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE	2:00 PM	
xx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE	4:00 PM	
xx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE	6:00 PM	
xx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE	8:15 PM	
xx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE	10:15 PM	
xx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE	12:15 AM	
FANAR-5		
RAEES- HINDI	11:30 AM	
RAEES- HINDI	2:30 PM	
RAEES- HINDI	5:30 PM	
RAEES- HINDI	8:30 PM	
RAEES- HINDI	11:30 PM	
MARINA-1		
RAEES- HINDI	12:00 PM	
xx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE	2:45 PM	
RAEES- HINDI	4:45 PM	
xx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE	7:30 PM	
xx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE	9:30 PM	
xx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE	11:30 PM	
MARINA-2		
xx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE	11:30 AM	
MONSTER TRUCKS	1:30 PM	
MONSTER TRUCKS	3:45 PM	
AL ATR - Kuwaiti Film	6:00 PM	
MONSTER TRUCKS	8:00 PM	
MONSTER TRUCKS	10:15 PM	
xx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE	12:30 AM	
MARINA-3		
RESIDENT EVIL: The Final Chapter	12:45 PM	
RESIDENT EVIL: The Final Chapter	3:00 PM	
RESIDENT EVIL: The Final Chapter	5:15 PM	

RESIDENT EVIL: The Final Chapter	7:30 PM	
RESIDENT EVIL: The Final Chapter	9:45 PM	
RESIDENT EVIL: The Final Chapter	12:05 AM	
AVENUES-1		
KAABIL- HINDI	12:00 PM	
DANGAL - Hindi	3:00 PM	
KAABIL- HINDI	6:15 PM	
DANGAL - Hindi	9:15 PM	
KAABIL- HINDI	12:30 AM	
AVENUES-2		
MONSTER TRUCKS -3D -4DX	12:45 PM	
MONSTER TRUCKS -3D -4DX	3:00 PM	
MONSTER TRUCKS -3D -4DX	5:15 PM	
MONSTER TRUCKS -3D -4DX	7:30 PM	
xx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE -3D -4DX	10:00 PM	
xx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE -3D -4DX	12:15 AM	
AVENUES-3		
RAEES- HINDI	11:30 AM	
RAEES- HINDI	2:30 PM	
RAEES- HINDI	5:30 PM	
RAEES- HINDI	8:30 PM	
RAEES- HINDI	11:30 PM	
360°- 1		
RESIDENT EVIL: The Final Chapter	11:30 AM	
RESIDENT EVIL: The Final Chapter	1:45 PM	
RESIDENT EVIL: The Final Chapter -3D	4:00 PM	
RESIDENT EVIL: The Final Chapter	6:15 PM	
RESIDENT EVIL: The Final Chapter	8:30 PM	
RESIDENT EVIL: The Final Chapter	10:45 PM	
RESIDENT EVIL: The Final Chapter	1:00 AM	
360°- 2		
DANGAL - Hindi	1:15 PM	
MOANA	1:45 PM	
FRI		
DANGAL - Hindi	4:30 PM	
DANGAL - Hindi	7:45 PM	
DANGAL - Hindi	11:00 PM	
360°- 3		
AL ATR - Kuwaiti Film	1:30 PM	
SING	3:30 PM	
SING	5:45 PM	
AL ATR - Kuwaiti Film	8:00 PM	
AL ATR - Kuwaiti Film	10:00 PM	
AL ATR - Kuwaiti Film	12:05 AM	
AL-KOUT.1		
xx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE	12:30 PM	
xx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE	2:30 PM	
xx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE	4:30 PM	
xx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE	6:30 PM	
xx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE	8:30 PM	

URGENTLY REQUIRED

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CHANGE OF NAME

I, Joseph Lourito Michael Fernandes, holder of Indian Passport No. K-4651486 and Civil ID 251011600403, issued at Kuwait on 16-03-2012, hereby confirm that I am also known by the following names Lawrie Fernandes, Joseph L M Fernandes, Joseph Laurito Michael Fernandes. (C 5261)

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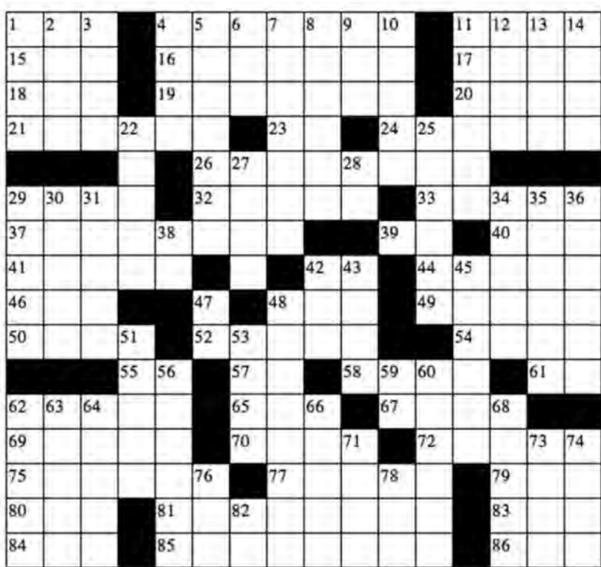
Flight Schedule

Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page (www.kuwait-airport.com.kw)

DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Tuesday 31/1/2017				Departure Flights on Tuesday 31/1/2017			
Airlines	Fit	Route	Time	Airlines	Fit	Route	Time
MSC	405	Sohag	00:05	MSR	611	Cairo	14:00
KAC	776	Riyadh	00:20	FDB	076	Dubai	14:05
KLM	411	Amsterdam/Dammam	00:20	AXB	394	Kozhikode	14:10
JZR	267	Beirut	00:30	UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
JZR	539	Cairo	00:40	JZR	324	Al Najaf	14:25
THY	772	Istanbul	00:55	BON	102	Sarajevo	14:55
MSC	411	Asyut	01:00	KAC	673	Dubai	15:00
QTR	1086	Doha	01:15	KAC	561	Amman	15:00
KAC	102	London	01:25	FDB	060	Dubai	15:10
THY	764	Istanbul	01:50	KAC	785	Jeddah	15:15
DLH	635	Doha	01:55	PAL	669	Dubai/Manila	15:20
PGT	858	Istanbul	02:00	GFA	222	Bahrain	15:25
AXB	395	Kozhikode	02:00	KAC	513	Tehran	15:25
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:05	QTR	1079	Doha	15:40
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:30	SVA	501	Jeddah	15:45
UAE	853	Dubai	02:30	KNE	530	Jeddah	15:55
OMA	643	Muscat	02:55	KAC	777	Riyadh	16:00
KKK	6506	Istanbul	02:55	KAC	745	Dammam	16:00
FDB	069	Dubai	03:05	ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20
RJA	644	Amman	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
QTR	1076	Doha	03:30	JZR	266	Beirut	17:05
KAC	358	Kochi	03:30	JZR	240	Amman	17:15
KAC	206	Islamabad	03:45	FDB	052	Dubai	17:25
KAC	1544	Cairo	03:55	KAC	615	Bahrain	17:35
LMU	5510	Cairo	04:00	KAC	343	Chennai	17:40
KAC	418	Manila	04:25	QTR	1073	Doha	17:40
THY	6376	Istanbul	05:05	UAE	858	Dubai	17:45
JZR	529	Asyut	05:15	JZR	538	Cairo	17:45
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:20	RJA	641	Amman	17:55
KAC	354	BLR	05:20	KAC	331	Trivandrum	18:00
KAC	344	Chennai	05:35	SVA	511	Riyadh	18:15
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:45	GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
THY	770	Istanbul	05:55	KAC	205	Islamabad	18:25
KAC	384	Delhi	06:05	CLX	7785	Luxembourg	18:30
KAC	364	Colombo	06:05	JZR	184	Dubai	18:40
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	06:25	NIA	252	Alexandria	18:55
BAW	157	London	06:40	FDB	064	Dubai	19:05
PAL	668	Manila/Dubai	07:00	JZR	124	Bahrain	19:15
FDB	5061	Dubai	07:15	UAE	876	Dubai	19:30
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50	MSR	621	Cairo	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	FDB	058	Dubai	20:35
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:05	KAC	361	Colombo	20:35
QTR	1070	Doha	09:30	KAC	1543	Cairo	21:00
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	MSR	607	Luxor	21:05
SVA	512	Riyadh	10:00	OMA	648	Muscat	21:10
AVV	651	Asyut	10:10	KAC	345	Ahmedabad	21:30
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	QTR	1089	Doha	21:35
IRA	675	Lar	10:40	DLH	634	Doha	21:35
SYR	341	Damascus	11:00	FDB	5054	Dubai	21:50
MSC	403	Asyut	11:15	DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50
JZR	165	Dubai	11:30	JAI	571	Mumbai	21:55
MEA	404	Beirut	11:55	KAC	351	Kochi	22:00
QTR	8511	Doha	12:00	KAC	783	Jeddah	22:10
MSC	401	Alexandria	12:30	ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	22:15
JZR	561	Sohag	12:40	KAC	413	Bangkok	22:15
FDB	075	Dubai	12:50	KAC	203	Lahore	22:15
UAE	871	Dubai	12:50	MEA	403	Beirut	22:20
KAC	680	Dubai	12:55	ALK	230	Colombo	22:25
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	GFA	220	Bahrain	22:30
AXB	393	Kozhikode	13:10	KAC	301	Mumbai	22:45
BON	101	Sarajevo	13:30	KAC	381	Delhi	22:45
KAC	564	Amman	13:40	UAE	860	Dubai	22:55
				ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:05
				NIA	152	Cairo	23

