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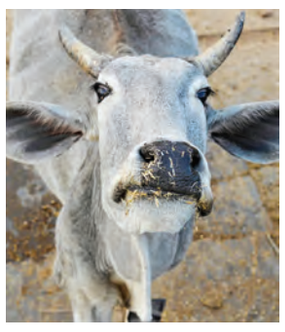

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DOHA: US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson (left) meets Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani at the Sea Palace residence yesterday. — AFP

KUWAIT/DOHA: HH the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah yesterday expressed "bitterness" and is "extremely concerned" over "unprecedented developments" in the Gulf crisis. The Amir appreciates the positive reactions and messages of support of Kuwait's mediation efforts regarding the stalemate, displayed by Kuwaiti nationals, Gulf states and the international community, read an Amiri Diwan statement.

These expressions of support have "relieved" him from the resulting pain and "increased our determination" to resolve the matter, said HH the Amir, who is leading mediation efforts in the crisis involving several Arab countries. The Amir warned that the Gulf Cooperation Council's accomplishments, based on the aspirations of its people, "cannot be compromised, and should be maintained and adhered to". "We will not surrender our historic responsibilities (towards the bloc) and we will be loyal to it until we overcome these developments," he underlined, stressing that the related parties themselves can only resolve this crisis.

Meanwhile, Qatar and the United States signed a deal yesterday on combatting "terrorism" as visiting US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson pursued efforts to resolve the Gulf diplomatic crisis. In Qatar as part of a series of Gulf meetings, Tillerson also said Doha had been "reasonable" in the dispute, which has seen Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt cut ties with the emirate over accusations it supports extremism.

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Saudis execute 4 over attacks on police, riots

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia yesterday executed four men convicted of "terrorist crimes" including attacks on police and participating in riots in the district of Qatif, the kingdom said. The interior ministry named the four as Zaher Al-Basri, Yusof Al-Meshikhes, Mahdi Al-Sayyegh and Amjad Al-Emeibid, according to a statement aired by Al-Ekhbariyah state news channel. They were convicted of "disobeying the ruler" and attempting to "sow sedition" in the kingdom, according to the statement.

They were found guilty of charges including opening fire at police centers in villages in Qatif, in Eastern Province, and taking part in riots and hurling petrol bombs at security forces and government installations. The executions come amid mounting attacks on police in Qatif, home to a significant part of the kingdom's Shiite minority which has traditionally complained of marginalization.

On Saturday, two police officers were wounded in an attack on a patrol in Qatif, while a police corporal was killed in a bombing in the same area on Thursday.

GAZA: UN Special Coordinator for the United Nations for the peace process in the Middle East Nikolay Mladenov (left) shakes hands with Qatar's Ambassador to Gaza Mohammed Al-Emadi following a press conference yesterday. — AFP

Qatar pledges Gaza support, UN says enclave 'unlivable'

GAZA CITY: Qatar's envoy to Gaza said yesterday Doha was committed to funding projects in the Hamas-run Palestinian enclave, despite pressure from Saudi Arabia and others who accuse it of supporting extremism. Meanwhile, the Gaza Strip may already be "unlivable", a United Nations official warned yesterday, after a decade of Hamas rule and a crippling Israeli blockade.

Speaking in Gaza City alongside a top UN official, Mohammed Al-Amadi said Qatar would continue to fund projects in Gaza, despite the "siege" imposed by Saudi Arabia and its allies in recent weeks. "We came to assure you we stood and will continue to stand with the besieged Palestinian people and we will continue with the reconstruction process," he told a news conference. "The policy of Qatar is to support the people and the official government. We do not support Hamas, we support Hamas as a part of the Palestinian people."

On June 5, Saudi Arabia and its allies severed all diplomatic ties with Qatar, accusing the gas-rich state of bankrolling "extremist" groups, including Hamas. Islamist movement Hamas has ruled Gaza since 2007 but is considered a terrorist group by the United States, European Union and Israel. The official Palestinian government is based in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and led by Hamas' rivals Fatah.

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US military plane crashes, 16 dead PAGE 6

Ban on niqab in Belgium upheld PAGE 8

IS chief Baghdadi reported dead

BEIRUT: Islamic State group chief Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi was reported dead yesterday, a day after Iraq declared it had driven the militants from their one-time biggest stronghold of Mosul. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a longtime monitor of the country's conflict, said it had information from top IS leaders confirming Baghdadi's death. The report could not be independently verified and Baghdadi has been reported dead several times.

But if confirmed, his death would mark another devastating blow to the extremist group after its loss of Mosul, which Iraqi Prime Minister Haider Al-Abadi said Monday had been retaken from IS after a gruelling months-long campaign. "Top tier commanders from IS who are present in Deir Ezzor province have confirmed the death of Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi, emir of the Islamic State group, to the Observatory," the Britain-based monitoring group's director Rami Abdel Rahman told AFP.

"We learned of it today but we do not know when he died or how."

Deir Ezzor, in eastern Syria, remains largely under IS control even as the group is losing territory elsewhere in the country and in neighboring Iraq. Abdel Rahman said Baghdadi "was present in eastern parts of Deir Ezzor province" in recent months, but it was unclear if he died in the area or elsewhere. There was no official confirmation or denial of the news on social media platforms used by IS.

The US-led coalition fighting the group in Syria and Iraq said it could not verify the Observatory's information. "We cannot confirm this report, but hope it is true," said coalition spokesman Colonel Ryan Dillon.

"We strongly advise ISIS to implement a strong line of succession, it will be needed," he added, using a different acronym for IS. Asked if the coalition had a process underway to examine such claims, Dillon said: "We have professionals who use all information at their disposal to verify reports before we would confirm any allegations."

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MOSUL: This file grab taken from a propaganda video released on July 5, 2014 allegedly shows the leader of the Islamic State (IS) group Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi, aka Caliph Ibrahim, addressing worshippers at a mosque in this northern Iraqi city. — AFP

Three cups of coffee a day keep the doctor away

MIAMI: Coffee addicts and aficionados often say drinking the bitter liquid makes life worth living, but the habit may also help them live longer, according to two major international studies yesterday. Experts cautioned, however, that the US and European reports, published in the Annals of Internal Medicine, failed to show that coffee was truly the reason that many drinkers appeared to have longer lives. Rather, the studies were observational in nature, meaning they showed an association between coffee-drinking and a propensity toward longevity, but stopped short of proving cause and effect.

The first study, led by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) and Imperial College London, examined more than half a million people across 10 countries in Europe. Those who drank about three cups a day tended to live longer than non-coffee drinkers, said the study, which researchers described as the largest analysis of the effects of coffee-drinking in a European population.

"We found that higher coffee consumption was associated with a lower risk of death from any cause, and specifically for circulatory diseases, and digestive diseases," said lead author Marc Gunter of the IARC, formerly at Imperial's School of Public Health. "Importantly, these results were similar across all of the 10 European countries, with variable coffee drinking habits and customs."

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'Gangnam' dethroned as top YouTube video

NEW YORK: "Gangnam Style," the quirky South Korean video that spawned a global dance craze and went so viral it nearly broke YouTube, has finally been dethroned as the most watched video. After four and a half years as YouTube's most seen video, "Gangnam Style" slipped late Monday to number two, replaced by "See You Again" by Wiz Khalifa and Charlie Puth. "Gangnam Style," a satirical take on the nouveau riche residents of the Seoul district by the same name, surprised even its singer, Psy, with its sudden global ascent in 2012.

Psy, who until "Gangnam Style" was little known outside of South Korea, found an avid fan base with the video's equestrian-style dance moves set to its infectious pop beat. The video became the first to reach one billion views on YouTube and caused the site's engineers to scramble to make changes when it topped 2.1 billion views, previously thought to be the maximum possible.

NEW YORK: This file photo taken on Dec 31, 2015 shows singers Wiz Khalifa (right) and Charlie Puth performing during a New Year's Eve event in Times Square. — AFP

As of early yesterday US time, "Gangnam Style" had 2.895 billion views on YouTube, a notch under "See You Again", which was featured in the 2015 action movie "Furious 7". "See You Again" intersperses scenes from the film with Wiz Khalifa rapping and Charlie Puth singing as they overlook a sandy coast. The song was a tribute to Paul Walker, an actor in "The Fast and Furious" film franchise who died in a car wreck.

Psy's triumph was all the more striking due to the overwhelming dominance of English-language music on global charts. In a new example, "Despacito" - a Spanish-language reggaeton song by Puerto Rican star Luis Fonsi and rapper Daddy Yankee-has reigned for nine weeks at the top of the US Billboard singles chart. The "Despacito" video is already the fifth most-watched on YouTube at 2.486 billion views even though it was released just this year. Once historic when Psy crossed the threshold, a total of 68 clips have passed the one billion view mark on YouTube, all but three of them music videos. — AFP

KUWAIT: An electronic signboard shows the temperature and humidity yesterday amid a heatwave in the country. —Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Acting Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Speaker of the National Assembly Marzouq Al-Ghanem.

— Amiri Diwan and KUNA photos

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Speaker of the National Assembly Marzouq Al-Ghanem.

Amir congratulates Iraq on Mosul's liberation

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah congratulated Iraqi President Fuad Masum and Prime Minister Haidar Al-Abadi, the government and people of Iraq on the liberation of the city of Mosul from so-called Islamic State (IS). His Highness the Amir, in cables to Masum and Abadi, said victory of Iraqi army and security forces was a victory for all Iraqis.

His Highness the Amir prayed to Allah the Almighty that Iraq enjoyed stability and security, and that the Iraqi people live in prosperity. His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah also congratulated Masum and Abadi on the liberation of Mosul from the grip of IS. His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent similar cables.

In other news, His Highness the Amir received yesterday at Bayan Palace Acting Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. His Highness the Amir also received Speaker of the National Assembly Marzouq Al-Ghanem; who later met separately with His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. — KUNA

Kuwait, US, Britain call for rapid solution of Gulf crisis

KUWAIT: Kuwait, the US and Britain Monday called for a rapid end to the Gulf crisis through dialogue, as they expressed their concern over the prolonging of the dispute. Kuwait's Acting Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and Britain's National Security Advisor Mark Sedwill expressed deep concern "over the continuation of the current crisis in the region."

The three officials, meeting at Bayan Palace, urged all parties to "contain this crisis rapidly, and to find a solution through dialogue as soon as possible." Tillerson and Sedwill reaffirmed support for mediation carried out by Kuwait and efforts of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to solve the crisis.

The meeting was attended by Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs and Acting Minister of Information Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Sabah, Deputy Foreing Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah, Assistant Foreign Minister for Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled's office Ambassador Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Sabah, Assistant Foreign Minister for protocols Dhari Al-Ajran and Assistant Foreign Minister for Al-Jarallah's office Ayham Al-Omar. Earlier, Tillerson reiterated Washington's commitment to the security, safety and stability of the State of Kuwait. This came during a meeting with Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled, during which they discussed ways of boosting bilateral ties, regional and international issues of mutual interest.

Meanwhile, Oman and Qatar said they supported mediation of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to solve the Gulf crisis. This came during a meeting between Omani and Qatari Foreign Ministers, Yusuf Abdullah and Sheikh Mohammad Al-Thani respectively, the official ONA news agency reported. The two Ministers hoped Kuwait's mediation would help solve the Gulf crisis in a way that would preserve security and stability of the GCC, and its common action, added ONA.

Earlier on Monday, Sultan of Oman Qaboos Bin Saeed received a letter from Qatari Emir Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani, dealing with bilateral relations and issues of mutual concern. Asaad Bin Qariq, Oman's Deputy Prime Minister for International Affairs and special representative of the Omani Sultan was handed the letter by Sheikh Mohammad. Kuwait is turning into a political 'Mecca' this coming week, with high-profile Arab and foreign officials arriving and holding talks in light of mediating efforts led by His Highness the Amir to solve the dispute between Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Bahrain and the UAE on one side and Qatar on the other.

Boris Johnson, British Foreign Secretary, visited Kuwait while Tillerson arrived earlier in the north Gulf state in yet another attempt to tackle the dispute. German Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel also visited the region, including Kuwait. The three men threw their weight behind the Kuwaiti mediation. Within the framework of the mediation efforts, His Highness the Amir had paid visits to Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Qatar, where he held constructive talks with leaders there, who in turn, warmly welcomed the initiative. — KUNA

KUWAIT: Kuwait's Acting Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and Britain's National Security Advisor Mark Sedwill. — KUNA

Kuwait's Acting Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson.

Oil Minister, Chinese delegation discuss boosting energy, water cooperation

$709 million deal to develop South Matlaa infrastructure

KUWAIT: Means of promoting bilateral cooperation in the energy and water sectors, as well investing in Kuwait's Silk City and five islands projects, featured high on the agenda of a meeting Oil Minister Essam Al-Marzouq held with a visiting Chinese delegation yesterday.

Emerging from the meeting, the minister said that he and the Chinese discussed boosting ties in the oil, electricity and water sectors. Marzouq explained to the delegation Kuwait's needs of future energy in fields like exploration for oil, and investments in oil refineries as well as petrochemical complexes overseas. In addition, the two sides discussed Kuwait's needs of energy over the coming two decades, namely establishing power plants, either to be operated by fossil fuel or alternative energy.

Meanwhile, Kuwait's ambassador to China Samih Hayat said that the visit is part of efforts to boost bilateral cooperation in energy, trade and investment. Such steps go in line with His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's strategic vision 'Kuwait 2035' and China's Belt and Road Initiative, Hayat noted. The Kuwaiti envoy stressed sincere mutual desire to consolidate ties, saying this is part of His Highness the Amir's desire to develop Kuwait into a regional and international financial and commercial hub.

The visiting delegation includes experts and specialists from several government departments in China, among them the China Development Bank, the National Development and Reform Commission, the Urban Planning Society of China, the China Association of Development Zones, the China Transport Company and the China International Energy Group Co, Ltd (CIEG), besides other state bodies in infrastructure and giant projects.

Housing project

In the meantime, a Chinese firm has signed a contract with the Kuwaiti government worth KD 215 million ($709 million) to develop infrastructure and roads for a new housing project in Kuwait's South Matlaa, a Kuwaiti official said. The contract, signed during the visit of the official Chinese delegation, involves works for 18,000 housing units in the new city located west of Kuwait City, Kuwait's State Minister for Housing Affairs and State Minister for Services Yasser Abul said. It comes on the heels of several contracts in the housing and communications sectors, and reflects the positive outcome of the visit, he added, without specifying the company that signed the deal.

Furthermore, Chinese technology and smartphone giant Huawei will execute the second phase of a fiber optics project in Kuwait, after it signed a KD 22 million ($72 million) contract with Kuwait's Ministry of Services, Abul said.

He commented that the diverse nature of sectors Chinese companies are handling in Kuwait illustrates the "combined determination to develop these sectors, to reach new levels of cooperation and to boost bilateral relations" with Kuwait.

Kuwaiti-Cino relations are in "constant development and growth" as more and more Chinese companies are dealing with the Kuwaiti government, he said, particularly in the housing sector. The minister went on to welcome further investment from Chinese construction and building materials firms to benefit from the vast investment opportunities in Kuwait's housing sector.

'Kuwait 2035'

Earlier yesterday, Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah met with members of the Chinese delegation, as their discussion focused on finding ways to collaborate within the framework of the 'Kuwait 2035' development strategy.

Also, Minister of Public Works Abdurrahman Al-Mutawa and the visiting Chinese delegation discussed means of promoting bilateral ties in all fields. The official Chinese delegation arrived yesterday on a four-day visit to Kuwait for boosting relations and promoting strategic cooperation for the good of both sides, the Ministry of Public Works said in a statement. Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad visited China last May for fostering bilateral ties, focusing on the goals of the 'Kuwait 2035' vision. During the visit, Sheikh Nasser met with China's Vice President Li Yuanchao.

The official Chinese delegation, which arrived in Kuwait on Monday, has been discussing matters related Kuwait's development plan and ways it could contribute to China's recreation of the ancient Silk Route, nicknamed the Belt and Road global trade project. The Chinese intend to do this through the development of strategic projects, including Kuwait's planned Silk City project, a 250 sq/km free trade zone in the northern Subbiyya region and Kuwait's five islands. — KUNA

Oil Minister Essam Al-Marzouq speaks during the meeting

KUWAIT: Oil Minister Essam Al-Marzouq attends a meeting with the Chinese delegation. —KUNA

Oil Minister Essam Al-Marzouq (left) greets a member of the Chinese delegation, as Kuwait's ambassador to China Samih Hayat (center) looks on.

Minister of Public Works Abdurrahman Al-Mutawa meets with the visiting Chinese delegation.

Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah meets with a delegation from the China Development Bank (CDK).

Kuwait's State Minister for Housing Affairs and State Minister for Services Yasser Abul attends a meeting with the official Chinese delegation.

KUWAIT: People shield themselves from the sun in Kuwait City yesterday, as the maximum temperature recorded was 52 C degrees. —Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Roaming food carts exclusively for youth

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

Mohammad Al-Jabri

KUWAIT: Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Minister and State Minister for Municipal Affairs Mohammad Al-Jabri said his postponement of legalizing roaming food carts aims at adding other activities to the project, and stressed that youth should benefit from small businesses exclusively, hinting that studies are currently ongoing to prevent major companies from exploiting roaming food cart licenses.

Personal inquiry

The justice ministry launched its new upgrade of personal inquiry services using a PIN code instead of the civil ID number for more security and privacy. To activate the new update, if the user is subscribed to the SMS service, the system will send an SMS to the mobile phone with the PIN, then the user can complete the registration steps. If the user is not a subscriber, then he should go to the justice ministry or citizen service center to apply for the SMS service, then follow the rest of the steps online.

Al-Shamlan Marina

Municipal Council member Usama Al-Otaibi issued a press statement with regards to Al-Shamlan Marina's supposed relocation from Sharq, saying the council's environmental committee has not taken any decision in this regard, adding that the issue of slipways and marinas was discussed in general as an item on the agenda. He said the committee listened to Kuwait Ports Authority's explanation on slipways and marinas and the future plans for the facilities including Al-Shamlan Marina in Sharq.

KFSD, EPA meeting

Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFSD) Director General Major General Khaled Al-Mikrad held a meeting with the Deputy Director General for Technical Affairs at the Environment Public Authority (EPA) Mohammad Al-Enezi and Deputy Director General of the Industry Public Authority Fahhad Al-Mutairi. Several topics of mutual interest were discussed.

Kuwait looks forward to closer ties with Turkey: Minister

ISTANBUL: Kuwaiti Oil Minister Essam Al-Marzouq on Monday described the Turkish-Kuwaiti relations as strong, voicing the country's desire for closer energy relations with Ankara. Marzouq, also Minister of Electricity and Water, said the State of Kuwait is looking forward to investing in Turkey in energy and benefiting from Turkish experiences in the fields of industry, technology and others.

He referred that meetings during the 22nd session of the World Petroleum Congress were fruitful, and focused on the continued supply of energy to industrialized countries and on alternative energy. The congress discussed several issues mainly oil industry, technology, relations between oil consuming and producing countries, environment protection, investment problems and meeting demands for energy resources, the minister noted. The event kicked off on Sunday and runs until Thursday, with the participation of high-level executives from leading energy companies and up to 50 energy ministers. —KUNA

ISTANBUL: Kuwaiti Oil Minister Essam Al-Marzouq receives a memento during the 22nd session of the World Petroleum Congress. — KUNA

No delay in ministry dues' payment: Finance Minister

By A Saleh

Anas Al-Saleh

KUWAIT: Deputy Premier and Finance Minister Anas Al-Saleh said there are no delays by the ministry to pay dues to the Ministry of Electricity and Water (MEW), be it in the 2015-2016 budget or that of this year. Saleh said in an answer to a question by MP Safaa Al-Hashem that for independent establishments to keep their full profit or part of it is according to their establishment laws depends if they pay for expenses for their projects in the development plan or capital projects. This is bearing in mind that there are independent establishments whose project costs are more than their reserves, such as Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) and its subsidiaries, Kuwait Ports Authority and Industry Public Authority, he said. About bonds issued by the Central Bank of Kuwait, Saleh said the bank has not issued any bonds to finance the deficit in the 2015-2016 budget. The finance ministry has requested the participation of local banks in financing the budget deficit of the 2016-2017 fiscal year.

Sponsorship ban

The Interior Ministry's information technology sector upgraded the deportation system to lift the sponsorship ban on the sponsor automatically from the main computer of the interior ministry as soon as the deportee's ticket is paid. The relations and security information department said the new system aims to achieve public interest. The system will issue deportees' tickets, and record details of financial affairs and statistics of collecting tickets from sponsors, along with all other required details. It said the system went into effect on Sunday.

Kuwait urges US to lift ban on direct flights

WASHINGTON: The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Monday called on the US Transportation Security Administration (TSA) to reconsider its decision and lift ban imposed on Kuwait Airways' direct flights to America. The directorate urged the US officials to take into consideration security measures taken for this purpose. This came in a meeting between a Kuwaiti delegation from DGCA headed by Emad Al-Jluwi and TSA's officials, in the presence of some staff of Kuwait Embassy in Washington, said Jluwi. During the meeting, the US officials were appraised of measures taken on international standards pertaining to security of civil aviation at the Kuwait International Airport, he said.

The Kuwaiti delegation also asked TSA to coordinate and cooperate with DGCA on enhancing the implementation of security systems at the airport and the new terminals, he noted. The delegation expressed the directorate's desire to accelerate the start of cooperation in various fields, including training and security systems, and the start of implementing procedures of the US Border Clearance at the support terminal. The US officials voiced their appreciation to keenness of Kuwait on boosting constructive cooperation on the implementation of standards of civil aviation security. The delegation invited the US officials to visit the Kuwait International Airport in mid-August to be appraised of measures so as to lift ban on the direct flights, he concluded. —KUNA

WASHINGTON: Members of the Kuwaiti delegation from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA). —KUNA

KUWAIT: Ahmadi Governor Sheikh Fawaz Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received yesterday Chairman of the Kuwait Society for the Blind Fayez Al-Azmi, who was accompanied by Public Relations Director Adel Al-Otaibi. The two sides discussed boosting cooperation to organize social activities for the disabled around the governorate.

In Brief

Amir offers condolences

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah sent a cable of condolences to the family of Sheikh Muhsen Ajeel Al-Jarba, head of the Shammar Tribe, on the passing away of Sheikh Muhsen. His Highness the Amir prayed to Allah Almighty to bestow his blessing upon Sheikh Muhsen, and said the 'noble positions' of the deceased during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait would be always in Kuwaitis' minds. —KUNA

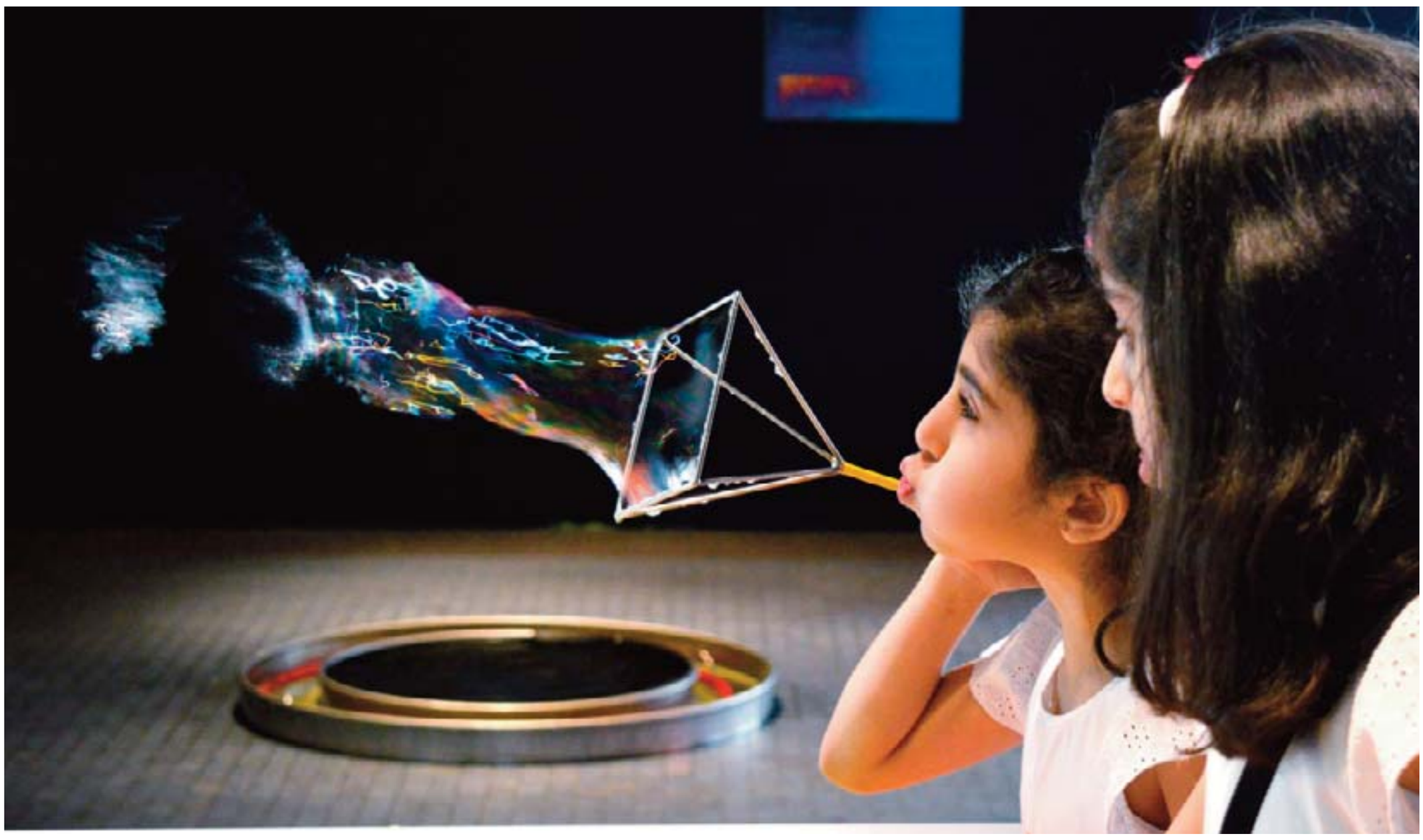
US Dollar stable at KD 0.303

KUWAIT: The US Dollar and Euro exchange rates were stable at KD 0.303 and KD 0.345 respectively, said the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) yesterday. The bank indicated that the Sterling Pound was still at KD 0.390 as oppose to the Swiss Franc, which was down to KD 0.313. The Japanese Yen stood the same at KD 0.002. —KUNA

Oil price down to $43.68 pb

KUWAIT: The price of Kuwait oil went down by 49 cents to $43.68 per barrel Monday as oppose to $44.17 pb last Friday, said Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) yesterday. The price of the Brent crude was down to $46.90 per barrel for August delivery, the same case with the West Texas Intermediate, which was down to $44.41 pb. —KUNA

Photo of the day



KUWAIT: A child looks on as another blows bubbles at the Discovery Place inside Kuwait's Scientific Center. Indoor activities are most popular in Kuwait during the summer when temperatures soar. —KUNA photo

The Commercial Real Estate Company sponsors engineering, petroleum students graduation projects

Project wins first place in 'Best Engineering Design'

KUWAIT: As part of The Commercial Real Estate Company ongoing 'We Care' - Social Responsibility initiatives, the company has been sponsoring and supporting the graduation projects for Kuwait University students for over 11 consecutive years now.

During the 32 Engineering Exhibition Competition that was recently concluded in Crowne Plaza Hotel 4-5 July under the patronage of Minister of Commerce and Industry and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Khaled Al-Roudhan, a unique project which was sponsored and supported by Al-Tijaria has won the first place.

The students involved in this project: Mohamed Waleed Al-Ayoub, Saad Saoud Al-Eteibi, Mohamed Humoud Al-Sabah, Abdulrazzaq Abdulfatah Marafie, Eissa Marwan Al-Eissa and Ali Hasan Taleb won the first prize as the 'The Best Engineering Design'. The project involved studying the maintenance system development at Kuwait Airways.

Rawan Adnan - Marketing and Leasing Department Manager stated that "the company believes in the powerful impact of human investment in building a successful society and impressing economy. Thus, the company supports youth education, especially the students from College of Engineering and Petroleum by financially supporting them all year around. This initiative encourages the students to do research, be creative and come up with graduation projects which can have an impact on the urban and social development in the State of Kuwait."

It is worth mentioning that The Commercial Real Estate Company has sponsored more than 2,700 students since the year 2006 and continues to do so till date. Rawan further stated that "The Commercial Real Estate Company is dedicating its efforts and care towards the youth and is liaising all of its resources to support them throughout their education and career.

KUWAIT: The Interior Ministry's Assistant Undersecretary for Border Security Affairs Major General Mansour Al-Awadhi honored a number of Border Security Department officers for their efforts in facilitating travel procedures during the recent Eid Al-Fitr holiday and summer vacation.

Firefighters battle farm blaze

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Firefighters tackled a blaze that spread over an estimated area of 100 square meters inside a Sulaibiya farm yesterday. The fire reportedly started in a machine used to manufacture asphalt inside the farm. Firemen managed to contain and put out the flames before they could reach diesel containers that were stored in the farm as well. No injuries were reported in the incident. Meanwhile, an investigation was opened to determine the cause of the fire.

Man killed, three hurt in roof collapse

KUWAIT: A man was killed and three of his colleagues were injured when the roof of a building under construction collapsed on them. The four Indian nationals were at work when the roof collapsed. Their colleagues rushed and got them out of the rubble, then called police and paramedics. Three were found severely injured, and one was pronounced dead on the scene. Investigations are underway.

Drunk 'fashion blogger' arrested

A famous 'fashion blogger' arrived in Kuwait from a neighboring Gulf country, and got into an argument with two policemen because they asked her to stay in line. She then insulted them and continued with behaving inappropriately. The woman, who was drunk, was arrested and taken to Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh police station. The two policemen filed a complaint and the investigator ordered that she be kept in jail until she sobers for questioning.

Drug addict detained

A young man decided to kill himself when his brothers tried to keep him from taking drugs. He was taken to hospital with various injuries and bruises. A security sources said the 29-year-old could not control himself after being kept from using drugs, so he started screaming, then hit his head hard on the wall, which left him severely injured. His family called police, and the man tried to attack policemen when they arrived, but his brothers controlled him and he was taken to hospital. He is facing legal action.

Fight

A group of young men who were using drugs had a dispute then beat up one of them, who was taken to Mubarak Hospital for treatment. The victim told police about the incident and they are in the process of arresting the suspects. Doctors at the hospital treating the victim, a bedoon, noticed his abnormal behavior due to using drugs and informed police. The victim confessed of using drugs with his friend in a flat.

Cable thief caught

Detectives arrested an Egyptian man on charges of stealing high voltage electricity cables that belong to the Ministry of Electricity and Water (MEW). Detectives received tips about a man who carried power cables on a half lorry and was seen by eyewitnesses using large cutters to cut suspended cables and cables on the ground. Police arrested the man red-handed while he was trying to sell the stolen cables. The man was referred to the public prosecution.

Attack

A citizen who went to help his wife, beat her friend following a dispute between the two in Saad Al-Abdullah. The victim went to the area's police station and told officers there about the incident. Police are investigating.

Kidnap

A Syrian man took his three children from their mother and traveled to Lebanon. The mother lodged a complaint at Fintas police station. The Syrian told his Lebanese wife he wanted to take the children on a picnic, but he took them to the airport and left to Beirut. He is placed on the wanted list.

Car thief apprehended

Jahra police arrested a bedoon (stateless) man while he was driving a stolen car that was carrying license plates different than the ones registered in the traffic department's records. The suspect was arrested and the car was sent to concerned authorities.

—Translated from the Arabic press

56% respondents in Kuwait believe there is a skills gap

KUWAIT: A recent study titled 'The Middle East Skills Report,' conducted by Bayt.com - the Middle East's number one job site - and YouGov - a research and consulting agency, have found that 56 percent of respondents in Kuwait believe that there is a skills gap in the market.

At the regional level, 65 percent of employers believe there is a skills gap in the market, while 7 percent of employers said there isn't a gap, and 28 percent said they did not know. Employers and job seekers seem to be in agreement on the presence of a skills gap in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. The majority of job seekers (59 percent) also think that there is a skills gap, while 11 percent think there is not.

Job seeker challenges

From a job seeker's perspective, according to respondents, the number one reason for not finding jobs fitting their skills set is a "lack of awareness" (33 percent) of what skills are in high demand. This sentiment varies with age: 38 percent among those aged 40+, compared to 34 percent amongst ages 30-39, and 30 percent amongst those below 30 years old.

Just above a quarter of job seekers (26 percent) also claimed that the educational system doesn't train students on skills which are relevant in today's marketplace. This sentiment is more prevalent in North Africa (31 percent) and amongst recent graduates (32 percent).

Today's most demanded skills

According to employers, the top three most important skills for mid-career or junior positions are "teamwork" (83 percent of employers said it is very important), "time management" (80 percent said it is very important) and "written communication" (76 percent said it is very important).

Job seekers also agree; 84 percent said that "teamwork" is a very important skill, 83 percent said "time management" is very important, and 79 percent said "written communication" is very important.

When it comes to senior positions, the survey showed that the top three most important skills according to employers are "time management" (89 percent of employers said it is very important), "teamwork" (88 percent said it is very important), and "people management" (87 percent said it is very important).

Job seekers are in agreement for senior positions as well. 89 percent said "time management" is a very important skill, 89 percent said "teamwork" is very important, and 87 percent said "people management" is very important.

Today's most scarce skills

Less than one in three (32 percent) employers claimed that it is "very difficult" to find good candidates for junior or mid-career positions. On the job seeker's side, only a quarter (25 percent) of them have claimed that it was "very difficult" to find jobs matching their skills level.

According to those surveyed, there is a much bigger gap between what employers and job seekers think when it comes to senior roles. Only about a quarter (24 percent) of senior employees have reported that it is "very difficult" to find a job matching their skills. On the other side, the majority of businesses (58 percent) face challenges in sourcing employees with relevant skills for senior positions.

When looking to hire for mid-career / junior positions, 47 percent of employers surveyed said that they face the most challenges when searching for candidates skilled at "creative thinking." 44 percent of employers said "global mindset" is very difficult to find and 43 percent said "visual thinking" is very difficult to find.

Job seekers seem to tell a similar story by rating themselves lowest on two of these skills. Only 50 percent of job seekers claimed to be "very good" at global mindset and 53 percent claimed to be "very good" at visual thinking.

However, there is a discrepancy in their evaluation of their creative thinking skills against what employers said: 59 percent of job seekers evaluate themselves as "very good" while 47 percent of employers say it is "very difficult" to find this skill.

For senior roles, 53 percent of employers claimed that it is "very difficult" to find candidates who possess creative thinking. 51 percent of employers said the same about critical thinking, while 49 percent said that about global mindset.

Similarly to junior roles, job seekers rate themselves highly on the most critical skills. 93 percent of them said they are "very good" at team work, 87 percent said they are "very good" at time management, 87 percent said they are "very good" at written communication, and 86 percent said they are "very good" at people management.

However, on time management and team work, the gap between job seekers' evaluation and businesses' difficulty in finding the right skills is to the extreme. For time management, 87 percent of job seekers rate themselves as "very good", while 47 percent of employers said it is "very difficult" to find good candidates with this skill. Similarly, for team work, 93 percent of job seekers rate themselves as "very good", while 45 percent of employers said it is "very difficult" to find good candidates with this skill.