CROSSWORD 1507



ACROSS

1. A three-year law degree.
4. Cause to be more favorably inclined.
11. Avatar of Vishnu.
15. The sense organ for hearing and equilibrium.
16. Area around the altar of a church for the clergy and choir.
17. A feeling of strong eagerness (usually in favor of a person or cause).
18. One or some or every or all without specification.
19. The line formed by measuring the hip at its greatest part.
20. Informal terms for money.
21. Female peafowl.
23. Not out.
24. Long-tailed black-and-white bird that utters a chattering call.
26. Low stinging nettle of Central and South America having velvety brownish-green toothed leaves and clusters of small green flowers.
29. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
32. Large west African tree having large palmately lobed leaves and axillary cymose panicles of small white flowers and one-winged seeds.
33. A unit of magnetic flux density equal to one weber per square meter.
37. The father of your father or mother.
39. Being one more than one hundred.
40. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
41. Wild sheep of northern Africa.
44. (of complexion) Blemished by imperfections of the skin.
46. A master's degree in business.
49. A river that rises in central Germany and flows north to join the Elbe River.
50. An association of people to promote the welfare of senior citizens.
52. Greek mythology.
54. Most important element.
55. The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.
57. An official prosecutor for a judicial district.
58. Large burrowing rodent of South and Central America.
61. A highly unstable radioactive element (the heaviest of the halogen series).
62. British filmmaker (born in Hungary) (1893-1956).
65. A constellation in the southern hemisphere near Telescopium and Norma.
67. Set down according to a plan.
69. (chemistry) Relating to or containing the azido group N₃.
70. An investment trust that owns and manages a pool of commercial properties and mortgages and other real estate assets.
72. Bottle that has a narrow neck.
75. The capital and largest city of Equatorial Guinea on the island of Bioko in the Gulf of Guinea.
77. (of meat) Cooked by dry heat in an oven.
79. Aircraft landing in bad weather in which the pilot is talked down by ground control using precision approach radar.
80. A member of a people living in southern Benin and Togo and southeastern Ghana.
81. Any of several plants of the genus *Achillea* native to Europe and having small white flowers in flat-topped flower heads.
83. A barrier constructed to contain the flow or water or to keep out the sea.
84. A slight amount or degree of difference.
85. A tower that is part of a defensive structure (such as a castle).
86. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.

DOWN

1. A light springing movement upwards or forwards.
2. A narrow way or road.
3. Genus of prickly shrubs and small trees of the Caribbean region.
4. A dull persistent (usually moderately intense) pain.
5. A stiff protective garment worn by hockey players or a catcher in baseball to protect the shins.
6. A watery solution of sugars, salts, and minerals that circulates through the vascular system of a plant.
7. Not having a lining or liner.
8. Pertaining to one of the small sacs (as in a compound gland).
9. (British) Informal term for information.
10. Fragrant resin obtain from trees of the family Burseraceae and used as incense.
11. Popular music originating in the West Indies.
12. A city in northwestern Syria.
13. A landlocked republic in northwestern Africa.
14. (prefix) In front of or before in space.
22. Doglike nocturnal mammal of Africa and southern Asia that feeds chiefly on carrion.
25. Luna moths.
27. An Arabic speaking person who lives in Arabia or North Africa.
28. A state in New England.
30. A popular island resort in the Netherlands Antilles.
31. Measuring instrument in which the echo of a pulse of microwave radiation is used to detect and locate distant objects.
34. The capital and largest city of Yemen.
35. Any of various spectacular plants of the genus *Laelia* having showy flowers in many colors.
36. Characterized by intense emotion.
38. A doctor's degree in religion.
42. Towards the side away from the wind.
43. A collection of objects laid on top of each other.
45. A medieval hood of mail suspended from a basin to protect the head and neck.
47. Half the width of an em.
48. A cut of pork ribs with much of the meat trimmed off.
51. A genus of Ploceidae.
53. The sixth month of the civil year.
56. African tree having an exceedingly thick trunk and fruit that resembles a gourd and has an edible pulp called monkey bread.
59. A silvery ductile metallic element found primarily in bauxite.
60. A woman's dress style that imitates the caftan cloaks worn by men in the Near East.
63. United States conductor (born in Japan in 1935).
64. Aroused to impatience or anger.
66. Garlic mayonnaise.
68. (Irish) Chief god of the Tuatha De Danann.
71. A fine grained mineral having a soft soapy feel and consisting of hydrated magnesium silicate.
73. Someone who works (or provides workers) during a strike.
74. God of love and erotic desire.
76. South American wood sorrel cultivated for its edible tubers.
78. Relating to or characteristic of or occurring on the sea or ships.
82. A period of time equal to 1/24th of a day.

Yesterday's Solution

B	N	S		F	L	A	S	H	E	R		P	T	S	D
L	A	B		T	I	N	E	O	L	A		R	E	T	E
O	P	E	C		A	T	E	L	I	E	R		S	A	C
C	A		A	S	I	A		I	N	T	A	G	L	I	O
			B	A	S	K		S	T	A	T	U	A	R	Y
B	A	L	O	N	E	Y		T		M	E	I			
A	G	A	M	A		A	P	I	A		L	A	W	S	
S	I	N	B	A	D		I	C	K	Y		D	H	A	K
A	L	C	A		A	B	C		A	A	R		E	Y	E
L	E	E		B	L	A	E		B	H	U	T	A	N	I
			B	A		K	A	S	A	I		A	D	E	N
O	S	C	A	N		E		K		O	K				
C	H	A	N	A	L		D	A		B		A	G	H	A
C	A	B	A	L	A		A	G	O	R	A		A	A	S
A	K	A	N		P	E	D	I	C	A	B		I	F	C
M	O	L	A		P	L	A	T	A	E	A		N	T	H

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Although you may be impatient to move forward in your place of business, you will need to clear up unfinished business first. Whether this is family business or work business, the concentration on this unfinished business is well worth your efforts. You may find it easy to work at cross-purposes to yourself just now, especially if you push for too long. Make a to-do list and follow it until you feel that all is completed. Then business, no matter where it originates from, is business as usual. Emphasize the positive aspects of your work and seek companionship with close associates. Companionship with others is most rewarding and you should take every opportunity to strengthen and be strengthened by your friendships.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Diplomacy is the word for today. Whether you are dealing with real estate or personal business matters, you seem to know just what to say to get what you need—especially when it comes to a fair price or a good deal. It is not a sign of weakness to obtain some advice if you feel you need it. You have plenty of responsibilities and you will throw yourself into these activities most of the day. While you are out, take some time to drop by the library and gather information on the stock market. Your ability to calculate and your uncanny timing may bring you some big rewards. Invest in no more than a month's salary at first. You have control over money and you are very much in charge of your own financial destiny. Your creativity improves with discipline.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Assert yourself this morning—this day has all the energies of another successful day in the workplace! Most of this month is a time of preparation but it looks as though you have made all the right moves and spoken all the right words that will help in your progress up the corporate ladder. This afternoon, you may enjoy taking a sentimental journey down memory lane with a close friend or loved one. Until April, most of your concerns will be with the family. Your finances may slow, but another door of opportunity will open just when you need an additional income and now is the time to make new plans for financial growth. Let someone help you with lifting and pulling chores. You are able to work with your loved one in a combined goal today.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You may need a quiet place to work today. You can help create the necessary privacy it takes to get important work completed and out of the way. Nobody minds hard work when there is something to be gained from it—today there are rewards unseen in the background. The financial problems that you have had will have an opportunity to be worked out this afternoon. Also, you could come up with new ideas through conversations with your friends. Save your ambition for the planning stages just now and be sure to take notes. You spend a lot of time thinking about other people and enjoy several phone conversations. A close love relationship takes on more depth this evening. This is the perfect evening for bonding and romance.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