On job seekers' self-evaluations, the survey revealed that they rated themselves highest on the same skills they said are the most important. This is consistent but may also suggest that candidates felt compelled to say that they perform well on the skills they had identified as being critical.

Suhail Masri, Vice President of Employer Solutions, Bayt.com, said: "It is evident that the region experiences several changes and trends that are impacting the labor market and the type of skills that are in high demand. We have dedicated our platform, as the Middle East's #1 Job Site, to facilitate connections and exchanging information between job seekers and job providers in hopes of matching more talent and securing more job opportunities. In face of the skills gap and the reported changes in demand, we encourage all professionals to utilize Bayt.com, our products, services, and information - such as this research - that can help them further understand the regional skills gap and work towards achieving better career trajectories and successful talent acquisition strategies."

Preparing for future jobs

The majority (78 percent) of job seekers surveyed claimed that they are committed to acquiring and developing new skills. However, senior job seekers are more likely than junior ones to read books on new skills (63 percent vs 57 percent), study industry best practices (51 percent vs 41 percent), attend company training (42 percent vs 27 percent), attend conferences (35 percent vs 23 percent) and attend extra classroom courses (31 percent vs 18 percent).

On the employers' side, eight in ten companies support their employees through a variety of initiatives. Mainly, companies organize training sessions (49 percent) and inform employees on industry best practices and implement them internally (38 percent). There is also some interest in offering extra classroom courses beyond the company trainings (24 percent), organizing industry tests for employees (23 percent) and paying for employees' participation in conferences (23 percent).

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AHMADABAD: Indian students hold placards and offer tributes to the victims of a gunfire attack on a bus carrying pilgrims, in Ahmadabad, India. — AP

Hindus continue pilgrimage in Kashmir after attack

More security provided for buses carrying pilgrims

SRINAGAR: As the Indian government blamed separatist rebels yesterday for gunning down seven Hindu pilgrims and wounding 19 more before fleeing into the night, Kashmiri rebel groups condemned the rare, deadly attack on civilians and insisted they had no part in it. Meanwhile, thousands of Hindus continued a religious pilgrimage undeterred, as Indian soldiers and police increased security along the mountain route to the Amarnath cave shrine in the mostly Muslim region.

Police said the attack Monday night began with gunmen unleashing a hail of bullets on an armored police vehicle and a police patrol. Police returned fire in both incidents and the gunmen responded, with bullets striking a bus carrying 60 Hindus returning from paying obeisance at the shrine. Several people who were wounded said the attackers fired at the bus from three directions for nearly five minutes. They said the driver kept driving the bus as it was being struck with bullets near the southern town of Anantnag on the main highway linking Kashmir with the rest of India.

The annual summer pilgrimage to the Amarnath cave shrine has been targeted in the past and takes place under heavy security. Opponents of Indian rule in Kashmir accuse Hindu-majority India of using the pilgrimage as a political statement to bolster its claim to the disputed region. Thousands of Indian army and paramilitary soldiers are deployed on the route to the cave shrine high in the Himalayas each summer. Officials said the bus was violating nighttime travel restrictions, which are imposed because security patrols are withdrawn after sunset.

Cowardly attacks

More security was provided yesterday for the buses that carry pilgrims to base camps where they start walking up a mountain path to the Amarnath cave. Police were still searching for the assailants Tuesday. They have blamed Muslim militants, but no group has claimed responsibility. Three top separatist leaders in Kashmir have condemned the attack. Officials say most of the wounded pilgrims were released from hospitals after overnight treatment.

The seven bodies were airlifted to New Delhi for the journey to the pilgrims' home states of Gujarat and Maharashtra in western India. Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted that "India will never get bogged down by such cowardly attacks and the evil designs of hate."

SRINAGAR: Indian paramilitary soldiers frisk a Kashmiri civilian left and an Indian pilgrim, right, as others wait for their turn at a temporary checkpoint near the pilgrim base camp in Pahalgam, about 100 Kilometers south of Srinagar, Kashmir. — AP

Separatist leaders demanded an independent investigation into the attack on pilgrims, which is rare in the insurgency-wracked region. "This incident goes against the very grain of Kashmiri ethos," three top separatist leaders, Syed Ali Geelani, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq and Mohammed Yasin Malik, said in a joint statement in Srinagar, the main city in Indian-controlled Kashmir. The attack sparked outrage across much of India. In the Jammu region of Kashmir, which is dominated by Hindus, hundreds of protesters shouted angry slogans against the militants and burned a faceless effigy meant to represent both terrorism and Pakistan, which India blames for supporting the rebels. Many shops and businesses were also shuttered in Jammu, after trade unions and political parties called for a protest strike.

Meanwhile, students in the Gujarati city of Ahmadabad gathered for a sit-in to protest all religious violence, while peace activists planned a candlelight vigil in New Delhi on Tuesday night. The Press Trust of India news agency said the last major attack on Amarnath pilgrims occurred in 2000 when gunmen struck in the Pahalgam area and killed 30 people, including some local porters who carry the baggage of pilgrims on the mountain path. —AP

16 killed in US military plane crash in Mississippi

WASHINGTON: All 16 troops aboard a Marine Corps air refueling and transport aircraft were killed when the plane crashed in a field in rural Mississippi, officials confirmed yesterday. Authorities provided few details on what went wrong, or the nature of the Marines' mission. The KC-130, an air refueling aircraft that can also carry troops and cargo, took off from a Marine Corps air base at Cherry Point, North Carolina on Monday and disappeared from radar over Mississippi, crashing in the late afternoon.

"A Marine Corps KC-130 transport aircraft crashed in LeFlore County, Mississippi, on July 10 at approximately 4:00 pm CDT (2100 GMT), claiming the lives of 16 service members," the Marine Corps said in a statement. The cause of the crash is under investigation. US President Donald Trump, in a tweet, said the news was "heartbreaking." "Melania and I send our deepest condolences to all!" he added. Mississippi congressman Steven Palazzo said on Twitter he was "devastated," and offered prayers for the families of the victims.

The plane crashed in a soybean field in a largely rural area in the western part of the state. All the victims were on the Marine Corps aircraft and there were no survivors, Leflore County emergency management director Fred Randle told CNN. Helicopter footage taken by local news station Fox 40 showed a large gash in a green field, with fiercely burning fires sending up plumes of black smoke. Firefighters sprayed the aircraft with huge layers of foam to quell the blaze.

Randle told NBC News that the scene was unsafe due to the presence of fuel. The FBI was on hand, along with local and state emergency responders and investigators, he said. Mississippi Governor Phil Bryant called for prayers for "those hurting after this tragedy." "Our men and women in uniform risk themselves every day to secure our freedom," he said in a brief statement on Facebook. The names of the victims were being withheld pending notification of their next of kin.

Accidents involving US military aircraft are not uncommon, but rarely do they claim so many lives. The crash of a twin-engine C-23 Sherpa in the southern state of Georgia in March 2001 claimed the lives of 21 people. In April 2000, 19 people were killed in the crash of a Marine Corps MV-22 Osprey, a tilt-rotor aircraft that flies like a plane but can hover and land like a helicopter. — AFP

MISSISSIPPI: In this frame from video, smoke and flames rise from a military plane that crashed in a farm field, in Itta Bena, Mississippi, killing several. — AP

In small-town India, book helps gay men come out of the closet

CHENNAI: Writing about the everyday life of his gay protagonist Mohanaswamy, Indian author Vasudhendra was acutely aware of the fact that he himself had not yet found the courage to come out of the closet. For four years he wrote short stories inspired by his own life, his struggle to be open about his sexuality, his despair and frustration that nearly drove him to suicide - quietly breathing life into Mohanaswamy, the hero of his stories.

Just days before his book was first published in 2013, under a pseudonym in Kannada, the regional language of the southern state of Karnataka, he plucked up the courage to tell his sister that he was gay. "And with me and Mohanaswamy, many of my readers embraced their truth," the award winning Kannada writer said, adding that when he finally did reveal his identity, gay men from across Karnataka started calling him, sharing stories with him, crying, laughing and talking.

"Many readers, who called me, from villages and small towns, do not read English and for them the Mohanaswamy series was a way to rediscover themselves and find solace in the fact that they were not alone," he said. The acclaimed series, which was recently translated in English, will also be published in other Indian languages, including Telugu and Malayalam in the coming months.

"Gay men don't only live in an urban setting. Thousands are growing up in villages and towns, with no way to access information on sexuality, most of which is available only in English," Vasudhendra, who goes by just one name, said. "More has to be written and it has to be written in the language people are familiar with." Since the stories were published gay women have approached him to write about their lives, frustrated that they cannot even find magazine articles that reflect their situation.

"For women it is so much tougher because saying 'no' to a marriage is never an option," he said. "What they go through is something I cannot imagine because at least I got away by refusing to marry." There is no official data on the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) population in India, but the government in the past has submitted in the Supreme Court that there are an estimated 2.5 million gay people in the country. Those numbers reflect only those who have self declared to the Health Ministry and will be far higher as many individuals conceal their identity fearing discrimination, campaigners say.

Healing process

"In Kannada literature, homosexuality has been portrayed in a very negative way, pushing it to the margins," said Vasudhendra, who came out in his early 40s. "It took me a long time because I also feared discrimination and lacked courage. Many go through their life keeping their sexuality a secret." The software engineer turned author vividly recalls a telephone call from an elderly man after the Mohanaswamy stories were published. "The man said he had regretted his marriage every single day," said Vasudhendra, 48.

"And when he read my book he relived his own struggle with his sexuality and the lie his life had been. I realized then that my story had resonated with people who live in small towns and villages, just like the one I grew up in." The series of 11 stories of homosexual love and lives explore sexuality, urbanization and class. Mohanaswamy talks about losing his partner to a woman, mentions an imaginary girlfriend to a fellow passenger on a plane while picturing the man he is in love with, losing friends, being shown around a flat by a real-estate agent who assumes he has a wife and children. "Mohanaswamy dreams of living a simple, dignified life that would allow him to leave, even forget, the humiliation and fears of adolescence, the slurs his mind still carries and the despair that made him crave to conform," is how the stories are described on the book jacket. While city readers have told the author these are "once upon a time in India" stories, rural readers say they are ahead of their time.

"Being gay is not easy, especially in small communities, where talking about it is taboo. It gives you many sleepless nights, there is constant pressure to get married and many friendships get ruined," said Vasudhendra. "Writing the stories was a healing process for me and for many of my readers, it was a book they understood."—Reuters

Islamic State built in staying power with global jihadis

WASHINGTON: The Islamic State group's mix of a local insurgency and digitally-connected global jihadis gives the group staying power and the means to re-launch its future, from small cells of extremists escaping the war zone in Iraq and Syria to those who never went there in the first place. The impending loss of Mosul and Raqqa cuts out the urban heart of its self-proclaimed caliphate, but the extremist organization has built-in plans to endure and has shown a degree of flexibility that will be difficult to counteract.

For more than a year, Islamic State has acknowledged the possibility of losing the territory that propelled it to the forefront of the global jihadi movement - and drew thousands of foreign fighters. Islamic State's goal since then has been to maintain its local and global support base in the face of overwhelming defeat. Whether it succeeds depends on what happens well after today's battles are over.

Escape cells

A first group of Islamic State fighters from Syria and Iraq numbering more than 100 arrived in Afghanistan at the beginning of February, followed by a smaller group, around 20, at the end of March, according to a UN report released last week. The group is unpopular among average Afghans, but shows traction among the young and, most importantly, receives ample funding from Islamic State's central command to pay new fighters triple what the Taliban offers - $500 to $600 a month.

The UN report said Islamic State has warned its Afghanistan contingent that it will soon need to be self-financing, an ominous sign for the organization that once pulled in millions of dollars in oil money, ransoms and extortion. Other groups of foreign fighters are feared to be trying to make their way back to Europe or North Africa, to ether plot attacks there or simply await orders. In Europe, this has fed fears of extremists hiding among the influx of migrants, while North Africa is "really unstable. ... It's awash in weaponry," said Colin Clarke, an analyst with the RAND think tank.

Islamic State is "a global group but it's more regionally anchored. I don't see them taking up and traveling wholesale to another place. They're going to go where they have roots. They're going to seek out these weak states. They're going to insinuate themselves in local conflicts," he said.

Hostile takeover

Al-Qaida and the Islamic State group split in 2014, driven apart less by ideology than by a dispute over timing and tactics. Now known as Hayat Tahrir al-Sham in its latest rebranding effort, Al-Qaeda is on the rise in some parts of Syria and in recent days has begun targeting what it calls "organization cells" of the Islamic State group in Idlib and other Syrian provinces. The two groups have considerable crossover - and both claim the mantle of Osama bin Laden. The Al-Qaeda campaign could be a precursor to demands for a merger or hostile takeover, complete with a choice of death or repentance from rank-and-file defectors.

"The differences between these groups are more in style and tone than in substance," said Bruce Hoffman, the head of Georgetown University's security studies program and author of "Inside Terrorism." Many of Islamic State's foreign fighters, especially those from Europe, headed to Syria with the expectation of joining Al-Qaeda's branch there, then switched to what they believed was the winning side. Changing back will not be very difficult, Hoffman said. " Al-Qaeda has been waiting in the wings and been letting ISIS take all the heat," Hoffman said, using an alternative acronym for IS.

Fighting - or hiding - in place

Iraq and Syria themselves offer plenty of safe havens for local extremist fighters biding their time. At its height, IS held vast stretches of territory by promising not just brutality, but a religious government beyond corruption that would protect against arbitrary punishment, theft and graft in the service of a global movement for Sunni Muslims everywhere. The promises tapped especially into the grievances of Iraqi Sunnis, who felt abandoned by the Shiite-led government in Baghdad and were suspicious of the Kurdish government in Irbil.

Many in the US have called on the Iraqi government to ensure that Sunnis share in the country's gains going forward - a step that will prove especially complex given that Sunni areas have seen widespread destruction in the fight against the extremists. Block after block of shattered homes line the roads of Mosul, Fallujah and Ramadi. "It's almost at a new level of divisiveness and an unrelenting decade of bloodletting has made any sense of rebuilding a civil society unbelievably challenging," Hoffman said. Islamic State retains a powerful presence in Iraq's Anbar province and in the city of Tal Afar.

Islamic State's leadership still has a core of leaders from Saddam Hussein's Baathist organization, known for their survival skills and the support networks they built - something the group's spokesman, Abu Muhammad Adnani, noted in a message before he was killed last summer in a US airstrike: To survive "whether Allah blesses us with consolidation or we move into the bare, open desert, displaced and pursued."

Revenge attacks

A major aspect of Islamic State's propaganda narrative has been to offer a haven to Sunnis worldwide and until recently its videos and photos made a point of tempering extreme brutality with images of abundant harvests, children at play and efficient, free medical care. Recently, however, its videos have depicted airstrikes destroying the caliphate, providing a powerful new message - vengeance. Last month's attack at London Bridge was claimed by Islamic State as revenge against the US-backed coalition, and the group pledged more violence to come.

With supporters from around the world linked by social media and thousands of pieces of propaganda, security officials in Europe and the US fear similar attacks are in the offing. At its height, Islamic State had tens of thousands of fighters at its disposal, though estimates varied widely. Airstrikes killed a vast percentage, the streams of Europeans heading to the war zone have dried up, and new recruits from the region are growing scarce, but its survival may not depend on numbers alone.

"The numbers may never be their 60,000 fighters or whatever, but the attraction of terrorism is the disproportionate effect a few people can have on the enemy societies and that'll be enough to keep it alive," Hoffman said. "The most visceral emotion we know is revenge. It is cathartic and self-satisfying and it becomes a duty."—AP

MOSUL: Airstrikes target Islamic State positions on the edge of the Old City a day after Iraq's prime minister declared total victory in Mosul, Iraq.—AP

Sporadic clashes in Mosul after victory declaration

Iraqi forces, US-led coalition fail to adapt their tactics

MOSUL: Sporadic clashes erupted in Mosul yesterday, a day after Iraq's prime minister declared "total victory" over the Islamic State group, with several airstrikes hitting the Old City neighborhood that was the scene of the fierce battle's final days. Plumes of smoke rose into the air as IS mortar shells landed near Iraqi positions and heavy gunfire could be heard on the western edge of the Old City. At times heavy, the clashes underscored the dangers still posed by the militants after Iraqi forces announced they retook full control of Mosul, the country's second-largest city, three years after it was seized by extremists bent on building a global caliphate.

Meanwhile, Amnesty International warned in a report released yesterday that the conflict in Mosul has created a "civilian catastrophe," with the extremists carrying out forced displacement, summary killings and using civilians as human shields. The report also detailed violations by Iraqi forces and the US-led coalition. "The scale and gravity of the loss of civilian lives during the military operation to retake Mosul must immediately be publicly acknowledged at the highest levels of government in Iraq and states that are part of the US-led coalition," said Lynn Maalouf, the research director for Mideast at Amnesty.

The report, which covers the first five months of this year, noted how IS fighters moved civilians with them around the city, preventing them from escaping, creating battle spaces with dense civilian populations while "Iraqi forces and the US-led coalition failed to adapt their tactics." The Iraqi forces and the US-led coalition "continued to use imprecise, explosive weapons with wide area effects in densely populated urban environments," Amnesty stated, adding that some violations may constitute war crimes.

On Monday evening, Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi came to Mosul for the second day in a row to declare "total victory," flanked by his senior military leadership at a small base on the edge of the Old City. But he also alluded to the brutality of the conflict, saying the triumph had been achieved "by the blood of our martyrs." In Geneva, the UN human rights chief urged Iraq's government to ensure that human rights will be respected in post-IS Mosul.

Daily horrors

Zeid Ra'ad al-Hussein described Mosul's fall as the "turning point" in the conflict against IS, but warned the group continues to subject people to "daily horrors" in its remaining strongholds of Tal Afar, west of Mosul, and Hawijah, north of Baghdad. "Horrific though the crimes of ISIS are, there is no place for vengeance," said Zeid, who is a Jordanian prince, using an alternative acronym for the Islamic State group. He cited allegations of threats of collective punishment and forced evictions in Mosul by Iraqi security forces and their allies. He also cited three years of rights violations during IS' control of Mosul, including abuses like sexual slavery of women and girls that "have left deep scars on Iraqi society."