You are not particularly interested in a costume party just now but you do like unusual combinations of colors and clothes. On this day you may be most interested in good smells, as well as beautiful clothes. It could be time for a party, and food or costume would make up the perfect theme. You may have recently received some aromatherapy kit, or at least the technique of aromatherapy comes to your attention. Perhaps you have discovered some wonderful aromatherapy combination that sends high energy into the ether. A good investment comes to your attention as well as receiving a wonderful surprise later today. This may be something you ordered and forgot about, but more than likely, it is a belated gift.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Accept the social invitations that come your way today. Your business, or the position that you hold in a business, could be influenced in a positive way through these gatherings. Someone new will be coming into your life this day—it is good to be aware and make a point to remember names. Leading an interaction of ideas within a group of people can spur your creative side, which you may feel is your calling. Debates and lectures bring about a question and answer type of day which is your specialty. If you are not in a customer service type of job, it would be surprising. This whole day is about putting your thoughtful contribution of information on top of confusion. Truth will see through to the marrow of the mind eventually.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

You may have always wanted to be able to express who you are and what you stand for by the way you make your living. You will also concentrate this year on making your style of living fit for you. This may mean investing in property that would allow you to build a retreat or involving yourself in lots of volunteer options. Yes, every job has its pull and you will find that even when you are not working for a paycheck, you will be working to express your talents. You may be an excellent child advocate or perhaps a spiritual counselor. Many people appreciate your contributions. Your witty side lifts a spirit this evening—it is good that you not become too involved in any one thing, just in the living of life. Aim for a good emotional balance every day.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

You are most persuasive with others. Your career goals will be realized soon and you have more confidence in your abilities than ever before. New goals can be formed and at this time, you will find a business associate that will help you if you need help. You, in turn, will be helpful to others wanting professional success. A new technical gadget has your attention later today. New ways to make your job easier are always welcomed. Healing with a friend, neighbor or loved one is possible this afternoon. A positive outlook is inevitable and others learn from your attitude. Reality is an important issue now, because if you can be realistic, with a touch of hopefulness and dreaminess, you will not lose what is real, but gain what is possible.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

All sorts of business activity come into play today. Work is concentrated and steady. You reach out to every opportunity that comes your way. Your desire to understand and embrace all of life may have you enthralled by group issues and social affairs. You do best in a job that offers you interaction with a variety of people, from a variety of backgrounds. One thought is that if you cannot visit different countries you can at least visit the people from different countries. You appear very easygoing. Everything seems to be working together and you may find yourself expressive and able to communicate well. This is a good time to think and study, for you have a real appreciation for ideas and thoughts. A love relationship blossoms this evening.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

You may be making headway in the work world. Breaks to exercise can be real energizers. You can continue with a focus on business affairs all day long. You may have the opportunity to improve your home surroundings or plan a move. These energies are strong through the end of the month and if you were looking to sell your home, this would be a good time. Your best buys or any improvement toward repairs could be made now as well. The importance of a good foundation in home and finances is what makes you happy and this is the time to make sure all is as you want it to be. This evening you make sure you spend time in an interactive mode with the family and loved ones. You like the way your family makes you feel.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

Ambitious plans will become more realistic and obtainable this birthday year. You seem to be catching on to where your abilities match the possibilities of what you want. In other words, you may be educated the way your parents want for you, but your talents or dreams are somewhere else. Considering this is only an example of the present day aspects, you may find this close to the truth for you. Use your accomplishments as a most necessary tool that will help you achieve your dream goals of the future. Drop those resentments; only the most positive of attitudes will get you where you want to go. Today is about you and your new beginnings. Good thoughts will create positive forms. Embrace and enjoy the day as it unfolds.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You may have found a great way to make a little extra money this week—there is success in your efforts. This little sideline works out nicely and does not interfere with your regular place of business. It is good that you know the importance of keeping them separate. Any frustrations on the home front are healed now and it is as though nothing ever happened. Take some time to think about what lessons might have come from the frustration. This will help to keep the situation from recurring. Finding ways to make yourself understood is a good thing. Placing a calendar in a visible place for all would be a good move—appointments will not go forgotten. You like to know what to expect each day and so do the other members of your household.

WORD SEARCH

Hawaii

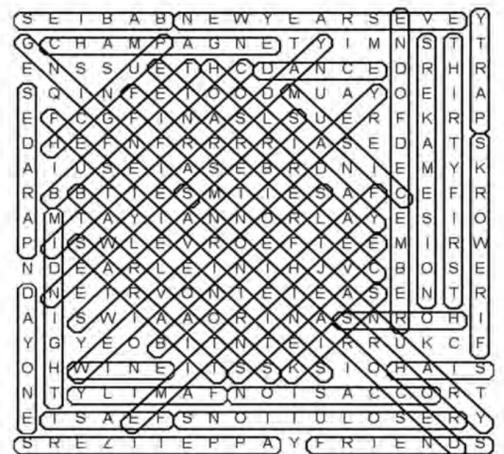
Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining 48 letters spell a secret message.



- | | | | |
|-----------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| ALOHA | KAHO'OLAWA | N'IHAU | SUGARCANE |
| ARCHIPELAGO | KAUAI | NORTH SHORE | SURFING |
| BEACHES | KAYAKING | O'AHU | TOURISTS |
| CANOES | KONA COAST | PACIFIC OCEAN | TROPICAL |
| COFFEE | LUAU | PEARL HARBOR | UKULELE |
| GRASS SKIRT | LUAU | PEAPLES | VACATION |
| HAWAIIAN | MACADAMIA NUTS | RESORTS | VOLCANOES |
| HONOLULU | MANA RAYS | SAND | WAIKIKI |
| HULA | MAUI | SCUBA DIVING | WAIMEA BAY |
| HUMPBACK WHALES | MOLOKAI | SNORKELING | WARM |
| ISLANDS | NAPALI COAST | STATE | WHALE WATCHING |

Yesterday Solution

Happy New Year



- | | | | |
|------------|------------------|---------------|----------------|
| APPETIZERS | DECORATIONS | HATS | PARADES |
| BABIES | END OF DECEMBER | HOLIDAY | PARTY |
| BALLOONS | EVENTS | HORNS | PUNCH |
| BANNERS | FAMILY | KISS | RESOLUTIONS |
| BUFFET | FATHER TIME | MIDNIGHT | SINGING |
| CELEBRATE | FEAST | MUSIC | STREAMERS |
| CHAMPAGNE | FESTIVITIES | NEW YEARS DAY | THIRTY FIRST |
| CONFETTI | FIREWORKS | NEW YEARS EVE | TIARAS |
| DANCE | FIRST OF JANUARY | NOISEMAKERS | WINE |
| DAY ONE | FRIENDS | OCCASION | YEAR IN REVIEW |

The hidden message is: TIMES SQUARE IN NEW YORK CITY

Daily SuDoku

			7		4
8		6			5
	5		8		6 1 9
4			1	3	
5			2		8
	8	7			4
3 5 9		4		1	
7			8		9
8		1			

Yesterday's Solution

7	2	1	4	9	6	3	5	8
6	3	8	1	2	5	7	9	4
9	5	4	7	8	3	2	1	6
8	7	2	9	6	1	5	4	3
4	6	9	3	5	7	8	2	1
5	1	3	8	4	2	6	7	9
1	8	5	2	3	9	4	6	7
2	4	7	6	1	8	9	3	5
3	9	6	5	7	4	1	8	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
Khalidiya	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 Ikhlas Hawally & Rawdha Ghadeer Kindy Ibn Al-Nafis Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Salmiya-Amman St Hawally-Beirut St Hawally & Rawdha Coop Jabriya-Block 1A Jabriya-Block 3B Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	25726265 25647075 22625999 22564549 25340559 25326554 25721264 25380581 25628241

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
Antigua	001268	Malawi	00265
Argentina	0054	Malaysia	0060
Armenia	00374	Maldives	00960
Australia	0061	Mali	00223
Austria	0043	Malta	00356
Azerbaijan	00994	Marshall Islands	00692
Bahamas	001242	Martinique	00596
Bahrain	00973	Mauritania	00222
Bangladesh	00880	Mauritius	00230
Barbados	001246	Mayotte	00269
Belarus	00375	Mexico	0052
Belgium	0032	Micronesia	00691
Belize	00501	Moldova	00373
Benin	00229	Monaco	00377
Bermuda	001441	Mongolia	00976
Bhutan	00975	Montserrat	001664
Bolivia	00591	Morocco	00212
Bosnia	00387	Mozambique	00258
Botswana	00267	Myanmar (Burma)	0095
Brazil	0055	Namibia	00264
Brunei	00673	Nepal	00977
Bulgaria	00359	Netherlands	0031
Burkina	00226	Netherlands Antilles	00599
Burundi	00257	New Caledonia	00687
Cambodia	00855	New Zealand	0064
Cameroon	00237	Nicaragua	00505
Canada	001	Niger	00227
Cape Verde	00238	Nigeria	00234
Cayman Islands	001345	Niue	00683
Central African	00236	Norfolk Island	00672
Chad	00235	N. Ireland (UK)	0044
Chile	0056	North Korea	00850
China	0086	Norway	0047
Colombia	0057	Oman	00968
Comoros	00269	Pakistan	0092
Congo	00242	Palau	00680
Cook Islands	00682	Panama	00507
Costa Rica	00506	Papua New Guinea	00675
Croatia	00385	Paraguay	00595
Cuba	0053	Peru	0051
Cyprus	00357	Philippines	0063
Cyprus (Northern)	0090392	Poland	0048
Czech Republic	00420	Portugal	00351
Denmark	0045	Puerto Rico	001787
Diego Garcia	00246	Qatar	00974
Djibouti	00253	Romania	0040
Dominica	001767	Russian Federation	007
Dominican Republic	001809	Rwanda	00250
Ecuador	00593	Saint Helena	00290
Egypt	0020	Saint Kitts	001869
El Salvador	00503	Saint Lucia	001758
England (UK)	0044	Saint Pierre	00508
Equatorial Guinea	00240	Saint Vincent	001784
Eritrea	00291	Samoa US	00684
Estonia	00372	Samoa West	00685
Ethiopia	00251	San Marino	00378
Falkland Islands	00500	Sao Tome	00239
Faroe Islands	00298	Saudi Arabia	00966
Fiji	00679	Scotland (UK)	0044
Finland	00358	Senegal	00221
France	0033	Seychelles	00284
French Guiana	00594	Sierra Leone	00232
French Polynesia	00689	Singapore	0065
Gabon	00241	Slovakia	00421
Gambia	00220	Slovenia	00386
Georgia	00995	Solomon Islands	00677
Germany	0049	Somalia	00252
Ghana	00233	South Africa	0027
Gibraltar	00350	South Korea	0082
Greece	0030	Spain	0034
Greenland	00299	Sri Lanka	0094
Grenada	001473	Sudan	00249
Guadeloupe	00590	Suriname	00597
Guam	001671	Swaziland	00268
Guatemala	00502	Sweden	0046
Guinea	00224	Switzerland	0041
Guyana	00592	Syria	00963
Haiti	00509	Serbia	00381
Holland (Netherlands)	0031	Taiwan	00886
Honduras	00504	Tanzania	00255
Hong Kong	00852	Thailand	0066
Hungary	0036	Togo	00228
Ibiza (Spain)	0034	Tonga	00676
Iceland	00354	Tokelau	00690
India	0091	Trinidad	001868
Indian Ocean	00873	Tunisia	00216
Indonesia	0062	Turkey	0090
Iran	0098	Tuvalu	00688
Iraq	00964	Uganda	00256
Ireland	00353	Ukraine	00380
Italy	0039	United Arab Emirates	00976
Ivory Coast	00225	United Kingdom	0044
Jamaica	001876	Uruguay	00598
Japan	0081	USA	001
Jordan	00962	Uzbekistan	00998
Kazakhstan	007	Vanuatu	00678
Kenya	00254	Venezuela	00582
Kiribati	00686	Vietnam	0084
Kuwait	00965	Virgin Islands UK	001284
Kyrgyzstan	00996	Virgin Islands US	001340
Laos	00856	Wales (UK)	0044
Latvia	00371	Yemen	00967
Lebanon	00961	Yugoslavia	00381
Liberia	00231	Zambia	00260
Libya	00218	Zimbabwe	00263
Lesotho	00266		

STATE OF KUWAIT DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



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Fax: (+965) 24348714
www.met.gov.kw



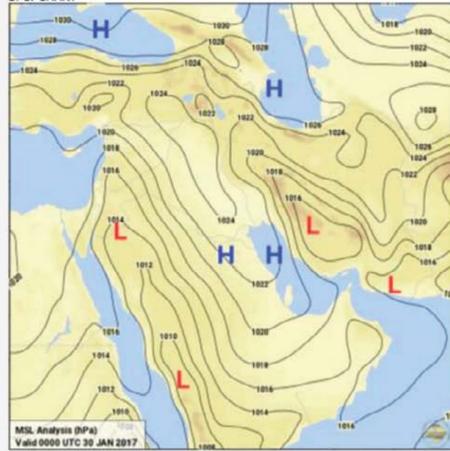
Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

Issued 30/01/2017-07:00 LT UTC +3hr

Max Temperature 16 °C

By Day : Sunny with light to moderate north westerly to northerly wind, with speed of 12 - 35 km/h
By Night : Cold with light to moderate north westerly to light variable wind, with speed of 08 - 30 km/h and some high clouds will appear

SFC. CHART



Four-Day Forecast

	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Expected Weather	clouds to increase + light rain	partly cloudy + raising dust	temperature will decrease + raising dust	sunny + raising dust
Min Temp °C	06	08	04	02
Max Temp °C	16	19	13	13
Wind Direction	south easterly	north westerly	north westerly	north westerly
Wind Speed km/h	15 - 40	15 - 40	20 - 45	25 - 45

All times are local time (GMT+3) unless otherwise stated

Warnings & Weather Watches

no warnings or weather watches

Kuwait Forecast

Station	MIN °C	Max °C
KUWAIT CITY	09	17
KUWAIT AIRPORT	08	16
ABDALY	02	16
BUBYAN	06	19
JAHRA	06	17
FAILAKA ISLAND	08	16
SALMIYAH	09	15
AHMADI	10	15
JAL ALIYAH	02	16
QAROH ISLAND	12	15
UMM AL-MARADEM	12	15
NUWAISIB	06	16
WAFRA	06	18
MANAGISH	04	16
SALMY	00	15
MUTRIBA	02	17

Recorded Yesterday at Kuwait Airport

Max Temp (°C)	18
Min Temp (°C)	06
Max Rel Hum (%)	67
Min Rel Hum (%)	23
Max Wind Speed (km/h) and Direction	39 N
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR	0 mm
Sunrise	06:38
Sunset	17:24

Prayer Times

Fajr	05:17
Sunrise	06:38
Zuhr	12:01
Asr	15:03
Sunset	17:24
Isha	18:44



PRIVATE CLINICS

Ophthalmologists	Plastic Surgeons
Dr. Abdallah Al-Mansoor	25622444
Dr. Samy Al-Rabea	25752222
Dr. Masoma Habeeb	25321171
Dr. Mubarak Al-Ajmy	25739999
Dr. Mohsen Abel	25757700
Dr. Adnan Hasan Alwayl	25732223
Dr. Abdallah Al-Baghly	25732223
Ear, Nose & Throat (ENT)	
Dr. Ahmed Fouad Mouner	24555050 Ext 510
Dr. Abdallah Al-Ali	25644660
Dr. Abd Al-Hameed Al-Taweel	25646478
Dr. Sanad Al-Fathalah	25311996
Dr. Mohammad Al-Daory	25731988
Dr. Ismail Al-Fodary	22620166
Dr. Mahmoud Al-Booz	25651426
General Practitioners	
Dr. Mohammed Y Majidi	24555050 Ext 123
Dr. Yousef Al-Omar	24719312
Dr. Tarek Al-Mikhaizeem	23926920
Dr. Kathem Maarafi	25730465
Dr. Abdallah Ahmad Eyadah	25655528
Dr. Nabeel Al-Ayoobi	24577781
Dr. Dina Abdallah Al-Rafea	25333501
Urologists	
Dr. Ali Naser Al-Serfy	22641534
Dr. Fawzi Taher Abul	22639955
Dr. Khaleel Abdallah Al-Awadi	22616660
Dr. Adel Al-Hunayan FRCS (C)	25313120
Dr. Leons Joseph	66703427