In Baghdad, Shiite politician Karim al-Nouri warned that defeating IS in Mosul doesn't mean that "terrorism" is finished and urged the government to review its policies for dealing with Sunni areas of the country to "avoid previous mistakes that led to the emergence" of IS. The government needs to work on "removing fears of marginalization and terrorism affiliation in Sunni areas," said al-Nouri, a senior member of Badr Organization. He said he believes the Iraqi security forces should stay in Mosul until it is fully secure, before handing over to local forces. Lawmaker Intisar al-Jabouri from Nineveh province, where Mosul is the capital, said that uprooting IS' "extremism ideology" was key for a peaceful future in Mosul, which reeled under the extremists' harsh rule for three years.

She urged Baghdad to invest in "good relations" between the residents and the security forces and take all "necessary measures to prevent terrorism groups from returning to Mosul." While Mosul fell to the Islamic State group in a matter of days in 2014, the campaign to retake the city, which began last October, has lasted nearly nine months. For more than two years before the operation started, Iraqi forces backed by coalition airstrikes slowly clawed back territory from IS elsewhere in Iraq, and tens of thousands of Iraqi troops went through a massive coalition training program.

Caliphate

The IS defeat in Mosul dealt a huge blow to the group's so-called Islamic "caliphate" - territory that the militants seized, spanning large swaths of both Iraq and Syria - but also killed thousands, left entire neighborhoods in ruins and displaced nearly 900,000 from their homes. Thousands of civilians are estimated to have been killed in the fight for the city, according to the provincial council of Nineveh, where Mosul is the capital - a toll that does not include those still believed buried under collapsed buildings. Iraq's military does not release official casualty numbers for soldiers killed in combat.

A statement late Monday from IS claimed its fighters were still attacking Iraqi soldiers in the al-Maydan area of Mosul's Old City, purportedly killing and wounding many and seizing weapons and ammunition. "The soldiers of the caliphate in Mosul continue to accomplish epics until they achieve either victory or martyrdom," it said. Also Monday, the United Nations said that of the more than 897,000 people displaced from Mosul, thousands will probably not be able to return because of "extensive damage caused during the conflict."

"Make no mistake, this victory alone does not eliminate ISIS, and there's still a tough fight ahead," Lt. Gen. Stephen Townsend, the top US commander in Iraq said in a recorded video from Baghdad following al-Abadi's statement. ISIS is another acronym for IS, also referred to as Daesh, an Arabic name. "The coalition will continue to support our Iraqi partners until ISIS is defeated in Iraq," Townsend added, calling on Iraqis to unite and prevent a return of the conditions that allowed the extremists' rise more than three years ago.—AP

MOSUL: In this file photo, fighters from the Islamic State group parade in a commandeered Iraqi security forces armored vehicle down a main road at the northern city of Mosul, Iraq.—AP

US-backed fighters take IS held village outside Raqa

BEIRUT: US-backed fighters said they have seized a village where the Islamic State group had a training camp and base near the jihadist stronghold of Raqa in northern Syria. The advance comes as the Syrian Democratic Forces militia, an alliance of Kurdish and Arab fighters, battles to oust IS from Raqa, one of their last remaining bastions in Syria. "The SDF has captured the village of Al-Akeryshi east of the city (of Raqa) and IS car bomb attacks attempting to take it back have failed," the alliance said late Monday.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a Britain-based monitor, said the village had been used by IS as both a military base and a training camp named after slain Al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden. But the jihadist group also carried out a massacre of up to 200 of its own members in the village in 2015, according to the monitor, executing fighters who were accused of seeking to leave its ranks.

The SDF has captured around 30 percent of Raqa city since it entered the IS bastion in June after a months-long operation to capture territory in the surrounding province.

The US-backed coalition fighting IS in Syria and Iraq has provided the SDF with key support ranging from air strikes to weaponry and advisors on the ground.—AFP

Libya clashes leave four dead in E Tripoli

TRIPOLI: Clashes between forces loyal to Libya's unity government and rival fighters east of Tripoli have left four people dead including at least two civilians, the health ministry said. Another 21 people were wounded in the fighting on Sunday and Monday in Garabulli about 60 kilometers east of the capital, the ministry said overnight on Facebook. Two foreign workers, whose nationalities were unclear, were among those killed, it said.

Clashes broke out on Sunday evening between forces loyal to the Government of National Accord and fighters aligned with former prime minister Khalifa Ghweil who refuses to recognize the UN-backed government in Tripoli, witnesses said. The violence was continued at dawn yesterday, they said. Pro-GNA forces backed by dozens of tanks and pick-up trucks mounted with anti-aircraft guns deployed east of the capital heading for Garabulli on the weekend, the witnesses said.

On Friday the GNA warned groups it described as "outlaws" against attempting to advance on Tripoli, adding that it had instructed security forces to prevent an assault on the capital. Libya has been wracked by chaos since the 2011 toppling of dictator Moamer Kadhafi, with various militias and administrations vying for control of the oil-rich country. A rival authority based in the country's east has refused to recognize the GNA since it started working in Tripoli in March last year.—AFP

Thousands mourn Srebrenica massacre victims

SREBRENICA: Thousands gathered in Srebrenica yesterday to mark the 1995 massacre of some 8,000 Bosnian Muslims, Europe's worst atrocity since World War II, with some giving their loved ones a proper burial for the first time. The remains of 71 victims of the bloodshed, considered genocide by international justice, will be laid to rest in a joint funeral at a memorial cemetery in Potocari, near Srebrenica. They include seven people who were under 18 when they were killed and a 33-year-old woman.

Adela Efendic said she had come to "finally say goodbye" to her father Senaid, who was 35 when he was killed. "His remains were found nine years ago in a common grave, but only a few bones," the 22-year-old said, her head covered with a violet veil and tears streaming down her cheeks. "We were waiting hoping to find more, but nothing turned up... We decided to bury him now so his bones find peace," said Efendic, who was only 20 days old when her father died.

BOSNIA: Bosnian Muslim people pray in front of coffins during a funeral ceremony for dozens of newly identified victims of the 1995 massacre, at the memorial centre of Potocari near Srebrenica, 150 kms north east of Sarajevo, Bosnia. —AP

"I have only one photo of him, a small one, like for an ID card. But my mother told me a lot about him ... it allows me to imagine him." Bosnian Serb forces captured the eastern Bosnian town, a UN-protected enclave at the time, on July 11, 1995, five months before the end of Bosnia's inter-ethnic war. In the following days they summarily killed some 8,000 Muslim men and boys. So far the remains of 6,429 Srebrenica victims have been buried at the memorial site and 233 in other cemeteries, according to Bosnia's institute of missing people.

The remains of more than 1,000 other victims still have to be located. The victims were found in some 80 mass graves of which the last one was discovered in December 2015. Among the identified victims there were 22 women and some 440 children who were under 18 when they were killed, according to the institute. In 2016, a UN tribunal found Bosnian Serb wartime leader Radovan Karadzic guilty of genocide over his role in the atrocity and sentenced him to 40 years in jail.

Bosnian Serb wartime military chief Ratko Mladic is expecting a verdict by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in November. Bosnian Serbs still deny the Srebrenica massacre was an act of genocide, although international courts have ruled so. Bosnia's 1992-1995 war between its Croats, Muslims and Serbs claimed some 100,000 lives.—AFP

Venezuela enters crucial week in battle over constitution rewrite

Opposition to hold its own symbolic public vote

CARACAS: Pro- and anti-government groups are battling fiercely for public support over a contested plan by embattled President Nicolas Maduro to have a new body elected this month to rewrite the constitution. The opposition, energized by the release from jail of one of its emblematic leaders, Leopoldo Lopez, is leading the charge against the new assembly to be chosen in a July 30 election. On Monday it organized a demonstration in Caracas, during which dozens of protesters and some security force personnel confronting them were injured. Unrest also spread to other cities.

On Sunday, the opposition will hold its own symbolic public vote on whether the new constitutional assembly should be established. "This population has decided to continue the fight for liberty," one opposition lawmaker taking part, Freddy Guevara, said. "Sunday will be the biggest act of civil disobedience in Venezuela's history." With Maduro determined to see through the process-which critics view as a way for him to bypass the opposition-led parliament-there are fears of more violence in the streets.

Since April 1, more than 90 people have been killed during protests. The latest was a 16-year-old killed Monday in La Isabelica, a town in northern Venezuela's Carabobo state, authorities said on Twitter. In what could be an ominous sign of violence yet to come, a candidate for Maduro's constitutional assembly was shot to death Monday in Maracay, capital of the central state of Aragua. According to the Telesur news channel, Jose Luis Rivas, 42, was gunned down at a campaign event.

CARACAS: Members of the National Guard are caught up in a blast during protests in Caracas.—AFP

Dictatorship

The Venezuelan president, who rules over a once flush oil-rich nation reduced to penury, has been accused by the influential Catholic Church of turning the country into a "military dictatorship." However Russian President Vladimir Putin, a longtime ally, on Monday praised Maduro in a telephone call for "his efforts in maintaining stability and peace in the country," according to a Venezuelan foreign ministry statement. Putin also endorsed Maduro's allegations that he was the victim of a foreign plot to topple him, the statement said.

Campaigning for Venezuela's controversial constitutional assembly is to end on July 27. The opposition coalition has said it will not field any candidates in an election it denounces as a "fraud." It has been bolstered by Lopez's exit on Saturday from prison, where he had been kept since 2014 on charges of inciting violence. He is serving the rest of his 14-year sentence under home detention in the capital, although his lawyers said they are looking to have that restriction lifted too, so he is completely free.

On Sunday—the 100th day of the protest wave against Maduro — 4,000 demonstrators marched against the president, some of them wearing T-shirts with Lopez's face and carrying banners that read: "One hundred days and I continue to rebel against tyranny." "I reiterate my commitment to fighting until Venezuela's freedom is won," Lopez said in a statement read by a leader of his party. The opposition also said it would continue to press for the liberation of 400 other detainees it describes as "political prisoners," but who the government insists are common criminals.

Possible talks?

One analyst, Luis Vicente Leon, said switching Lopez from prison to house arrest suggested the government hoped to lower tensions, and that political negotiations now seemed possible. Maduro especially wanted to avoid fractures within the army, without which his grip on power would end, he said. Other observers noted that the opposition leader's release came three days after pro-Maduro militants wielding sticks and pipes stormed parliament and beat lawmakers, injuring at least seven, during a nine-hour assault.

Maduro publicly condemned the violence and said he had ordered an investigation. The officer in charge of parliamentary security was on Monday charged with human rights violations for allowing the attack to happen. Inside Maduro's own camp, there are voices of dissent. The country's attorney general, Luisa Ortega, a strong supporter of Maduro's late predecessor and mentor Hugo Chavez, has come out against the constitutional assembly and criticized government and military actions.

Venezuela's Supreme Court is holding legal proceedings against Ortega and is due to rule this week on whether to suspend her from office and put her on trial. A grouping of Latin American and Spanish attorneys general, AIAMP, is to hold an extraordinary meeting in Argentina on Thursday to discuss Ortega's situation. The body has already held two similar gatherings on the same issue. In the most recent one last month, it voiced support for Ortega and slammed the "illegal" pressure against her. —AFP

NIS: A picture shows co-director of the Russian-Serbian Humanitarian Centre (RSHC) Viacheslav Vlasenko presenting the satellite weather monitoring system, in the southern Serbian town of Nis.—AFP

Russian aid centre in Serbia rebuffs spy fears

NIS, Serbia: Showing off tents, lifeboats and other rescue equipment at the Russian-Serbian Humanitarian Centre, co-director Viacheslav Vlasenko laughs at Western suspicions that his workplace is a front for a spy operation. "We are very open here," the cordial 70-year-old Russian said at the base in the strategically-located town of Nis in southern Serbia-not far from Kosovo with a large NATO-led peacekeeping force. Vlasenko listed all the crises in the Balkans that he says his team has helped to tackle, including forest fires, major floods and the huge influx of migrants across the region in 2015.

"We are not politicians, we are fulfilling our mission, I hope in a good way," he said. The centre was set up on the basis of a 2012 agreement between Russia and Serbia, with the stated aim of providing humanitarian assistance and training for emergencies in the Balkans. But since its inception, the project has sparked concerns among Western officials and analysts that Moscow has underhand intentions of using it for espionage or as a so-called lily pad-an outwardly low-key advance base for military intervention in the region.

Russia's as-yet-ungranted request for the centre and its staff to have diplomatic immunity has only heightened the suspicions, although Vlasenko insisted that the request had been made simply to reduce taxes. "You have seen now each corner of our centre," he said after giving a tour of the building. "Is it possible to use it for military (purposes)? It's nonsense."

Russia is often perceived as a big brother figure to Serbia, a fellow Slavic and Orthodox Christian nation. Moscow backs Belgrade, for example, in refusing to recognize the independence of Kosovo, a former Serbian province. As Serbia and other Balkan countries pursue European Union membership, however, Russia has stepped up efforts to boost its regional influence.

Balkan chessboard

Last month Montenegro joined NATO-to Moscow's anger-effectively completing the Western alliance's control of the Adriatic coast. Albania and Croatia have been members since 2009. The development came several months after an alleged attempt to overthrow the government in Podgorica, a murky affair in which Montenegrin prosecutors said "Russian state bodies" were involved with the aim of preventing NATO accession. Moscow denies the accusations.

The EU's foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini warned in March, when asked about Russia's role in the region, that the Balkans "can easily become one of the chessboards where the big power game can be played". There is little on display to suggest dodgy activities at the quiet centre in Nis, where a couple of cheerful men in uniform-on three-month rotations from Russia's Ministry of Emergency Situations (EMERCOM) — tick off checklists of rescue equipment.

Screens in a small crisis operations room show satellite images that can pick up fires and project flood patterns. The centre, which cost more than $40 million (35 million euros) to set up, currently has five Russian and 15 Serbian staff members, including interpreters and technicians, Vlasenko said. In a major emergency EMERCOM sends in relief teams and aircraft, he added.

Nefarious activities

At a US Senate hearing last month on "Strengthening Democracy and Countering Malign Foreign Influence" in southeast Europe, US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Hoyt Brian Yee expressed concerns over "this so-called humanitarian centre". He feared "not so much what it is now, but what it might become if it receives what Russia has been asking from Serbia, which is some kind of special status to protect it, diplomatic status or other immunity". Yee noted the centre's proximity to the border with Kosovo.

"If (Serbia) allows Russia to create some kind of special centre for espionage or other nefarious activities it will lose control over part of its territory," the senior US official said. Spying plans or not, the project is aiding Russia's drive to win hearts and minds in the region. Certificates of appreciation for its aid in times of crisis line the entrance foyer. The centre has also helped to clear explosives remaining from NATO's bombing of Serbia in 1999 during the Kosovo war, an episode that still fuels deep skepticism towards NATO among Serbs. Opinion polls in Serbia regularly show more favorable views of Russia than the EU-even though European funding far outweighs that from Moscow.

And Belgrade refused to join Europe in imposing sanctions on Russia over the Ukraine crisis. Serbian authorities have taken a cautious wait-and-see attitude towards granting the centre immunity-some have spoken in favor, but the country's strongman, President Aleksandar Vucic, has so far resisted it. The controversy is symbolic of the "real mistrust" between Russia and the West, according to Aleksandra Joksimovic, head of the Centre for Foreign Policy, a Belgrade-based non-governmental organization. "I think Serbia is closely watching how not to cross red lines on one side or the other," she said.—AFP

US soldier arrested after pledging loyalty to IS

HONOLULU: An active duty US soldier was arrested on terrorism charges after authorities say he pledged allegiance to the Islamic State group and said he wanted to "kill a bunch of people." The FBI arrested Sgt. 1st Class Ikaika Kang, 34, in a suburb of Honolulu over the weekend after a yearlong investigation involving multiple undercover officers and confidential informants. He made an initial appearance in federal court on Monday.

Kang's court-appointed defense attorney, Birney Bervar, said it appears his client may suffer from service-related mental health issues of which the government was aware but neglected to treat. Bervar declined to elaborate. He said Kang was "a decorated veteran of two deployments" to Iraq and Afghanistan. A 26-page affidavit from FBI Special Agent Jimmy Chen filed in court Monday detailed how Kang thought he was dealing with people working for Islamic State but who were actually undercover agents.

Paul Delacourt, the FBI special agent in charge of the Hawaii bureau, said Kang gave military documents to people he believed would give them to Islamic State, but none of them got to the organization. He told reporters the FBI believed Kang was a lone actor and wasn't affiliated with anyone who poses a threat. On Saturday, agents arrested him after he pledged loyalty to Islamic State leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and said he wanted to "take his rifle, his magazines and kill 'a bunch of people.'"

Kang and the agents together made combat training videos he believed would be taken to the Middle East to help prepare the group's soldiers to fight American forces, according to the affidavit. Kang had received the highest level of combat training available in the Army and was a mixed martial arts enthusiast. Also on Saturday, Kang and an undercover agent allegedly went shopping for a drone to give to Islamic State fighters.