Paediatricians	Endocrinologist
Dr. Khaled Hamadi	25665898
Dr. Abd Al-Aziz Al-Rashed	25340300
Dr. Zahra Qabazard	25710444
Dr. Sohail Qamar	22621099
Dr. Snaa Maarouf	25713514
Dr. Pradip Gupje	23713100
Dr. Zacharias Mathew	24334282
Dermatology	
Dr. Mohammed Salam Bern University	23845955
Dentists	
Dr. Anil Thomas	3729596/3729581
Dr. Shamah Al-Matar	22641071/2
Dr. Anesah Al-Rasheed	22562226
Dr. Abdallah Al-Amer	22561444
Dr. Faysal Al-Fozan	22619557
Dr. Abdallateef Al-Katrash	22525888
Dr. Abdallah Al-Duweisan	25653755
Dr. Bader Al-Ansari	25620111
Neurologists	
Dr. Sohal Najem Al-Shemeri	25633324
Dr. Jasem Mola Hassan	25345875
Gastrologists	
Dr. Sami Aman	22636464
Dr. Mohammad Al-Shamaly	25322030
Dr. Foad Abdallah Al-Ali	22633135

Physiotherapists & VD	Rheumatologists:
Dr. Abd Al-Naser Al-Othman	25339330
Dr. Ahmad Al-Ansari	25658888
Dr. Kamal Al-Shomr	25329924
Dr. Deyaa Shehab	25722291
Dr. Mused Faraj Khamees	22666288
Dr. Adel Al-Awadi	25330060
Dr. Khaled Al-Jarallah	25722290
Internist, Chest & Heart	
DR.Mohammes Akkad	24555050 Ext 210
Dr. Mohammad Zubaid MB, ChB, FRCP, PACC	
Assistant Professor Of Medicine Head, Division of Cardiology Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital	25339667
Consultant Cardiologist	
Dr. Farida Al-Habib MD, PH.D, FACC	2611555-2622555
Inaya German Medical Center	
Te: 2575077	
Fax: 25723123	

Family Doctor	Psychiatrists	Gynaecologists & Obstetricians
Dr Divya Damodar	23729596/23729581	
Dr. Esam Al-Ansari	22635047	
Dr. Eisa M. Al-Balhan	22613623/0	
DrAdrian arbe	23729596/23729581	
Dr. Verginia s.Marin	2572-6666 ext 8321	
Dr. Fozeya Ali Al-Qatan	22655539	
Dr. Majeda Khalefa Aliyami	25343406	
Dr. Ahmad Al-Khooly	25739272	
Dr. Salem soso	22618787	
General Surgeons		
Dr. Amer Zawaz Al-Amer	22610044	
Dr. Mohammad Yousef Basher	25327148	
Internists, Chest & Heart		
Dr. Adnan Ebil	22639939	
Dr. Mousa Khadada	22666300	
Dr. Latefa Al-Duweisan	25728004	
Dr. Nadem Al-Ghabra	25355515	
Dr. Mobarak Aldoub	24726446	
Dr Nasser Behbehani	25654300/3	

AWARDS



The cast of 'Hidden Figures' accept the award for outstanding performance by a cast in a motion picture at the 23rd annual Screen Actors Guild Awards at the Shrine Auditorium & Expo Hall in Los Angeles. — AP/AFP photos



Taraji P Henson poses in the press room with the award for outstanding performance by a cast in a motion picture for 'Hidden Figures'.



Actor Denzel Washington accepts Outstanding Performance by a Male Actor in a Leading Role for 'Fences'.



Actress Emma Stone accepts the award for best leading actress for "La La Land".



Janelle Monae poses in the press room with the award for outstanding performance by a cast in a motion picture for "Hidden Figures".



Aldis Hodge, from left, Theodore Melfi, Mahershala Ali, Jim Parsons, Kimberly Quinn, Kristen Dunst, Octavia Spencer, Saniyya Sidney, Taraji P Henson, Janelle Monae, and Glen Powell pose in the press room with the awards for outstanding performance by a cast in a motion picture for "Hidden Figures".

Emma Stone's F-bomb among off-camera antics at SAG Awards



Actress Viola Davis, winner of the Outstanding Performance by a Female Actor in a Supporting Role award for 'Fences', poses in the press room.

Actors obviously love the camera, but some of the most delightful and insightful moments at Sunday's Screen Actors Guild Awards didn't make the show. Here's a look at some of the fun from behind the scenes:

The statue

The SAG Awards statuette is the heaviest of Hollywood's awards season - a full 31/2 pounds weightier than the Oscar. Every actor who receives one remarks on its heft. But William H Macy, Matthew Modine and "Orange is the New Black" actress Blair Brown made some more detailed observations about the Actor trophy. "It's odd that he has no mouth," Macy said thoughtfully as he inspected the award he won for his comedic performance in "Shameless." "You'd think it would be a big mouth." Brown noted the statuette's defined anatomy, including his perky posterior and pronounced pecs. "Are those breasts?" she asked. Modine examined the statuette he picked up for "Stranger Things," noting, "He's got a great behind."

That speech

As shocked as anyone to have won the TV ensemble drama award, the cast of "Stranger Things" was still reeling from David Harbour's passionate and stirring acceptance speech when they were ushered into the "thank you cam" area just offstage. "That was the best speech ever!" actress Millie Bobby Brown, who plays Eleven, told her co-star.

"So good!" actor Matthew Modine said as he scooped up Brown into a hug. Her eyes were teary. "I hope you guys don't act like divas on Tuesday when we shoot," Harbor said. As the group made their way down the hallway toward the table where 12-pound statuettes awaited each member of the cast, Brown and her fellow pre-teen stars realized they'd each get trophies of their own. "We get a statue! We each get a SAG award!" 12-year-old Brown said.

"Wait, we each get one?" Finn Whitrock, 14, asked in disbelief. As they piled into the trophy area, Brown shouted, "Someone go get our parents!" Meanwhile, John Lithgow, picking up his award for "The Crown," praised Harbor for his speech. "Fabulous," Lithgow said, embracing his colleague. "That was the moment of the evening."



Mahershala Ali appears backstage with his awards for outstanding performance by a male actor in a supporting role for "Moonlight" and outstanding performance by a cast in a motion picture for "Hidden Figures".

Those politics

For many actors, accepting awards amid political change casts the honors in a different light. Sarah Paulson, who continued her awards reign for playing Marcia Clark in "The People v. O.J. Simpson" at the SAG Awards, said she wants to keep the recognition in perspective. "This has been a very celebratory time in my life in terms of my work being recognized, but at the same time, it's dovetailing with a very interesting time in our country," she said backstage after accepting her SAG Award. "Even as I was getting ready tonight, as excited and as honored as I was, I felt the duality of the celebration and also the seriousness of people who are at JFK (airport) right now, people who are at LAX, people who are at airports all over the country ... So I'm trying to find a place to put it where I can be celebratory and also give the day its appropriate weight."

Asked whether it's appropriate for actors to use awards shows as a political forum, Emma Stone, who won for her

leading role in "La La Land," said yes. "I would hope that everyone that's seeing things being done that are absolutely unconstitutional and inhumane would say something - in any venue, whether it's at school or in an awards show or in their offices or online," she said backstage. "I would hope that people would fight for what's right and what's just (expletive) human. Sorry I said the F-word. I sort of whispered it."

Mahershala Ali, a double-winner for "Moonlight" and "Hidden Figures," said that as an African American and a Muslim, the pain of injustice is nothing new. "It's just as painful as it's always been," he said. "The positive thing is as artists, as actors, we have an opportunity to make certain choices that shine light on situations that light needs to be shined on, so perhaps we can bring attention to situations that need support and help start conversations and help raise awareness. Because with awareness, we can bring about change." — AP



William H Macy accepts the award for outstanding performance by a male actor in a comedy series for "Shameless".



David Harbour (center) and the Cast of 'Stranger Things' accept the award for Outstanding Performance by an Ensemble in a Drama Series.