Kang said the drone would allow the fighters to view the battlefield from above "to find tank positions and avenues for escape" from US soldiers, the affidavit said. He used his debit card to pay nearly $1,400 for the drone, Go-Pro camera, and related equipment. The agent paid him $700 to split the cost. Kang, a trained air traffic controller based at Hawaii's Wheeler Army Airfield, had his military clearance revoked in 2012 for making pro-Islamic State comments while at work and on-post and threatening to hurt or kill fellow service members. —AP

WARSAW: Protesters holding white roses demonstrate against monthly ceremony marking the Lech Kaczynski's presidential plane crash in Smolensk, in Warsaw, Poland.—AFP

Unwell Walesa a no-show at Polish anti-govt protest

WARSAW: Around 2,000 people on Monday took part in an anti-government street protest in Warsaw, though Polish freedom icon Lech Walesa was unable to attend because of health problems. The demonstration was held in opposition to a monthly march carried out by governing Law and Justice (PiS) party leader Jaroslaw Kaczynski in memory of his twin brother Lech, Poland's president at the time, and 95 other people who were killed when the presidential jet crashed in Russia in 2010. Opponents say Kaczynski uses the monthly event to mobilize supporters and attack centrist critics.

The Polish government is being probed by the European Union over perceived threats to the rule of law, and Walesa has previously questioned whether Kaczynski is seeking to turn Poland into "a dictatorship". Surrounded by a heavy police presence, the anti-Kaczynski protesters chanted, "Lech Walesa, freedom, equality, democracy" and placed white roses on the police cars.

The 73-year-old Nobel peace laureate, who had been planning to attend the protest, announced Saturday he would be a no-show after he was taken to hospital for tests related to his high blood pressure. But fellow communist-era dissident Wladyslaw Frasyniuk, who was arrested at an earlier anti-government protest, attended the demonstration. "The government is afraid. It has put up a fence between it and the people," Frasyniuk said at the protest, in reference to the metal barriers installed along the avenue leading to the presidential palace.

Kaczynski for his part addressed his supporters-numbering a couple of thousand-saying "we can't hesitate. We can't quit the path we're on: that of the reconstruction of Polish democracy." Shipyard electrician Walesa won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1983 for leading Solidarity, the Soviet bloc's only free trade union, and became Poland's first democratically elected president in 1990. His boldness in standing up to the communist regime is still widely respected, but his divisive presidency earned him scorn from many Poles.—AFP

Europe court upholds ban on full-face veil in Belgium

STRASBOURG: The European Court of Human Rights yesterday upheld a Belgian ban on wearing the full-face niqab veil in public. The court ruled that the restriction sought to guarantee social cohesion, the "protection of the rights and freedoms of others" and that it was "necessary in a democratic society", a statement said. Belgian banned the wearing of the full-face veil under a June 2011 law. It prohibits appearing in public "with a face masked or hidden, in whole or in part, in such a way as to be unidentifiable".

Violations can result in fines and up to seven days in jail. France was the first European country to ban the niqab in April 2011. The European Court of Human Rights had already ruled on a challenge to the French law in 2014 when it also rejected arguments that the restriction breached religious freedom and individual human rights. The Belgian case was brought by two Muslim women, Samia Belcacemi, a Belgian national, and Yamina Oussar, a Moroccan.

Both women said they chose of their own free will to wear the niqab and claimed their rights had been infringed and the law was discriminatory. After Belgium introduced the ban, Belcacemi continued wearing the veil for a while but stopped because of social pressure and fears she would be fined. Oussar told the court that she had decided to stay at home, the statement from the court said.—AFP

Afghan-American female pilot seeks to inspire young women

KABUL: An Afghan-American female pilot on a solo flight around the world seeking to inspire young women across the globe has taken a detour to visit her native Afghanistan - and meet the country's president and civil society activists seeking to safeguard women's rights. Shaesta Waiz left her single-engine plane in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates, to take a commercial flight to Kabul where she arrived on Monday night. The 29-year-old said her Beechcraft Bonanza A36 was not suited for flying over the mountainous terrain of her native country.

Waiz, the first female pilot from Afghanistan, began her journey in Florida in May and has since made stops in 11 countries, with eight more to complete her mission. "The whole purpose of this flight around the world is not to set a world record," Waiz said during a welcoming ceremony by government officials and civil society activists in Kabul. "The purpose of this trip is to inspire young girls and boys to believe in themselves, to believe on what they are capable of doing, regardless of where they are from or the challenges you had faced in your life."

Afghan President Ashraf Ghani welcomed Waiz at his office later in the evening and told her how much he admired her courage. Waiz, in turn, promised Afghan women that once her world trip is done, she would come back and find ways to help them. Much has changed for Afghan women since the Taliban were ejected from power 16 years ago. During their rule, women were not permitted to attend school or work, were largely confined to their homes, and subject to public beatings for violations of strict rules on what they could wear in public.

Now millions of Afghan girls go to school, compared to practically none in 2001, and many women work for the government and security services, run their own business, and are elected to parliament. Waiz and her family moved in 1987 to the United States where she got her pilot's license, becoming the youngest certified female pilot from Afghanistan. She took off from Daytona Beach in Florida in May and has mapped out a route that will take her aboard approximately 25,800 kilometers around 19 countries, including Canada,

Spain, Britain, Italy, Greece, Egypt, Bahrain, India, Singapore and Australia, before ending the trip back in the US in August. Waiz's father, Fahim Waiz Atghandiwal, who accompanied her on the visit to Kabul, said each and every girl needs the support of her family - especially the support of her parents - to achieve her goal and turn dreams into reality. After returning to Dubai, Waiz said she will continue her voyage to India as she seeks to become the first Afghan-American woman to accomplish a solo flight around the world.—AP

KABUL: In this photo, Afghan President Ashraf Ghani shakes hands with Afghan-American female pilot Shaesta Waiz at the Presidential Palace in Kabul, Afghanistan. —AP

KRABI, Thailand: This handout photo shows local rescue workers gathered over the bodies of victims of a shooting at a residence in the southern Thai province of Krabi. —AFP

Gunmen kill eight in Thailand

BANGKOK: Eight relatives, including three children, were killed by gunmen posing as government officials in Thailand's Krabi province, police said yesterday, a mass slaying investigators believe was sparked by a personal conflict. Police say a gang of around six or seven men, dressed in camouflage outfits, stormed a house in the southern province around 4.00 pm on Monday. They took ten people hostage and waited for the owner of the property-a local village chief-to return.

"Around 8 pm the owner arrived, all of them (the victims) were handcuffed and blindfolded until midnight when gunmen opened fire," Chaiwut Buathong, chief of Ao Luek district, said. Six died at the scene and two others died in hospital, Chaiwut said, adding three of the victims were girls aged under 15. Three others were taken to hospital with one in critical condition. Deputy national police spokesman Krissana Pattanacharoen told reporters the victims came from a local Muslim family and that the gunmen "claimed to be officials who wanted to check on illegal activity".

Photos taken by medical workers showed two bodies slumped on a blood-splattered children's bed, with a teddy bear thrown to one side. Police said they are still investigating possible motives, including a property dispute between the village chief and locals who occupied public land in his community. "Personally I believe that the motive is a serious personal conflict," said national police chief Chaktip Chaijinda, who flew down to Krabi to lead the investigation. Firearm ownership is common in Thailand and the country boasts one of the highest gun-related homicide rates in Asia.

But while petty arguments and disputes frequently turn deadly, mass organized killings are rare. Krabi province is a popular holiday destination boasting beaches like Ao Nang and Rai Ley, though Monday's killings took place in an area removed from the main tourist drags. The province boasts a large Muslim community who have lived in the region for centuries. They are Thai speakers and ethnically different from the Malay-speaking Muslims in the country's three southernmost provinces where a violent nationalist insurgency has raged against the central government for more than a decade.—AFP

San Diego likely in range of N Korea ICBM in two years

NK's first ICBM test, gift to America

SEOUL: North Korea's intercontinental ballistic missile is "likely" to be able to deliver a 500 kilogram warhead to San Diego within two years, a US monitoring group said yesterday, after its launch sparked global alarm last week. The isolated, nuclear-armed state's first successful ICBM test was described by leader Kim Jong-Un as a gift to "American b****rds". The Hwasong-14 missile is currently estimated to have a range of 7,000-8,000 kilometers-enough to reach Alaska or Hawaii-aerospace engineer John Schilling wrote on the respected 38 North website, a monitoring project linked to Johns Hopkins university.

"If the Hwasong-14 is put together the way we think it is, it can probably do a bit better than that when all the bugs are worked out," he wrote, projecting a range of 9,700 kilometers with a 500 kg warhead on board. "The North Koreans won't be able to achieve this performance tomorrow, but they likely will eventually," he added. At present it would be "lucky to hit even a city-sized target", he said, citing limits to its re-entry technology.

But with "a year or two of additional testing and development", he added, "it will likely become a missile that can reliably deliver a single nuclear warhead to targets along the US west coast, possibly with enough accuracy to destroy soft military targets like naval bases", such as that at San Diego in California. The North's missile technology-which it is banned from developing by the UN Security Council-has advanced rapidly under Kim, ramping up tensions between Pyongyang and Washington.

The impoverished state has also staged five nuclear tests-including two last year. Washington is to propose tougher UN sanctions against the North, but analysts say they will have a limited impact unless China-the North's sole major ally and economic lifeline-steps up pressure on its neighbor. Beijing is reluctant to risk destabilizing the North, fearing a potential influx of refugees along the frontier or US troops stationed on its border in a unified Korea.—AFP

PYONGYANG: This image made from undated video of a news bulletin aired by North Korea's KRT shows North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un waves to the audience in Pyongyang. —AP

India's top court stays ban on cattle slaughter

NEW DELHI: India's top court yesterday stayed a nationwide ban imposed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government on the sale of cattle for slaughter that had provoked outcry in many states. The Supreme Court upheld a decision by a lower court staying the ban imposed in May, which prohibited the sale and purchase of cows-an animal considered sacred for Hindus-for slaughter. The sudden ruling had sparked protests against what many saw as an overreach by the Hindu-right Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), and many states where cow slaughter was legal vowed to fight the decree.

Petitioners in the southern state of Tamil Nadu launched the first challenge, claiming the ban infringed their right to eat what they choose, a flashpoint issue in the Hindu-majority nation. Allegations of cow slaughter and beef consumption against Muslims and other minorities have triggered murders and violent reprisals in India, where many are vegetarian. "This is a welcome ruling and we expect the court will now look into the constitutional validity of the order," Ajmal Khan, the lawyer who represented petitioners in Tamil Nadu, said. "Our stand is vindicated."

In its ruling, the Supreme Court said the government had already given it a commitment that it would review the rules on the sale of cattle for slaughter. Some states organized beef festivals in the days after the ban was announced to protest the measure, while counter rallies by BJP supporters saw cows adorned with flowers. The national government said the ban aimed to regulate the industry and ensure the welfare of animals, which often suffer cruelty in markets. But it threatened to constrain India's supply of beef and leather, two lucrative export industries worth billions.

A separate legal challenge against the ban was rejected by a court in Kerala, a southern state that along with a handful of provinces allow cow slaughter. Killing cows, as well as the possession or consumption of beef, is banned in most but not all Indian states. Some impose up to life imprisonment for infringements. The federal ban affected not just the trade in cows but bulls, bullocks, buffaloes, calves and camels. Modi's BJP pledged to impose a countrywide ban on the slaughter of cows ahead of the 2014 national elections, but the federal government failed to persuade opposition parties to back such a law. —AFP

Japan floods death toll rises to 25

TOKYO: The death toll from torrential rains and flooding that swept through Japan's south has reached 25, the government said yesterday, as rescue teams battled through thick mud to rescue more than 100 still stranded. Further downpours were predicted to pound Kyushu after swathes of the southwestern island were devastated last week by overflowing rivers-sweeping away roads, houses and schools and forcing thousands of people into makeshift shelters. But many remain stranded, with emergency services struggling to reach them amid treacherous conditions.

Some 150 people were still cut off as of Monday evening in hardest-hit Fukuoka and Oita prefectures, according to local government officials. A total of 25 people have died while at least 25 remain unaccounted for, Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga told reporters yesterday. Some 12,000 rescuers were making "utmost" efforts to find survivors and clear washed up driftwood hampering the search, Suga said.—AFP

Bangladesh arrests suspect in murder of Rohingya leaders

DHAKA: Bangladesh police have arrested a man suspected of murdering two Rohingya leaders in the country's southeast where tens of thousands from the group are living in camps after fleeing persecution in Myanmar, an official said yesterday. Dhaka estimates that 400,000 Rohingya refugees are now in Bangladesh, with 70,000 arriving since October when Myanmar security forces launched a brutal crackdown on the minority group in neighboring Rakhine state in response to militant attacks on police posts.

Dost Mohammad, a 32-year-old Rohingya man, was arrested Sunday from one of the many squalid camps in Bangladesh's coastal district of Cox's Bazar, which borders Rakhine and where thousands of the ethnic Muslim minority now live in grinding poverty. Police said Mohammad was caught at Nayapara camp in possession of firearms, ammunition and drugs after a long manhunt. "He is a key suspect in the murder of two refugee leaders," local police chief Mainuddin Khan said.

The arrest comes amid reports that young Rohingya in the Bangladeshi camps are trying to join insurgents in Myanmar. A Rohingya shopkeeper in Nayapara said on condition of anonymity that Mohammad and his group fought with others in the camps. "They are like a bunch of hooligans. Many say they are members of RSO," he said, referring to a Rohingya insurgent group who were active in the Bangladeshi Rohingya refugee camps in the early 1990s but are now widely considered defunct.

Other community leaders described Mohammad as "short tempered" but said the murder allegations were "baseless". "His father lives in Saudi Arabia, and sister in Australia. They regularly send him money, he didn't work. He quarreled with others in the camp," said Mirza Ghalib, a Rohingya refugee from the Nayapara camp. "But killing someone or possessing illegal weapons is an unbelievable accusation against him." Local law enforcement often blames the Rohingya for crimes including drug trafficking.

Police arrested several Rohingya men over an attack on a police checkpoint in Bangladesh last year when the commander of the checkpoint was killed. Bangladesh has floated the idea of relocating tens of thousands of Rohingya refugees to a remote island off its coast, despite opposition from rights groups.—AFP

Afghanistan combat vet charged with killing wife

NEW YORK: A New York state police trooper responding to reports of gunfire was shot to death by a soldier who had just killed his wife at their home near his Army base, authorities said Monday. Trooper Joel Davis was approaching the couple's home in rural Theresa, near the Canadian border, when Staff Sgt. Justin Walters shot him in the torso with a rifle, leaving him in a roadside ditch, police and court documents said. Another trooper arrived and found Davis, who died about an hour later at a hospital.

Walters' wife, Nichole Walters, was found dead in the driveway, with multiple gunshot wounds. A female friend of hers, who was living on the property, also was shot, suffering non-life-threatening injuries, police said. Davis, 36, had been a state police trooper for four years, after 10 years as a county sheriff's deputy in the area, police and friends said. "He truly did love being a law enforcement officer," family friend Chris Fletcher said. "One of his last texts to another one of his cousins was he couldn't believe he got paid to do what he does."

Justin Walters

Gov. Andrew Cuomo said "the entire New York family grieves" for Davis, a married father of three teenagers who was commissioner of a youth baseball league in his tight-knit community. State police Superintendent George P Beach II noted that signs had already sprung up around the area to pay tribute to Davis. "It's not just the police who suffer a loss like this," Beach said. Justin Walters, 32, was barefoot and clad only in shorts when he was taken to a town court around 4 am Monday to be charged with murder.

He was in an orange jail uniform and shackles when he was re-arraigned Monday evening in LeRay Town Court, where he was ordered held without bail for grand jury action. His assigned lawyer, Eric Swartz, waived a preliminary hearing. He said the next appearance would be in Jefferson County Court later. He wouldn't comment further, saying he had only met Walters minutes before court. Walters, a native of Zeeland, Michigan, joined the Army in 2007 and did two one-year tours in Afghanistan, in 2009 and again from March 2011 to March 2012, Army officials said. He was stationed at Fort Drum, home of the 10th Mountain Division.

Fort Drum's senior commander, Maj. Gen. Walter E Piatt, called the slain trooper a hero. "It takes an uncommon valor to run toward acts of terrible violence, to sacrifice for the safety of strangers," Piatt said. Cuomo, a Democrat, called Davis' death "yet another sad reminder of the risks law enforcement officers face each day." Davis was the second New York law enforcement officer killed on duty in less than a week. New York City police Officer Miosotis Familia was fatally shot last Wednesday by a man who was then killed by other officers.

The state police superintendent said Davis was wearing body armor but the round hit him in his side, where he had no protection. He said Walters gave no motive for the shootings. Walters and his wife, who was 27, met around the time she finished high school in Mattydale, a community near Syracuse, her hometown friend Jerry Mikels said. She was devoted to her toddler-age son and was always willing to help people, he said. "She got along with everybody," he said. "If she knew you needed help, she would help out. She was there for my wife when she had cancer."

Data on domestic violence among military couples varies widely. A 2010 federal Centers for Disease Control survey, prepared for the Department of Defense, said domestic violence aimed at military wives occurs at a similar rate as it does to women in the general population, with about 30 percent of the wives having been physically attacked, raped or stalked by an intimate partner. But other studies on the percentage of women in military couples who've experienced domestic violence have given rates ranging from about 13 to 60 percent.—AP

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FOCUS

Special class on how to survive shooting in Rio

Teachers in violence-wracked Rio de Janeiro started a new course on Monday - they are learning how to react to the shootings and violence plaguing the host city of last year's Olympic Games. Some 40 teachers attended the course organized by the International Committee of the Red Cross, and each educator will go back and instruct colleagues in their own schools on how to deal with a variety of violent incidents.

"It's a question of knowing how to manage each situation - how to react during a shooting, for example. These are simple courses of action that can make a real difference," said Lorenzo Caraffi, regional director of the ICRC in Latin America. Rio has more than 1,500 public schools, a third of them located in areas deemed to be at risk from violence. Since the start of the academic year, only seven of 120 school days have passed without at least one of the city's schools being shut down because of outbreaks of violence.

Rio is in the grip of an increasingly bloody war between rival drug gangs operating in its favelas - the poorer communities that lack adequate infrastructure or police, but which are home to a quarter of the city's six million inhabitants. Residents can all too often find themselves pinned down by gunfire, especially when the quasi-military police force battles with gangs in pitched shootouts. On Monday, as the first class on dealing with violence began, 18 schools were closed due to a police raid on the City of God favela, made famous in the movie of the same name by director Fernando Meirelles, who also orchestrated the opening ceremony of last year's Olympics.

"The situation has really got much worse recently, so it's important to have extra tools available to deal with these chaotic situations," said Emiliane Tinoco, one of the educators taking part in the course. Tinoco coordinates human resources for schools in Rio's poorer northern zone where 13-year-old Maria Eduarda was killed by a stray bullet in her school on March 30. "Teachers know from experience that when a shooting breaks out, you have to lead the kids into a corridor and lie down. But they often feel very alone when faced with these stressful situations," she said.

The daily newspaper O Globo said that 632 people had been hit by stray bullets in Rio between January 1 and July 2, an average of three a day. Sixty-seven of them died of their wounds. "We are not going to solve the problem from one day to the next, but we can't just do nothing," said Rio's public schools chief Cesar Benjamin. "Education is like Stalingrad - it's the last bastion which must be defended whatever the cost," he said, referring to the World War II battle in the former Soviet Union. — AFP

Tanzania women street cooks hope for safety, loans

It's nearly midday at the bustling Tegeta bus terminal in Tanzania's biggest city and Olivia Mbiku is busy preparing ugali - a popular maize meal - beef stew and vegetables for her customers. "I wake up early, light up the fire and rush to the market to buy meat, cooking oil, tomatoes and everything I need for the day," said the 25-year-old mother of two. Shrouded in a cloud of smoke, and with a traditional colorful 'khanga' tied round her waist, Mbiku takes some maize flour from a sachet and sprinkles it into boiling water while briskly stirring with a stick to make it stiff. "I cook ugali every day because most of my customers like it," Mbiku told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. "It's not a lucrative business, but I get enough to feed my family."

Mbiku is among dozens of food vendors trying to earn a living amid the hubbub of the Dar es Salaam bus terminal, where conductors hoot and yell to attract customers. She works eight hours and day, earning around 45,000 shillings ($20) to supplement her husband's income as a mason. But unlike licensed hawkers who work from rows of wooden stalls, Mbiku cooks in the open air and is often harassed by the city militias for selling food without the proper papers. "They often seize my cooking pots and sometimes lock me up. I have to pay some money to be released and get my stuff back," she said.

Mbiku and other women with unlicensed businesses finally have a glimmer of hope after the Tanzanian government last month announced it would recognize them as part of its broader policy of empowering women. Maria Ezekiel, 31, who has a stall serving chicken soup, chapatti and tea along the busy Bagamoyo highway each morning, said the move to formalize micro-enterprises like hers was an important milestone for small-scale entrepreneurs. A license would allow her to apply for credit to upgrade her business, she said. — Reuters

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Tech companies wage war on mosquitoes

American technology companies are bringing automation and robotics to the age-old task of battling mosquitoes in a bid to halt the spread of Zika and other mosquito-borne maladies worldwide. Firms including Microsoft Corp and California life sciences company Verily are forming partnerships with public health officials in several US states to test new high-tech tools. In Texas, Microsoft is testing a smart trap to isolate and capture Aedes aegypti mosquitoes, known Zika carriers, for study by entomologists to give them a jump on predicting outbreaks.

Verily, Alphabet's life sciences division based in Mountain View, California, is speeding the process for creating sterile male mosquitoes to mate with females in the wild, offering a form of birth control for the species. While it may take years for these advances to become widely available, public health experts say new players brings fresh thinking to vector control, which still relies heavily on traditional defenses such as larvicides and insecticides. "It's exciting when technology companies come on board," said Anandasankar Ray, an associate professor of entomology at the University of California, Riverside. "Their approach to a biological challenge is to engineer a solution."

Smart Traps

The Zika epidemic that emerged in Brazil in 2015 and left thousands of babies suffering from birth defects has added urgency to the effort. While cases there have slowed markedly, mosquitoes capable of carrying the virus - Aedes aegypti and Aedes albopictus - are spreading in the Americas, including large swaths of the southern United States. The vast majority of the 5,365 Zika cases reported in the United States so far are from travelers who contracted the virus elsewhere. Still, two states - Texas and Florida - have recorded cases transmitted by local mosquitoes, making them prime testing grounds for new technology.

In Texas, 10 mosquito traps made by Microsoft are operating in Harris County, which includes the city of Houston. Roughly the size of large birdhouses, the devices use robotics, infrared sensors, machine learning and cloud computing to help health officials keep tabs on potential disease carriers. Texas recorded six cases of local mosquito transmission of Zika in November and December of last year. Experts believe the actual number is likely higher because most infected people do not develop symptoms.

Pregnant women are at high risk because they can pass the virus to their fetuses, resulting in a variety of birth defects. Those include microcephaly, a condition in which infants are born with undersized skulls and brains. The World Health Organization declared Zika a global health emergency in Feb 2016. Most conventional mosquito traps capture all comers - moths, flies, other mosquito varieties - leaving a pile of specimens for entomologists to sort through. The Microsoft machines differentiate insects by measuring a feature unique to each species: the shadows cast by their beating wings. When a trap detects an Aedes aegypti in one of its 64 chambers, the door slams shut.

The machine "makes a decision about whether to trap it," said Ethan Jackson, a Microsoft engineer who is developing the device. The Houston tests, begun last summer, showed the traps could detect Aedes aegypti and other medically important mosquitoes with 85 percent accuracy, Jackson said. The machines also record shadows made by other insects as well as environmental conditions such as temperature and humidity. The data can be used to build models to predict where and when mosquitoes are active.

Mustapha Debboun, director of Harris County's mosquito and vector control division, said the traps save time and give researchers more insight into mosquito behavior. "For science and research, this is a dream come true," he said. The traps are prototypes now. But Microsoft's Jackson said the company eventually hopes to sell them for a few hundred dollars each, roughly the price of conventional traps. The goal is to spur wide adoption, particularly in developing countries, to detect potential epidemics before they start.

"What we hope is (the traps) will allow us to bring more precision to public health," Jackson said. SORTING MOSQUITOES WITH ROBOTS Other companies, meanwhile, are developing technology to shrink mosquito populations by rendering male Aedes aegypti mosquitoes sterile. When these sterile males mate with females in the wild, their eggs don't hatch. The strategy offers an alternative to chemical pesticides. But it requires the release of millions of laboratory-bred mosquitoes into the outdoors. Males don't bite, which has made this an easier sell to places now hosting tests.

Oxitec, an Oxford, England-based division of Germantown, Maryland-based Intrexon Corp, is creating male mosquitoes genetically modified to be sterile. It has already deployed them in Brazil, and is seeking regulatory approval for tests in Florida and Texas. MosquitoMate Inc, a startup formed by researchers at the University of Kentucky, is using a naturally occurring bacterium called Wolbachia to render male mosquitoes sterile.

One of the biggest challenges is sorting the sexes. At MosquitoMate's labs in Lexington, immature mosquitoes are forced through a sieve-like mechanism that separates the smaller males from the females. These mosquitoes are then hand sorted to weed out any stray females that slip through. "That's basically done using eyeballs," said Stephen Dobson, MosquitoMate's chief executive.

Enter Verily. The company is automating mosquito sorting with robots to make it faster and more affordable. Company officials declined to be interviewed. But on its website, Verily says it's combining sensors, algorithms and "novel engineering" to speed the process. Verily and MosquitoMate have teamed up to test their technology in Fresno, California, where Aedes aegypti arrived in 2013.

Officials worry that residents who contract Zika elsewhere could spread it in Fresno if they're bitten by local mosquitoes that could pass the virus to others. "That is very much of a concern because it is the primary vector for diseases such as dengue, chikungunya and obviously Zika," said Steve Mulligan, manager of the Consolidated Mosquito Abatement District in Fresno County. The study, which still needs state and federal approval, is slated for later this summer. — Reuters

Coup takes toll on Turkey foreign policy

The consequences of the failed July 15 coup in Turkey increased Ankara's international isolation, exposing shortcomings in the government's sometimes overambitious foreign policy, analysts say. NATO member and EU membership hopeful Turkey had expected an outpouring of solidarity after the coup attempt one year ago aimed at ousting President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, which Ankara blames on the US-based preacher Fethullah Gulen.

But ties with Brussels were bruised and Turkey's long-running EU membership bid set back as the European Union reacted with alarm to the post-coup purge that has seen tens of thousands arrested. The US presidency of Donald Trump has so far also given no hope that Turkey has seen the end of the rancor that marked ties between Washington and Ankara under Barack Obama. Meanwhile, the diplomatic crisis in the Gulf risks wrecking Turkey's efforts to keep a tight strategic alliance with Qatar without upsetting Saudi Arabia.

"Turkey has been somewhat isolated diplomatically since the July 2016 failed coup, both because NATO partners were taken by surprise and because the subsequent purge went far beyond anything that could be expected," said Marc Pierini, a visiting scholar at Carnegie Europe. "The crisis between Saudi Arabia and its allies and Qatar only adds to the host of problems Turkey is facing on the diplomatic front," he told AFP.

'Ever-increasing disputes'

Ankara's precarious position is a far cry from what it enjoyed a decade ago, when Erdogan was seen as an essential mediator in almost every crisis and was courted by both the European Union and the United States. For former prime minister Ahmet Davutoglu, Turkey was a center of the Islamic world and deserved influence from Bosnia to Arabia in lands Constantinople controlled under the Ottoman Empire. Turkey had high hopes that the Arab Spring uprisings would bring into power Sunni Muslim governments that would be under Turkish influence. But the ousting of the Muslim Brotherhood's Egyptian president Mohamed Morsi and failure to unseat Syria's Bashar Al-Assad put paid to these goals. "The picture today is a very different one," said Kemal Kirisci of the Brookings Institution. "It is characterize by the ever-increasing disputes that Turkey is having with countries in its neighborhood and beyond," he added.

'Not even partially fulfilled'

Turkey has sought to join the European Union for the last half century, in an agonizingly slow process where Ankara has watched on enviously as post-Communist states join the bloc with far less fuss. Erdogan has sometimes made Brussels seem like a strategic enemy rather than partner, with attacks bubbling with venom in the run-up to an April 16 referendum on enhancing his powers. Victory in that referendum handed Erdogan powers that critics fear will create one-man rule and take Ankara inexorably away from European values.

"The bases for a deeper political alliance through EU membership remain as they have always been. It will be up to Turkey's leaders, at some point in the future, to return to their earlier ambitions," said Pierini, a former EU ambassador to Ankara. Despite the controversies surrounding Trump's anti-Muslim rhetoric, Turkish officials fell over themselves to welcome the tycoon as US leader, predicting a new page in relations.

But no progress has materialized on the vexed issue of Turkey's desire to secure the extradition of Gulen, who denies any link to the coup, or US support for a Kurdish militia in Syria which Ankara sees as terrorists. A much-touted visit by Erdogan to Washington to iron out these issues was overshadowed by a fracas involving his bodyguards that led to arrest warrants for 12 members of his security detail. "While Ankara was very optimistic about the Trump presidency, none of Turkey's expectations from the new US administration were even partially fulfilled," said Ozgur Unluhisarcikli, director of the Ankara office of the German Marshall Fund of the United States.

In this context, the Saudi-led move to isolate Qatar over its alleged support for terrorism - claims that both Doha and Ankara reject - was the last thing Turkey needed. Turkey had to some extent repaired ties with Saudi Arabia after a downturn in relations following Riyadh's support for the ousting of the pro-Ankara Morsi in Egypt. But it now finds itself dealing with a new environment in the Gulf, especially after the surprise elevation of the hugely powerful Prince Mohammed bin Salman to be Saudi crown prince. — AFP

Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan (second right) and Turkey's Prime Minister Binali Yildirim (third right) attend a prayer by the grave of a victim of the July 15, 2016 failed coup attempt in Istanbul yesterday. — AP

Qatar pledges Gaza support, UN says enclave...

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Qatar pledged $1 billion to reconstruct Gaza after the 2014 war with Israel, the largest single pledge. Speaking alongside Amadi, Nickolay Mladenov, UN envoy for the Middle East, thanked Qatar for the "commitments you have shown over many years to assist the people of Gaza."

Robert Piper, the UN's top humanitarian official in the Palestinian territories, told AFP in an interview to mark a new report on living conditions in Gaza all the "indicators are going in the wrong direction". "We predicted some years ago that Gaza would fast become unlivable on a host of indicators and that deadline is actually approaching even faster than we predicted - from health access, to energy to water," he said.

A 2012 UN report predicted the Palestinian enclave would be "unlivable" by 2020 if nothing was done to ease the blockade. Piper pointed out that power supplies were down to as little as two hours a day in Gaza, where medical care had been slashed and youth unemployment was over 60 percent. In such circumstances "for most of us that unlivability point has already been passed", he said. "And yet somehow the Gazans soldier on."

Hamas seized Gaza from secular Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas's forces in June 2007, leading Israel to impose a crippling blockade which critics say punishes all of the two million residents indiscriminately. Since 2013 Egypt, the only other country with which Gaza shares a border, has largely closed off its crossing and destroyed hundreds of smuggling tunnels that provided a vital lifeline for the economy while also allegedly being used by Hamas to bring in weapons. — Agencies

Amir expresses bitterness, concern over...

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Tillerson is spending much of this week in the Gulf seeking to mediate in the rift among crucial US allies, and will meet foreign ministers of the four countries isolating Qatar in the Saudi city of Jeddah today. After talks with senior officials in Doha yeterday, Tillerson and Qatari Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani announced the deal targeting extremist financing. "The memorandum lays out a series of steps the two countries will take over the coming months and years to interrupt and disable terror financing flows and intensify counter-terrorism activities globally," Tillerson said at a joint press conference.

He said the deal meant Qatar was "the first to respond" to US President Donald Trump's call at a summit in Riyadh earlier this year "to stop the funding of terrorism" - suggesting that such deals could be signed with the other Arab states as a step towards ending the crisis. Referring to its rivals, Sheikh Mohammed urged "the siege countries to join us in the future" by signing on to such deals.

While the State Department has warned the crisis could last months, Tillerson yesterday struck a moderately optimistic note. "I'm hopeful we can make some progress to bring this to a point of resolution," he said after meeting Qatar's emir. "I think Qatar has been quite clear in its positions and I think very reasonable and we want to talk now... (about) how do we take things forward." Tillerson flew back to Kuwait - the main mediator in the crisis and where he is based this week - after the talks in Qatar.

Egypt announced the meeting with Tillerson in Jeddah today, saying it "reflects the four countries' desire to enhance coordination and underscore their unity on ways to deal with Qatar in the future." The diplomatic crisis is the worst to hit the region since the establishment of the Gulf Cooperation Council in 1981. The four countries on June 5 announced sanctions, effective immediately, against Qatar over accusations Doha supported Islamist extremism and was too close to Iran. They severed all diplomatic ties, suspended transport links with Doha and ordered all Qataris to return home within 14 days. On June 22, the Saudi-led bloc issued a list of 13 demands which, if met, would end the sanctions, including closing broadcast giant Al-Jazeera, downgrading ties to Iran and shutting a Turkish military base in Doha.

Qatar refused to comply and has consistently denied accusations of ties to Islamist groups. Tillerson's arrival in Doha was overshadowed by the publication of pre-existing confidential agreements between Qatar and other GCC states in which all sides had pledged to combat extremist funding and avoid interference in other states. Publication of the accords, dated 2013 and 2014, caused both sides in the dispute to launch a fresh round of mutual accusations.

US broadcaster CNN aired leaked papers in which Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Kuwait - and later Bahrain and the UAE - had signed accords forbidding support for any opposition and hostile groups in their own nations, as well as in Egypt and Yemen. That agreement specifically ruled out support for the Muslim Brotherhood and other unnamed groups that could threaten the bloc's members. Qatar sees the Brotherhood as a legitimate political force and has for years hosted its spiritual guide, Sheikh Youssef Al-Qaradawi. That puts it squarely at odds with Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Egypt, which see the Brotherhood as a terrorist organization.

A joint statement released by the Saudi-led bloc said the documents proved "beyond any doubt Qatar's failure to meet its commitments and its full violation of its pledges". Their 13-point list of demands in June was tied to those earlier deals and was "fully in line with the spirit of what was agreed upon," they said. The head of Qatar's government communication office, Sheikh Saif bin Ahmed Al-Thani, disputed that, saying the June demands "bore no relation to the Riyadh agreements", according to a statement carried by the official Qatar News Agency. He called the "siege" by the four states a violation of the GCC charter and agreements. — Agencies

Three cups of coffee a day keep the...

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The second study included more than 180,000 participants of various ethnic backgrounds in the United States. It found benefits to longevity whether the coffee was caffeinated or decaffeinated. Coffee drinkers had a lower risk of death due to heart disease, cancer, stroke, diabetes, and respiratory and kidney disease. Those who drank one cup a day were 12 percent less likely to die compared to those who didn't drink coffee.

Those who drank two or three cups per day saw an even higher 18 percent reduced risk of death. "We cannot say drinking coffee will prolong your life, but we see an association," said lead author Veronica Setiawan, an associate professor of preventive medicine at the Keck School of Medicine of University of Southern California. "If you like to drink coffee, drink up! If you're not a coffee drinker, then you need to consider if you should start."

Coffee is one of the most popular drinks in the world. Some 2.25 billion cups are consumed every day. Many prior studies have hailed the benefits of coffee-drinking, saying the beverage imparts anti-oxidants, may improve liver function and reduce inflammation. But coffee may carry risks for some people, and pregnant woman and children are urged to avoid caffeine, which can be fatal in high doses. A report from the IARC last year that said drinking very hot beverages - coffee, tea or otherwise - is one probable cause of cancer of the esophagus, the tube that runs from the throat to the stomach.