"Stranger Things," cast members, recipients of the Outstanding Performance by an Ensemble in a Drama Series award, pose in the press room.

AWARDS



Taylor Schilling, center, and the cast of 'Orange Is the New Black' accept the award for outstanding performance by an ensemble in a comedy series.



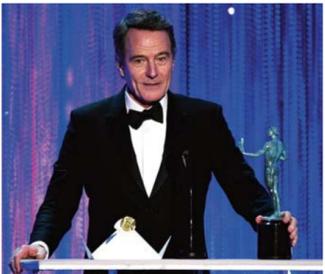
The cast and crew of 'Orange is the New Black' pose in the press room with the awards for the award for outstanding performance by an ensemble in a comedy series.



"Orange Is the New Black" cast members, winners of the Outstanding Performance by an Ensemble in a Comedy Series award.



Actor John Lithgow accepts the award for Outstanding Performance by a Male Actor in a Drama Series for "The Crown".



Bryan Cranston accepts the award for outstanding performance by a male actor in a television movie or limited series for "All the Way".



Sarah Paulson accepts the award for outstanding performance by a female actor in a television movie or limited series for "The People v. O.J. Simpson: American Crime Story".

List of SAG winners

FILM WINNERS

- Outstanding performance by a cast in a motion picture**
"Hidden Figures"
- Outstanding performance by a male actor in a leading role**
Denzel Washington, "Fences"
- Outstanding performance by a female actor in a leading role**
Emma Stone, "La La Land"
- Outstanding performance by a male actor in a supporting role**
Mahershala Ali, "Moonlight"
- Outstanding performance by a female actor in a supporting role**
Viola Davis, "Fences"

TELEVISION WINNERS

- Outstanding performance by an ensemble in a drama series**
"Stranger Things"
- Outstanding performance by an ensemble in a comedy series**
"Orange is the New Black"
- Outstanding performance by a male actor in a drama series**
John Lithgow, "The Crown"
- Outstanding performance by a female actor in a drama series**
Claire Foy, "The Crown"
- Outstanding performance by a male actor in a comedy series**
William H Macy, "Shameless"
- Outstanding performance by a female actor in a comedy series**
Julia Louis-Dreyfus, "Veep"
- Outstanding performance by a male actor in a television movie or miniseries**
Bryan Cranston, "All the Way"
- Outstanding performance by a female actor in a television movie or miniseries**
Sarah Paulson, "The People vs. O.J. Simpson" — AFP



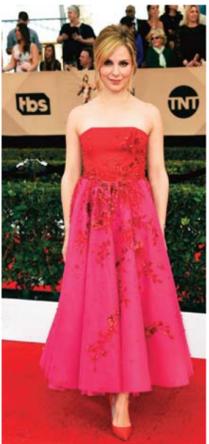
(From left) Matt Peters, Blaire Brown, Michael Harney and Lin Tucci from "Orange is the New Black".



Claire Foy poses in the press room with the award for outstanding performance by a female actor in a drama series for "The Crown".



Julia Louis-Dreyfus poses in the press room with the award for outstanding performance by a female actor in a comedy series for "Veep".



Cara Buono



Sarah Paulson



Natalie Portman



Keith Urban and Nicole Kidman



Kaley Cuoco



Meryl Streep



Actress Sofia Vergara



Artist John Legend and Chrissy Teigen



Actress Taryn Manning



Sarah Sutherland



Actress Beth Dover



Actress Shannon Purser



Actress Yara Shahidi



Actress Julie Lake



Actress Vanessa Kirby



Actress Yael Stone

Syrian musician in limbo after travel ban

A Syrian musician who was allowed to legally immigrate to the United States on account of his "extraordinary" abilities, and who recently toured with famed cellist Yo-Yo Ma, is now wondering whether he can return to his Brooklyn home. Kinan Azmeh, a clarinet player who has called the US home for 16 years, said Sunday he does not have a "plan B" if he is not allowed to return. Azmeh, who flew to China three weeks ago to perform with Ma, was caught in travel limbo after President Donald Trump issued an order last Friday to refuse entry to citizens of Syria and six other Muslim-majority nations, including travelers holding valid visas and residency permits.

He was granted a green card three years ago through an EB-1 visa, for applicants who can demonstrate "extraordinary ability" in science, business, or art. The 40-year-old is currently in Beirut on the last leg of his tour before he will attempt to return home later this week. He also performed with Ma in Denmark. "I have my apartment. You know, 16 years is not a short time, you accumulate lots of stuff," he said. "But what is not replaceable is all the friends who are incredibly supportive."

He said he was flooded with messages of support in the hours after the executive order, which is being challenged by civil rights attorneys in federal courts. Several judges have granted injunctions against the order, but lawyers say border control officers at several airports still have not granted them access to detained travelers. They say they are afraid the deportations will continue. Azmeh said he was "positively surprised" by the support shown by demonstrators at US airports.

"I am holding onto the optimism in me," he said. Confusion about cases such as Azmeh's remained, even though Trump's aides stressed during a round of Sunday show interviews that only a small portion of travelers had been affected by the order. The aides said Sunday that citizens of the seven affected countries who hold permanent US residency "green cards" will not be barred from re-entering the country, as officials had said the day before. Azmeh grew up in Damascus, Syria, before coming to the US to pursue his doctorate in music. He stayed in the US for years on a student visa, before applying for permanent immigration status three years ago. "It seemed like the natural step," he said. "New York is where I developed my musical skills,

and where I grew as an artist." He says he considers himself fortunate to be able to call two cities his home, the Syrian capital and New York, even though he has not been able to visit Damascus since Syria descended into war nearly six years ago. Neighbors in Damascus have told Azmeh that his apartment there has been looted twice.

Millions of Syrians are not so lucky. Half the country's population has been displaced, according to the UN, and an estimated 400,000 have been killed. "I think of my countrymen and women, people who were forced out of their homes, and have to repeat that again - that is the worst case scenario," he said. — AP

Kinan Azmeh, 40, a Syrian musician who is one of thousands of valid US green card holders who have found their immigration status in limbo after Trump's order Friday, gives an interview to The Associated Press, in Beirut, Lebanon. — AP



Ajeel takes part in first 'Diyafa' festival in Dubai

Kuwaiti fashion designer and businesswoman Muntaha Al-Ajeel took part in the first 'Diyafa' festival at Atlantis Dubai, where stars from 10 countries were honored for their achievements and the records set by each in their field.

The festival was presented by media personality Ula Al-Faris in the presence of 400

VIPs led by Dr Michel Daher, president of the "Piaf" Committee of Beirut International Awards Festival, which organized the event.

Like all international festivals, honor awards were presented to the chosen personalities, among whom was Emirati poet Ali Al-Khwar, Egyptian film director Khaled Youssef, Egyptian actress Yusra, Tunisian singer Latifa,

Algerian singer Cheb Khaled, Emirati actor and director Habib Ghlum, Iraqi singer Majed Al-Muhandis, Lebanese singer Alissa and beauty expert and stylist Joel Mardinian. The event concluded with a concert by Australian singer Faidi.

Indian fashion week set for first transgender model

A Nepali who will become the first transgender model to walk the runway at an Indian fashion show hopes to inspire other victims of gender identity discrimination across conservative South Asia. Anjali Lama, who was born a man in rural Nepal, was ostracized by members of her own family after telling them twelve years ago that she wanted to live as a woman. She overcame abuse and prejudice to become the Himalayan country's first transgender model and is now preparing to strut the catwalk at Lakme Fashion Week in Mumbai, India's premier fashion show, next month.

"Growing up in Nepal as a transgender was extremely difficult," Lama, 32, told AFP in an email interview ahead of the fashion extravaganza, which runs from February 1 to February 5. "In South Asian countries people still aren't that accepting, they treat it like an illness. The public looks at you differently and treats you in a different manner." "One has to stay strong and reach out for their dreams," she added. Lama was born Nabin Waiba to a family of poor farmers in remote Nuwakot in mountainous Nepal.

But she always knew that she had been born in the wrong body and in 2005 took the decision to dress as a woman for the first time. "I knew I couldn't feel like another person living in someone else's body. Hence, I was ready to face the cruel words that people threw at me," said the model. "Most of the people, including my own brothers, weren't ready to accept me for who I was. I had to stay strong and believe in myself. My mother and sisters were the only ones who supported me throughout."