Experts who were not involved in the latest studies urged caution in interpreting the results. For instance, the European study excluded people who had cancer, heart disease or diabetes, meaning it took a measure of people over 35 who were already generally healthy. It also asked about coffee consumption just once, at the beginning, and did not update this figure over the span of the study, which included an average follow-up time of 16 years.

Finally, it found signs of a link between women who drank large amounts of coffee and a higher risk of cancer death, but downplayed this finding, saying it "may be spurious". The "conclusions will not lead me to start drinking coffee or to recommend people drink more coffee as a way to lessen their risks for heart disease," said Naveed Sattar, professor of metabolic medicine at the University of Glasgow. "I remain unconvinced that the link between coffee and heart disease represents a true cause and effect relationship and that coffee is truly protective, regardless of how large a study suggests this."— AFP

IS chief Baghdadi reported dead

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US President Donald Trump yesterday tweeted "Big wins against ISIS!" It was not immediately clear if that was a reference to the Mosul recapture, Baghdadi's reported death, or both. There have been persistent rumors of Baghdadi's death in recent months, and Russia's army said in mid-June that it was seeking to verify whether it had killed the IS chief in a May air strike in Syria. The US-led coalition said at the time it could not confirm whether the Russian strike had killed Baghdadi.

With a $25 million US bounty on his head, Baghdadi has kept a low profile and was rumored to move regularly throughout IS-held territory in the area straddling Iraq and Syria. The 46-year-old Iraqi-born leader of IS has not been seen since making his only known public appearance as "caliph" in 2014 at the Grand Mosque of Al-Nuri in Mosul. IS destroyed the highly symbolic site before Iraqi forces could reach it as they pushed the group from Mosul.

Iraqi forces launched their campaign in October to retake Mosul, which was seized by the jihadists during the mid-2014 offensive that saw them take control of large parts of Iraq and Syria. Abadi announced in Mosul on Monday that the campaign had ended with the defeat of IS in the city, hailing "a victory over darkness, a victory over brutality and terrorism".

The cost of victory has been enormous: Much of Mosul in ruins, thousands dead and wounded and nearly half the city's population forced from their homes. In Mosul's Old City, where buildings lie crumbling and burned-out cars and other debris choke the streets, security forces were still searching for remaining IS fighters. "What we are doing today is just combing the area and clearing it of sleeper cells," Staff Lieutenant General Sami Al-Aridhi, a senior commander in Iraq's elite Counter-Terrorism Service (CTS), said yesterday. "There are groups that are hiding in shelters," but they surrender or are killed, Aridhi said.

Since the Mosul operation began in October, 920,000 people have fled their homes, only a fraction of whom have returned, according to the United Nations. Rights group Amnesty International yesterday accused Iraqi forces and the US-led coalition of exposing civilians to "relentless and unlawful attacks" in west Mosul. "Pro-government forces launched barrages of indiscriminate or disproportionate attacks using explosive weapons unsuitable for such a densely populated urban area," Amnesty said. — AFP

Saudis execute 4 over attacks on police...

Continued from Page 1

Another policeman had been killed and three others wounded in a bombing in Qatif last Tuesday. Three people, including a police officer, were also killed last month in bombings in Qatif. The district has been rocked by unrest since 2011, when protests erupted to demand equality in the Gulf kingdom. Authorities have blamed the unrest on "terrorists" and drug traffickers. —AFP

Hertha Berlin sign son of Germany legend Klinsmann

BERLIN: The Klinsmann name made a return to the German football league yesterday as Hertha Berlin signed the son of former United States coach and Germany striker Juergen Klinsmann. Jonathan Klinsmann, 20, the goalkeeper with the United States Under-20s team, has been given an undisclosed contract after two weeks on trial with the Bundesliga club. Hertha plan to make Klinsmann junior their third-choice goalkeeper, behind Norway's Rune Jarstein and ex-Bayern Munich shotstopper Thomas Kraft, and he will gain experience for the Under-23 team in the regional league.

"After breakfast, Michael Preetz (Hertha's sports director) had a chat and said they had decided at short notice to offer a contract," said Klinsmann junior at Hertha's pre-season camp near Berlin. "It was an unbelievably emotional moment for me, because the club has such a family history." "I'm looking forward to everything at the club, the city of Berlin and the challenge of playing in Germany." — AFP

Liverpool sign young gun Solanke from Chelsea

LONDON: Teenage striker Dominic Solanke, capped for England at the recent Under-20 World Cup, signed for Liverpool from Premier League champions Chelsea yesterday. The 19-year-old forward scored four goals in England's Under 20 campaign which saw them beat Venezuela in June's final and win their first global trophy since the senior team in 1966. "It feels amazing and everyone has made me feel welcome already," said Solanke. "Even just pulling on the training top, I was over the moon. Hopefully I can put on the shirt in the near future and make some history here."

He could cost Liverpool around £3 million ($3.8m, 3.4m euros) according to the BBC but that will be decided by a tribunal because although his contract with Chelsea has expired, the club are due a fee for nurturing his talent and because he is under 24. Solanke, who played just once for Chelsea coming on as a substitute in a 2014 Champions League match, has senior level experience having spent the 2015/16 season out on loan in the Netherlands with Vitesse Arnhem where he scored seven times in 25 appearances. —AFP

Rooney to start for Everton on Africa trip

LONDON: Wayne Rooney will make his first appearance back in an Everton shirt in the club's friendly against Kenyan opponents Gor Mahia in Tanzania tomorrow. Manager Ronald Koeman has confirmed all players making the trip to East Africa will feature for at least 45 minutes in the game. "I'm looking forward to it-it should be a good trip," former England captain Rooney, whose return to his boyhood club was confirmed when he signed a two-year contract at the weekend to end his 13-year stay at Manchester United, told evertontv. "It's good when you go away with the team. It's good to be around the hotel with the players, spend more time with them and get to know them more." Koeman said the squad left yesterday and return Friday after the game. "This is our first friendly and everybody will be involved for 45 minutes in the game. You play football to win and we will do that in Tanzania," he said. Everton have spent close to £100 million in a summer spending spree but captain Phil Jagielka said the signing of Rooney was a "bit special". "To get Wayne in so early is great. — AFP

Jet ski national team

National Jet Ski team praises KFH support

KUWAIT: The national jet ski team praised the significant role of Kuwait Finance House (KFH) in the sponsorships and supports it offers to the Team's participation in the different World Jet Ski Championships.

This came after the team achieved many titles during their participation in the world Jet Ski championship held in Austria.

This championship witnessed huge participation from 26 countries across the world. The bank's sponsorship affirms the ongoing commitment towards assuming social responsibility and reflects its interest in the youth and sports, which contributes to encouraging athletes to win prestigious titles and represent Kuwait in the international events.

KFH expressed pride in the Jet Ski national team wishing it outstanding achievements and new titles in the years to come.

Meanwhile, the national team members expressed their gratitude and appreciation to KFH in recognition of its support and sponsorship, indicating that this reflects the prestigious status of the bank.

Briton transforms childhood tag into 'extreme sport'

LONDON: A childhood game played in school playgrounds the world over, tag has been transformed by a British enthusiast into an extreme sport, attracting world athletes and a James Bond movie actor. Fast moves and dodging are essential in a game of "Chase Tag", the new sport which sees players race around obstacles trying to catch each other.

The idea came to creator Christian Devaux after playing tag with his son, who challenged his dad to find out who was really the best. "We decided to introduce obstacles into the garden. We had a bin, and some chairs, and a bench," he tells AFP. "Then the obstacles just grew and grew more complicated".

Devaux's garden game led him to create Chase Tag in 2015 with its own set of rules. This month the sport held its second tournament with six teams of four players competing. Often used for boxing matches, the York Hall venue in London has been cluttered with obstacles as the athletes take part in the tournament's 20-second matches. The rapid race features two players, one tasked with catching the others in the short time frame. Each catch gives a team one point, while anyone who escapes uncaught with their nifty moves gets three points.

While the players are seen concentrating as they leap and dart around the pitch, there's a light-hearted atmosphere. "It appeals to our childish side," said Mehdi Hadim, a member of the Blacklist team.

"Everyone's played tag. And the game we play here has placed it at a new athletic level." Extreme sports are defined as recreational activities involving a high level of physical exertion.

JAMES BOND MOVIE SKILLS

The first non-British team to take part in a Chase Tag competition, Blacklist brings together four young men from the Paris region. The team is already skilled at parkour, which sees people perform often risky acrobatics mostly in cities.

"We discovered it in January by watching videos on the internet," said 25-year-old Valentin Dubois. For Sebastien Foucan, co-founder of parkour in France, Chase Tag "is a very technical type of sport but also very tactical. As you move, you reflect, you think ahead".

"You also have to analyse your opponents and act accordingly. For example, someone big goes under the obstacles less often," said the 43-year-old French athlete, who put his skills to the test as a James Bond villain in the film "Casino Royale".

'DON'T GET CAUGHT!'

Taking part in the competition, broadcast live on Facebook, is demanding and Blacklist trains several times a week, combining gymnastics, weightlifting, athletics, climbing and parkour. The team has a motto-"Don't get caught!"-which doubles as the golden rule of Chase Tag.

As well as the formal competition, Devaux has also arranged matches in one of London's famous parks. "You can do it anywhere," he says. "When we first decided to do the meet-ups, we were just using barrier tape (to build obstacles) in Hyde Park. We had all kinds of people doing it."

The sport has already come full circle, with 13-year-old fan Leo-Paul saying he plays Chase Tag in the playground.

"At the beginning, my mates didn't understand, they said that it was a thing for kids," he said, having travelled with his mother from Paris to help out at the tournament.

But when he showed it to them on Youtube videos "they were amazed. Now, we do our own route in the playground," he said. He discovered the game last year, having heard about it through Devaux's son, and he knows the Blacklist players.

With only a few dozen competitors, the sport is still in its infancy but there are already promising signs.

Players in India, Japan and the US have already shown their enthusiasm, posting videos online of their own Chase Tag matches. —AFP

ROME: This file photo taken on June 24, 2005 shows Sebastien Foucan (C) of France, freerunning during the first Italian freerunning gathering within the hip hop parade festival in Rome. A childhood game played in school playgrounds the world over, tag has been transformed by a British enthusiast into an extreme sport, attracting world athletes and a James Bond movie actor. Fast moves and dodging are essential in a game of "Chase Tag", the new sport which sees players race around obstacles trying to catch each other. — AFP

Boxing

WBO review rules, declares Jeff Horn the clear winner

SYDNEY: Australian Jeff Horn's shock welterweight title victory over Manny Pacquiao was confirmed yesterday after a scoring review by the World Boxing Organization declared him the clear winner. The WBO took a close look at the fight after Pacquiao, backed by the Philippine government's sports regulatory body, criticised the referee and the judges and demanded a review after losing in Brisbane on July 2. Horn stunned the Filipino legend-who has won world titles in an unprecedented eight weight divisions-with his ultra-aggressiveness to earn a unanimous 12-round decision.

The WBO-which does not have the power to reverse a decision unless fraud or law violations are proven-set up a panel of independent and anonymous judges who were asked to watch the bout without sound and determine who won each round.

The results were tabulated to show clearly the rounds each fighter won using an average scale based on 60, 80 and 100 percent, with three of the five officials needing to be in agreement. A similar method has been used to review WBO title fights before. "Upon the analysis, the findings stated that Pacquiao won the 3rd, the 8th and 9th by 100 percent; the 5th round was won by 80 percent; and the 11th round by 60 percent," the WBO said in a statement.

"Horn won the 1st, 6th and 12th rounds by 100 percent; rounds 2, 4, and 7 by 80 percent; and then, the 10th round by 60 percent. "From the results, it can be established that Pacquiao won five rounds while Horn won seven rounds. Based on this analysis, Jeff Horn was the winner of the bout."

The original fight was scored 117-111, 115-113 and 115-113 by judges Waleksa Roldan, Chris Flores and Ramon Cerdan respectively.

Concrete evidence - Horn, a former schoolteacher written off before the bout by most pbservers, welcomed the ruling as confirming what he already knew. "It gives me evidence behind me that I can just use now. Instead of saying I think I won the fight, now a heap of other people-professionally-think I won the fight," he told reporters in Brisbane. "It's definitely nice to have it finally put on paper. I thought I'd won the fight on the day and I think Pacquiao thought it as well. Now just to have it clear in front of us is good."

He has made clear he is keen for a rematch and Brisbane's Courier-Mail said talks were already under way for a possible November duel between the two in the same city.

Both the Philippine board and Pacquiao had criticised American referee Mark Nelson for supposedly allowing the underdog Australian to get away with illegal tactics without giving him warnings or point deductions. The loss sparked calls in the Philippines for the 38-year-old Pacquiao, a national icon after rising from poverty to be considered one of the greatest fighters of his generation, to retire and concentrate on politics.

Pacquiao briefly quit boxing last year to pursue his long-held political ambitions and was elected senator. But he quickly made a successful comeback against Jessie Vargas in November, saying he still felt like a youngster. — AFP

BRISBANE: This file photo taken on July 3, 2017 shows newly crowned World Boxing Organization (WBO) welterweight champion Jeff Horn of Australia posing for photographs with his belt after a press conference in Brisbane, one day after he beat Manny Pacquiao of the Philippines. Australian Jeff Horn's shock welterweight title victory over Manny Pacquiao was confirmed yesterday after a scoring review by the World Boxing Organization declared him the clear winner. — AFP

British Grand Prix at risk as Silverstone owners play tough

LONDON: Silverstone will not host the British Grand Prix after 2019 unless the circuit's owners gets a better financial deal from Formula One owners, they announced yesterday just days ahead of this year's renewal.

The British Racing Drivers' Club (BRDC) — who own Silverstone-announced they were triggering a break clause in its 17-year contract and the Grand Prix would not be raced on their prized possession post-2019 unless a revised agreement can be reached with Liberty Media, who were not the owners of Formula One when the original deal began in 2010.

"This decision has been taken because it is not financially viable for us to deliver the British Grand Prix under the terms of our current contract," BRDC chairman John Grant said.

"We sustained losses of £2.8m (3.1m, $3.6m) in 2015 and £4.8m in 2016, and we expect to lose a similar amount this year. "We have reached the tipping point where we can no longer let our passion for the sport rule our heads.

"It would not only risk the very future of Silverstone and the BRDC, but also the British motorsport community that depends on us. "However, I want to be clear that although we have now activated the break clause, we are fully supportive of the changes the Liberty team are making to improve the F1 experience.

"Our hope is that an agreement can still be reached, so that we can ensure a sustainable and financially viable future for the British Grand Prix at Silverstone for many years to come," added Grant whose body has been in talks with Liberty over the issue.

Nearly 140,000 spectators watched Britain's triple world champion Lewis Hamilton claim his third consecutive win at Silverstone last year. A near sell-out crowd is expected again this weekend as Hamilton bids to reduce rival Sebastian Vettel's 20-point lead in the title race. The circuit, unlike many other tracks on the F1 calendar, receives no government backing.

However, the BRDC have been hit financially by the hosting fee which goes up by five percent every year-from £12million in 2010, the year in which the new long-term deal started, to £17million this season and £26million in 2026. — AFP

Cubs seeking answers after erratic start to season

LOS ANGELES: The Chicago Cubs' curse-busting World Series win is a distant memory as the Major League Baseball champions limp into the All-Star break. The Cubs won their first title since 1908 — ending the longest sports title drought in American History-with their win over the Cleveland Indians in last year's Fall Classic.

But predictions that their core of 20-something stars were just getting started have been sorely tested in the first half of the 2017 season. The Cubs went into the 2016 All-Star break at 53-35 on their way to a 100-win season that never saw them drop below .500. So far this year they've flailed around the .500 mark, and trail the surprising Milwaukee Brewers in the National League Central race by 5.5 games.

"This year's just been kind of weird for all of us," National League Most Valuable Player Kris Bryant acknowledged. The Cubs are 43-45 as Major League Baseball takes it's mid-season break for Tuesday's All-Star Game in Miami. After Bryant lost out to the Dodgers' Justin Turner in final voting, the Cubs are the first World Series winners not to send a returning player to the All-Star Game.

Maybe Bryant could benefit from the time off. Last year the Cubs third baseman had 25 home runs, 65 RBI and a .962 on base plus slugging by the break. This season he's at 18, 38 and .928 — although Bryant insists he doesn't feel fatigued and the ankle he sprained in June is fine. Bryant showed a flash of brilliance on Friday, going 4-for-5 with two homers a triple and a single in the Cubs' 6-1 win over Pittsburgh. But the Pirates won the next two games of the weekend series, pummelling the Cubs 14-3 on Sunday to conclude the first half of the season. Bryant says the Cubs remain confident they can turn things around in the second half of the season-thanks in large part to their rally from 1-3 down in the World Series.

"We can do it," he said. "That's what makes us so confident." And manager Joe Maddon said he still sees "a chance for us to do something really spectacular" in the second half.

"I'm very pleased with where we're at right now," Maddon said at the weekend. "We have gone through a lot of different moments already this season regarding injuries, etc., and we've held our heads up pretty good." The Cubs offense stands to benefit from the returns of Ben Zobrist and Jason Heyward from the disabled list.

And the team is hoping slugger Kyle Schwarber's spell in the minor leagues was enough to sort out his hitting slump. But they also need to perk up their pitching. Ace Jon Lester endured the shortest outing of his career on Sunday when he gave up four earned runs and six hits before departing in the first inning against the Pirates on Sunday.—AFP

Farah set for final double title blast

LONDON: British athletics legend Mo Farah will hope he brings the curtain down on his track career with a third successive double world gold in the 5,000 and 10,000 metres in London in August.

The 34-year-old, who was named in both events in the British team selection unveiled yesterday, will compete on the track where he so memorably won double Olympic gold in 2012 when it was then the Olympic Stadium.

The host nation will be hoping a passionate home crowd will enable a relatively inexperienced team to at least match their 2015 world championship haul of seven medals. Farah-who began his world gold medal haul with gold in the 5000 in 2011 and silver in the 10000 — is the standout name in the British team with fellow 2012 Olympic champion Greg Rutherford the other proven champion in the squad.