Lama found some acceptance in Kathmandu, where she moved to study, and later became an



Nepali transgender model Anjali Lama poses during a promotional event for Lakme Fashion Week in the Indian city of Mumbai. — AFP

activist for an LGBT rights group called Blue Diamond Society. She underwent partial sex reassignment surgery in 2009 and her interest in modelling was piqued the following year when she was pictured on the front cover of a magazine featuring an article about transgender people.

New York, Milan, Paris?

It spurred her to pursue a career in modeling full-time. She enrolled in classes but initially found work hard to come by. "I was getting rejected because of my identity and that was extremely disheartening," said Lama, who has established herself as a successful

model in her native Nepal over the past couple of years. In 2014 she featured in a documentary titled "Anjali: Living Inside Someone Else's Skin" in which she said she hoped to become completely female one day—an operation that is financially out of reach for most Nepalis.

Her recent success has come as Nepal has increased its recognition of transgender people. In 2015 the country, which allows citizens to choose their sex, started issuing third gender category passports for those who identify themselves as transgender. "With the changing times people have become more accepting," explained Lama. Manisha Dhakal, one of the founders of the Blue Diamond Society, said Nepal's government needed to do more to provide equal opportunities in education and employment for transgender people.

"To get the acceptance in society we need to be economically empowered," she told AFP. In neighboring India, "Hijras" have also long complained of discrimination and marginalization. They are recognized as a third gender but are often shunned from society with some forced into begging or prostitution.

Lama—who said it would be a "dream come true" to follow other transgender models onto major catwalks such as New York, Milan and Paris—hopes her turn at Lakme Fashion Week will make a difference in the battle for acceptance. She added: "I do hope to be an inspiration for other transgender people. I'd like to tell them to always believe in themselves and to work towards their goals." — AFP

Iran's Oscar-winning director to skip awards over Trump visa ban

Oscar-winning Iranian director Asghar Farhadi said Sunday he will not attend next month's Academy Awards ceremony, comparing US President Donald Trump's visa ban on seven Muslim countries to the actions of hardliners in his own country. Farhadi, nominated for best foreign language film for "The Salesman," said in a statement released to AFP by his representatives in Los Angeles he had initially planned to attend the ceremony, but had been forced to change his mind. Trump signed an executive order on Friday prohibiting entry to the United States to all nationals of seven Muslim-majority states—Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen.

"I neither had the intention to not attend nor did I want to boycott the event as a show of objection, for I know that many in the American film industry and the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences are opposed to the fanaticism and extremism which are today taking place more than ever," Farhadi said. "However, it now seems that the possibility of this presence is being accompanied by ifs and buts which are in no way acceptable to me even if exceptions were to be made for my trip." He said hardliners in United States and Iran acted with the same mentality.

"For years on both sides of the ocean, groups of hardliners have tried to present to their people unrealistic and fearful images of various nations and cultures in order to turn their differences into disagreements, their disagreements into enmities and their enmities into fears," he said. "Instilling fear in the people is an important tool used to justify

extremist and fanatic behavior by narrow-minded individuals." His lead actress, Taraneh Alidoosti, had already announced that she would boycott the annual awards ceremony in Los Angeles over Trump's "racist" visa ban.

Farhadi won the best foreign language Oscar in 2012 for his film "A Separation." The subjects of "The White Helmets," an Oscar-nominated documentary about the volunteers who rescue victims of attacks in Syria, will also be unable to attend, it emerged later Sunday. "We have always said that if we were to be nominated, we would bring Raed Saleh, the head of the White Helmets, who has spoken many times in (Washington) DC, and Khaled Khateeb, the young cinematographer who risked his life over and over again, as our guests," producer Joanna Natasegara said in a statement to Entertainment Weekly.

"They've been nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize—these people are the bravest humanitarians on the planet, and the idea that they could not be able to come with us and enjoy that success is just abhorrent." The White Helmets say on their website that their unarmed rescuers have saved more than 78,500 lives in Syria. They were nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize last year, although the award went to Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos. "The White Helmets" is nominated for best documentary short at the Academy Awards on February 26. — AFP



In this file photo, Iranian film director Asghar Farhadi, right, and his wife Parisa, pose after he was awarded the Officer of the Order of Arts and Letters medal, at the French Ministry of Culture, in Paris, France. — AP

Tao, 98-year-old poster child for yoga and wellness

She is the 'World's Oldest Yoga Teacher' who, at age 98, still teaches five classes a week. But above all, Tao Porchon-Lynch is a poster child for health and positivity in a world obsessed by wellness and longevity. The former model and Hollywood contract actress—who earned her title from Guinness World Records—still has a delicate, slender physique.

Tao, as everyone calls her, grew up in India and lives in the New York suburbs, travelling the world attending yoga retreats. Stylish and fashionable, she zips from her Hartsdale home in Westchester County to the studio in a Smart car. Once in the studio, she happily demonstrates yoga poses, even if she sometimes calls on one of her dedicated students to show off others.

But more than yoga, she imparts a zest for life that has sustained her through nearly a century of existence, marked by encounters with the likes of Gandhi and Marlene Dietrich. "Don't be afraid," she tells her class. "Don't let others tell you what you can't do." She cautions her pupils against giving in to fatigue. "Breathe, feel this life force within you." Students of all ages quickly become devotees. "I am doing things that I never thought possible," says Julie Ann Ulbrich, 52, who has been coming to Tao's classes for eight years. "If she can be 98 and still driving and still living on her own and doing asanas like this, it gives me hope."

Strong

In a Western society increasingly determined to ward off the onset of aging, Tao's bracing cocktail of longevity and practical spirituality has made her a celebrity with an avid online following. She is even a sponsored athlete for Athleta, a brand of women's yoga clothing and active wear owned by Gap Inc., which put her on the cover of its latest magazine. "I believed in nature and I believed in breathing. I did not want to pray to something or somebody out of space; I wanted to pray to something that was inside of me," she explains. "Look at the trees. The trees are hundreds of years old, at this moment they are all bare, they look like skeletons, they look dead, but they are not—they are recycling themselves," she said in a nod to the winter season.

"Those trees are not getting any older, they are strong." Her life did not begin, however, in the most auspicious of circumstances. Born on August 13, 1918 at the end of World War I, her mother died when she was just seven months old, and her father entrusted her to an uncle and aunt who brought her up in Pondicherry, the part of French colonial India. She was raised a vegetarian. French and Hindi were her first languages. When still very young, she travelled to a number of countries with her uncle, who designed railway projects.

At 12, she met Gandhi when he visited the family home—a funny little man sitting on the floor



Yoga Master Tao Porchon-Lynch (center) instructs a yoga class.

with glasses and everybody bowing to him"—she remembers. Three weeks later, her uncle let her take part in what became Gandhi's Salt March. From the father of modern India and her uncle, she says, she learned never to show contempt for anyone, and a sense of "oneness."

Ballroom dancing

The onset of World War II saw her leave for Europe looking for her father, who was called up in France. She found refuge with an aunt in the Rhone, who initiated her into the world of wine—one of her passions—and the French Resistance.

After the Germans arrested a comrade, she travelled to London where she performed Indian dances for American troops. It was there that she met Dietrich, who became a "very good friend." After the war, she returned to France and modeled for Lanvin before travelling to the United States for the first time in 1948.

She returned to America for good a year later and worked in Hollywood, under contract for MGM for several years. In California, she became a yoga teacher, having practiced it always, even as a child despite her guardians telling her "It is not for girls." An Indian acquaintance in Hollywood pressed her to take up teaching.

Her first pupils? The actresses Debbie Reynolds and Kathryn Grayson. She then travelled back to India to deepen her knowledge from the renowned yoga teacher Krishna Pattabhi Jois. She was married to Bill Lynch, an insurance broker, for 20 years until his death in 1982, but the couple had no children and she has no close relatives. "My students are my children," she explains. "It is with them that she celebrates birthdays. And if yoga is not enough to keep her young at heart, she takes ballroom dances with partners 70 years her junior." — AFP



General view of Royal Atlantis and residences.



An Architecture masterpiece by KPF Associates (residential interior designer).

Kerzner International in collaboration with Knight Frank launch The Royal Atlantis Residences on The Palm in Dubai

Dubai is nearing completion of yet another legendary project on the Palm Island, which is an annex of the famous Atlantis Palm resort. The project consists luxury apartments and a hotel over ten hectares of ground.

Kerzner International, a leading international developer and operator of destination resorts and luxury hotels, in collaboration with Knight Frank, have launched The Royal Atlantis Residences in Dubai. Located on the crescent of The Palm and next to the iconic Atlantis resort, this new generation of distinctive luxury will offer a sophisticated lifestyle experi-

The Royal Atlantis Residences will consist of a selection of two, three, four and five-bedroom homes, Sky Courts, Penthouses and Garden Suites. When completed, The Royal Atlantis Resort & Residences will offer 231 Residences and 795 new lavish guest rooms and suites in the Resort on over 10 hectares of land

"We are incredibly proud to launch The Royal Atlantis Residences in Dubai. Building on the success of Atlantis, The Palm, this next phase of Atlantis, including the luxury residences of The Royal Atlantis, will continue to drive the growth of Dubai forward," comments Issam Galadari, Director, The Royal Atlantis Resort & Residences. "The development will become the new landmark of Dubai and will support the 'Dubai Plan 2021' in positioning it as one of the best places to live in the world."

"The timing was right for to build another iconic structure and to continue the Atlantis experience in a new way; creating a home and a community for families to live," comments Jean-Gabriel Pe?re?s, President and Chief Executive Officer, Kerzner International. "Dubai has always been important for us and Kerzner will continue to support to develop this amazing destination. We are working with the best in the industry, including world-class architects, designers, and artists to create bespoke homes that will allow people to live in the highest quality residences."

Award winning architects

With prices starting at approximately AED 7,650,000, The Royal Atlantis Residences will consist of contemporary living spaces with uninterrupted views of the ocean or across the waters of The Palm toward the Dubai city skyline. A team of international experts have come together including award winning architects-KPF Associates, residential interior designer - Sybille de Margerie, water feature creators - WET and sky pool and lounge designer-the 90 meter sky-high infinity pool experience-David Mexico to create the newest icon in Dubai that is expected to attract a number of investors from all over the world.

"The Royal Atlantis Residences will provide the ultimate lifestyle experience in Dubai and beyond," said Serge Zaalof, Chief Operating Officer, Atlantis Resorts and Residences. "I am thrilled that we are able to offer an extraordinary destination that will forever enhance

the landscape of Dubai and offer experiences to resorts guests, residents and visitors alike."

The vision

The vision of Dubai is absolutely remarkable-not only attracting people from around the world that want to come here on vacation, but to come to live in the best environment. Atlantis, The Palm will always be the iconic holiday destination of choice, but now The Royal Atlantis will provide the ultimate residential address. Dubai is the definitive global city providing incredible infrastructure, great schools, health care and safety, world renowned retail, and world-class restaurants. A city that now ranks alongside the likes of Singapore, London or New York as a hub for global business, a true crossroads. It's worth noting that Dubai has witnessed a rocket growth over the last forty five years, and its international airport is considered the busiest in the world, edging out London.

"We are excited to be working alongside Kerzner International to support the sales of The Royal Atlantis Residences on The Palm in Dubai," says Maria Morris, Partner, Knight Frank. "Through Knight Frank's established global network and our experience of marketing world-class developments, we have already received strong initial interest from our global client base, keen to invest in the development. Our international clientele is looking for a new level of luxury in the prime market in Dubai, and The Royal Atlantis Residences delivers on these requirements. This project will not only be best-in-class for Dubai but will certainly be one of the best projects globally."

On November 2016, Atlantis, The Palm won the best PR in the middle east. The prize is offered by MEPR, the Middle East Public Relations Association. During the launching event, the Atlantic PR team toured the regional journalists around the resort. Then, press conference took off at the Sales suite, followed by a visit to a model apartment and the development site. The Royal Atlantis Residences project is expected to be finished in 2019.



Royal Atlantis Residences designed by KPF associates.

ence encapsulated in dramatic architecture. The Royal Atlantis Residences, a fully-owned subsidiary of Investment Corporation of Dubai, are destined to become a new landmark, world-renowned address and will be Dubai's first super-prime residential development.



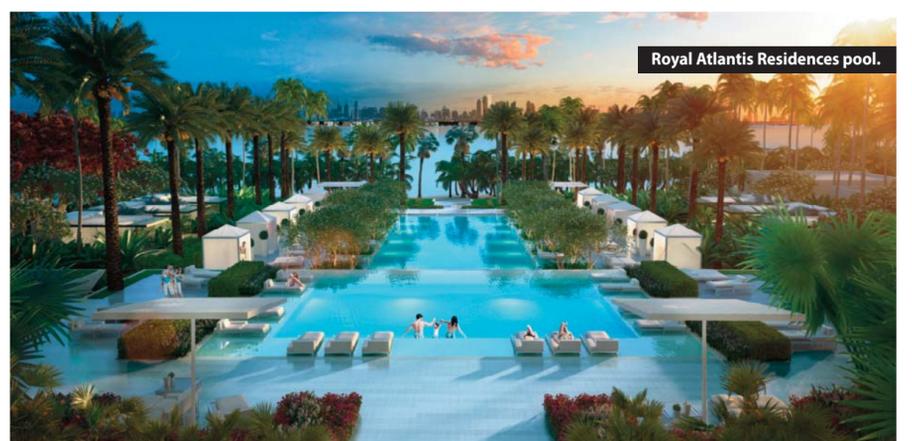
Rendering of a gold bedroom.



Living room of a three bedroom apartment.



Sky courtyard.



Royal Atlantis Residences pool.

Lifestyle

TUESDAY, JANUARY 31, 2017

Syrian musician in limbo after travel ban

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This general view shows Miss Universe candidates with pageant host Steve Harvey (center) of the US during the finals of the Miss Universe pageant at the Mall of Asia Arena in Manila yesterday. — AP/AFP photos

Miss France crowned Miss Universe in Philippines



Iris Mittenaere (center right) of France is congratulated by other candidates after being crowned Miss Universe in the Miss Universe pageant.

A 23-year-old dental student from France won the Miss Universe crown yesterday in the annual pageant held this year in the Philippines. Iris Mittenaere from the small town of Lille in northern France said in reply to a final question from pageant host Steve Harvey that she would be honored if she just landed among the three finalists, but was visibly stunned when she was announced the winner among the field of 86 contestants.

Mittenaere was speechless and put her hands on her face as the outgoing winner from the Philippines, Pia Wurtzbach, crowned her as the crowd erupted in cheers and applause at the packed Mall of Asia Arena by Manila Bay. In her profile, she said she would "advocate for dental and oral hygiene" if she takes home the crown. In the final question to the top three finalists, the candidate were asked to cite a failure in their life and explain what they learned from the debacle.

"I've failed several times in my life," Mittenaere said without elaborating but added that "when you fail, you have to be elevated and you have to try again and keep going ... I have failed before but for me this is the great first opportunity."

Miss Haiti, Raquel Pelissier, a 25-year-old survivor

of the devastating 2010 earthquake that destroyed her hometown, was named first runner up while Miss Colombia, 23-year-old, Andrea Tovar, was second runner up.

"I survived the earthquake," Pelissier said in reply to the same question, citing the quake the Haiti government estimated to have killed more than 300,000 people and displaced more than 1.5 million others. "I felt I was failing myself because I was not living my dreams ... But I chose to be a very positive person, and learned a great lesson from it because if I am here today, it is because I am living my dreams."

As he closed the ceremony, the American comedian host declared: "This is Steve Harvey, I got it right," referring in jest to his mistaken announcement of Miss Colombia as the winner in the last pageant in Las Vegas more than a year ago that sparked an uproar. — AP

The new Miss Universe Iris Mittenaere of France waves to photographers during a press conference after being crowned the winner at the Miss Universe pageant at the Mall of Asia Arena.



Miss Universe candidates (from left to right) Andrea Tovar of Colombia, Iris Mittenaere of France and Raquel Pelissier of Haiti stand on stage as they wait for the announcement of the winner during the finals of the Miss Universe pageant at the Mall of Asia Arena in Manila yesterday.



Miss Universe contestant Iris Mittenaere (right) of France is crowned the new 2017 winner by former Miss Universe Pia Wurtzbach of the Philippines (left).



Miss Universe candidate Iris Mittenaere of France (center) walks on stage.



Miss Universe pageant host Steve Harvey of the US speaks next to candidates.



Miss Haiti Raquel Pelissier answers on the same question asked to the top three finalists in the Miss Universe 2016 competition.



Iris Mittenaere of France walks on the stage after being crowned the winner of the 2017 Miss Universe pageant.