Rutherford, who is also the defending world champion, will hope to have fully recovered from the ankle injury that ruled him out of last Sunday's Diamond League meeting at the same stadium. "This feels bigger for us than Rio," said Neil Black, the performance director for British Athletics.

"We've selected some incredibly talented athletes, and in many events there have been some close calls. "It's now up to them to grasp this opportunity and produce performances that will make the whole nation proud."

Of the athleties hoping one day to aspire to such heights the most eye-catching is Scottish distance runner Laura Muir, who will compete in both the 1500m and 5000m. There was disappointment for sprinter Adam Gemili, who just missed out on a 200m Olympic medal last year, as the 23-year-old paid for his sixth place in the British trials and saw the last spot go to Zharnel Hughes. Gemili doesn't miss out altogether as he will compete in the 4x100m relay team. — AFP

LAS VEGAS: Sacramento Kings' Jack Cooley, left, battles for the ball with Los Angeles Lakers' Alec Brown and Vander Blue, right, during the first half of an NBA summer league basketball game, Monday, in Las Vegas. — AP

BASEBALL

Aaron Judge smashes hit way to Home Run Derby title

MIAMI: Aaron Judge hit the glass behind left field that supports the retractable roof at Marlins Park. He drove balls over the Red Grooms home run sculpture in left-center, over the batter's eye in center and - unusually for a Home Run Derby, to the opposite field, too.

He even hit the roof. The larger-than-life New York Yankees slugger dominated the All-Star Home Run Derby in the same manner he has smashed his way through his rookie season, beating Minnesota's Miguel Sano 11-10 with two minutes to spare in the final on Monday night.

"It was a blast. I enjoyed every minute of it - watching the other guys swing, coming here early and talking to the media," Judge said. "Everything about today was fantastic." Five years ago, Judge won the college home run derby in Omaha, Nebraska. This time, he outslugged some of baseball's top stars, including local favorites Giancarlo Stanton and Justin Bour of the Miami Marlins. "A lot more fans," Judge said. "Your adrenaline is pumping, you're nervous, you're excited. But this was an incredible experience." Judge, 6-foot-7 (2.01-meters) and 282 pounds (128 kilograms), hit 47 home runs in the derby that totaled 3.9 miles. His longest drive of the night went 513 feet, and he topped 500 four times.

"I thought I had seen it all before. He didn't even look like he was getting tired," said Seattle's Robinson Cano, the 2011 Derby winner. "He was going opposite field. He was late on the ball and he was putting the ball in the upper deck."

Judge had no trouble hitting the roof, thought to be previously untouched by batted ball. That drive didn't count. "I got it in BP, too, earlier. So I wasn't too surprised by that," Judge said. Hitting second each time, Judge knocked out Bour 23-22 in the first round and beat Los Angeles Dodgers rookie Cody Bellinger 13-12 in the second. Then, with lightning visible behind the huge glass door, he hit a 458-foot drive above the batter's eye for the title.

"That guy Aaron Judge, he doesn't get tired," Sano said. Many of the All-Stars sat in foul territory, some with their kids. "I had never seen him in person. He's really impressive," said Colorado's Charlie Blackmon, who was eliminated in the first round. "The first time I saw him, he was in a crowd. I was wondering what he was standing on. He's a monster."

Judge leads the major leagues with 30 home runs, and some Yankees fans showed up to support him in their full dress - flowing black robes and white powdered wigs. Booed initially by the crowd of 37,027, Judge earned cheers once Stanton, the defending champion, and Bour were eliminated in the first round.

Judge has hit the longest home run in the regular season this year in the majors - 495 feet. He broke a TV monitor at Yankee Stadium with a BP drive that went over the center-field bleachers in May and dented a door casing with a home run last week.

In yesterday night's game, he's set to bat third for the American League. Sano beat Kansas City's Mike Moustakas 11-10 in the opening round, and the Yankees' Gary

Sanchez topped Stanton 17-16. Stanton, who got home at about 5 a.m. after a game in San Francisco, started slowly against pitcher Pat Shine, hitting three liners before a 429-foot drive to center. Stanton began to find his grove and hit a 496-foot shot off the glass behind the left-field seats, then started spraying impressive drives. He had 15 when his 30-second bonus road started but added just one more. The crowd groaned when his last fell short.

"It just didn't work out as we had planned," Shine said. Bellinger, hitting off his dad, former big leaguer Clay Bellinger, earned bonus time as four minutes expired with his 13th drive, into the right-field upper deck, then with five seconds remaining knocked out Blackmon 15-14.

Hitting without batting gloves, Bour excited fans with 22 homers . Judge, hitting against his regular BP pitcher, Danilo Valiente, had 22 through four minutes, according to the scoreboard, and when he hit one in bonus time he walked away. But scoreboard reverted to 22 - apparently the roof shot was subtracted - and Judge added another with a few seconds left. "I thought I had 23 already, but I guess I tied him," he said. "I really didn't have any worries." Seeming tired, Sanchez opened the second round with 10 and Sano needed just 3:10 to hit 11, the longest at 491 feet. In a matchup of the leading candidates for rookies of the year, Bellinger hit 12 and Judge topped him with a minute to spare, including a 513-foot shot high off the window, a drive that left his bat at 119 mph and rose 143 feet. "I had no pressure going into it," Judge said. "I'm a rookie. This is my first time doing it. For me, I got no expectations. I'm just going to go in there and have some fun."— AP

MIAMI: Aaron Judge #99 of the New York Yankees competes in the final round of the T-Mobile Home Run Derby at Marlins Park on Monday in Miami, Florida. — AFP

BASKETBALL

Ball won't face Fox as Summer League loses marquee matchup

LAS VEGAS: Lonzo Ball will have to wait for another shot at De'Aaron Fox. Their summer showdown Monday was canceled. The Lakers rested their prized pick because of a groin injury, sitting him out of their NBA Summer League victory in Las Vegas over Sacramento and fellow rookie point guard Fox.

Fox dominated when Kentucky blew by UCLA in the NCAA Tournament, scoring 39 points to Ball's 10. LaVar Ball, Lonzo's outspoken father, would later say his son was playing with an injured hamstring.

If true, the No. 2 pick already knows there's no use trying to stay with the faster Fox at less than 100 percent. The Lakers said Ball, who struggled in his first game but responded with a triple-double in his second, had a sore right groin.

The Lakers got their first victory of the summer without him, blowing a 28-point lead but recovering for a 95-92 victory. Fox scored 12 points but played just 20 minutes, watching the Kings' comeback from the bench with his foot wrapped.

The matchup of California point guards was expected to headline an eight-game day that included a matchup between Golden State and Cleveland, who met in the last three NBA Finals. A look at the games.

LAKERS 95, KINGS 92

Vander Blue led the Lakers (1-2) with 21 points. Alex Caruso, who started for Ball, finished with 18 points and nine assists. College player of the year Frank Mason scored 24 points for the Kings (0-3) and Buddy Hield had 22. Rookie Justin Jackson added 16.

CAVALIERS 91, WARRIORS 74

Cleveland improved to 3-0, leading by as many as 27 points against the team from the NBA champions. Brandon Paul scored 21 points and backup point guard Kay Felder had 12 points and six rebounds for the Cavaliers. Patrick McCaw, a key member of Golden State's rotation late in the season, was 3 for 15 for nine points. Alex Hamilton scored 11 points for the Warriors (0-2), who got eight rebounds in 15 minutes from second-round pick Jordan Bell.

HAWKS 75, BULLS 55

DeAndre' Bembry scored 17 points and John Collins had 15 points and 11 rebounds as Atlanta improved to 2-1. Diamond Stone, acquired from the Clippers in a three-team trade with Denver, had 12 points and six rebounds in 19 minutes. The Bulls shot 22 percent from the field and were 4 for 35 (11.4 percent) in their pathetic performance. Lauri Markkanen, the No. 7 pick from Arizona, missed all 10 3-point attempts and went 1 for 13 overall. Second-year guard Denzel Valentine, who led the Bulls to the Summer League championship last year, was 1 for 12 and missed all eight behind the arc. Cameron Payne scored 12 points for the Bulls (0-2).

HEAT 91, WIZARDS 87

Matt Williams scored 17 points and made five 3-pointers as the Heat moved to 2-0. Rookie Bam Adebayo had 16 points and seven rebounds, while Trey McKinney-Jones added 15 points and Okaro White scored 14. Sheldon McClellan had 18 points and Jared Cunningham 16 for the winless Wizards (0-2).

NETS 95, PELICANS 66

Archie Goodwin had 18 points and eight assists as the Nets led by as many as 36 points and cruised to a 2-1 start. Caris LeVert added 17 points, while Rondae Hollis-Jefferson and Isaiah Whitehead each had 11. All were part of the rotation last season on a Nets team that finished with the NBA's worst record. Quinn Cook scored 20 points as New Orleans fell to a Summer League-worst 0-3.

ROCKETS 99, SUNS 94

Troy Williams scored 27 points for the Rockets (2-1), who also got 18 from Isaiah Taylor and 16 from Chris Johnson. Zhou Qi of China missed all five 3-point attempts and finished with three points. Marquese Chriss had 26 points for the Suns (1-2), who blew a 15-point lead and made just four baskets in the fourth quarter. No. 4 pick Josh Jackson of Kansas scored 20 points, and fellow rookie Mike James finished with 17.

RAPTORS 82, NUGGETS 81

Jakob Poeltl and Fred VanVleet each scored 17 points as the Raptors (3-0) hung on to remain unbeaten. Denver had a chance to tie, but Juan Hernangomez made only two of three free throws after he was fouled with 14.5 seconds left. The Nuggets got one more chance, but Pascal Siakam came up with a steal with 2.9 seconds to go. Siakam finished with 14 points. Malik Beasley scored 19 points for the Nuggets (0-3).

CLIPPERS 100, BUCKS 93

Montrezl Harrell, acquired from Houston in the Chris Paul trade, scored 21 points on 10-of-13 shooting as the Clippers won for the third time in three games. He was 4 for 4 in the fourth quarter, when Los Angeles shot 11 of 14 while outscoring Milwaukee 29-18. Sindarius Thornwell, who led South Carolina's surprising Final Four run, chipped in 18 points and Jamil Wilson finished with 18 points, eight rebounds and eight assists. Rashad Vaughn scored 21 points and D.J. Wilson had 17 for the Bucks (1-2). — AP

ATHLETICS

Indian sprinter ready to fight gender rule again

NEW DELHI: Indian sprinter Dutee Chand vowed yesterday to fight any efforts to bar her from the sport, after new research showed runners born with high testosterone levels enjoy a "significant competitive advantage". The 21-year-old was banned after being diagnosed in 2014 with hyperandrogenism-a condition that causes high natural levels of the hormone in women. She contested the ban and won a temporary reprieve from the Court of Arbitration for Sports (CAS) which allowed her to compete. Without proof, the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) regulations excluding women with hyperandrogenism from competition are set to lapse this year.

But the global body plans to submit the new research as evidence to back its case that they should remain in place. "I know that my case is going to start all over again but I am not afraid of anything," Chand told AFP by phone. "I am confident I will come out unscathed. I will keep fighting until I get justice. A positive ruling will not only benefit me but all other women athletes like me."

The IAAF introduced the regulations in 2011 after a highly emotive public battle with South Africa's two-time Olympic champion Caster Semenya. It part-funded the latest research, which relied on data from more than 2,100 blood samples taken from male and female athletes. Testosterone, which can also be injected as a performance-enhancer, increases muscle mass and boosts physical strength. The issue of hyperandrogenism is controversial because it has pitted principles of fair competition against the rights of women born with a condition they have no control over.

The IAAF rules allowed hyperandrogenic athletes to take medication to lower their testosterone levels to below 10 nanomoles per litre-considered a low level in men.

The natural range for women is about 10 times lower. Chand, who won two bronze medals at the recent Asian Athletics Championship in her home state of Orissa, said she was not alone in her fight against "cruel and discriminatory" rules.

"There are other athletes who are suffering like me without any fault. The whole world is supporting me." — AFP

BHUBANESWAR: India's Dutee Chand celebrates after placing third in the women's 100m event at the 22nd Asian Athletics Championships at Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar. Indian sprinter Dutee Chand vowed yesterday to fight any efforts to bar her from the sport, after new research showed runners born with high testosterone levels enjoy a "significant competitive advantage". — AFP

Bangladesh cricket vows crackdown on player scandals

DHAKA: Bangladesh's cricket board vowed tough action yesterday against any players accused of misconduct or bringing the game into disrepute amid a slew of high-profile scandals involving top stars. The warning from the cricket board came as the wife of fast bowler Mohammad Shahid filed a complaint against her husband, accusing him of torturing her. Farzana Akther told the Bangladesh Cricket Board at the weekend that her 28-year-old husband had hidden his marital status from other women and tortured her after she intervened, an official at the board said. Shahid, who is undergoing treatment for a knee injury sustained during a domestic match, denied the allegations.

"The allegation of torture is not true. Somebody is provoking her to raise complaint against me," Shahid told AFP.

BCB president Nazmul Hasan said it was difficult to monitor every aspect of players' lives but warned of repercussions if they didn't get their act together. "We have tried a lot to control them when they are with the squad. We've become tougher when they stay in hotels under our care," he told reporters. "The problems start when they leave (the hotel). We cannot monitor their personal issues.

"We have taken action against similar incidents in the past. We want (them) to get everything in order, otherwise we'll be compelled to take tough action in future." Shahid is the fourth Bangladeshi cricketer embroiled in a personal scandal in recent years.

Pace bowler Rubel Hossain was detained in 2015 after an actress claiming to be his fiancee accused him of rape. The charges were later withdrawn. Another pacer Shahadat Hossain spent nearly two months in custody last year after he and his wife were arrested on charges of torturing an 11-year-old girl they employed as a maid. A court later acquitted the couple. Left arm spinner Arafat Sunny was arrested in January and taken into custody after posting intimate photos of his girlfriend on social media.

The 30-year-old cricketer was released on bail in March after he told the court that the girlfriend was, in fact, his second wife.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh opening batsman Tamim Iqbal has left English county Essex after just one match for personal reasons the club revealed yesterday.

The 28-year-old-Bangladesh's highest international run scorer with more than 10,000 to his name in all forms of the game-signed only last week for an eight game stint in the T20 Blast county competition.

Tamim appeared in Sunday's seven-wicket loss to Kent but on Tuesday Essex released a statement saying his stay was over. "Essex County Cricket Club can confirm that overseas player Tamim Iqbal has left the club with immediate effect due to personal reasons," the statement read.

"We wish him all the best, and it would be appreciated if Tamim's privacy is respected during this time." Tamim starred with the bat for Bangladesh in the recent Champions Trophy scoring a splendid century against England, falling five short of another century against Australia and hitting 70 in the semi-final against India. — AFP

Sri Lanka take flak after 'disgraceful' cricket defeat

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka's cricketers faced a barrage of criticism yesterday a day after their series loss to bottom-ranked Zimbabwe in what is being described as a new low for the beleaguered side. Zimbabwe notched their first win abroad in eight years after claiming the one-day international series against Sri Lanka 3-2, embarrassing a home side that has struggled with fitness, losses and coaching upheaval. "Sri Lankan cricket has reached its lowest point and it could well be the point of no return. Now that the 11th ranked Zimbabwe have beaten them, we wonder what excuse is in store," declared local newspaper Island. "Disgrace" read a headline in the local Daily Mirror, while another newspaper said Sri Lanka's cricket was "in the doldrums". Their defeat came hot on the heels of their early exit from the Champions Trophy and a drubbing by Sports Minister Dayasiri Jayasekera, who accused the national side of being overweight and unfit to compete on the world stage. Players were given three months to get in shape or face the boot. The side began the five-match series against Zimbabwe without a coach after Graham Ford quit on the eve of the tournament, just halfway through his 45-month contract.

Sri Lanka's cricket board elevated fielding coach Nic Pothas for the series while they searched for a replacement for Ford. "You can't expect Pothas to perform miracles," said a senior cricket official, asking not to be named.

"There were several factors that contributed to the (latest) humiliation." A lack of preparation and poor selection decisions compounded problems for the home side, who appeared to underestimate the tourists, the official added. Zimbabwe rank just one place above cricket minnows Ireland and have not won abroad since a victory in Kenya in 2009.

Skipper Angelo Mathews conceded the shock defeat was a low point in his 187-match ODI career. "This is a hard pill to swallow. I don't want to give any excuses... They played better cricket," Mathews told the Island.

He said he will discuss his future with selectors but had not made any decisions. Sri Lanka faces Zimbabwe in a Test match in Colombo on Friday.— AFP

LONDON: England's Moeen Ali, third left, leads England off the field carrying the ball and a stump following his 10-wicket haul with captain Joe Root, second left, also carrying a stump at the end of the first Test between England and South Africa at Lord's cricket ground in London, Sunday. — AP

RUGBY

Maroons bank on Storm 'spine' to win decider

BRISBANE: Holders Queensland will rely on the Melbourne Storm 'spine' to give the Maroons victory in today's State of Origin rugby league series decider against New South Wales in Brisbane.

Queensland have won 10 of the last 11 fiercely-fought interstate series and must do without injured mercurial Test pivot Johnathan Thurston and Test back Darius Boyd to clinch another one.

Thurston landed a pressure sideline conversion to crown a magnificent 18-16 comeback victory over the Blues last month to keep the series alive, but afterwards was ruled out for the rest of the season with a shoulder injury. The Maroons have named debutant Cameron Munster as Thurston's replacement at stand-off, implanting the steely Melbourne Storm club 'spine' into the Queensland starting line-up.

Queensland will have skipper Cameron Smith at hooker along with his fellow Storm teammates Cooper Cronk at scrum-half, Munster at stand-off and Billy Slater at fullback along with Will Chambers in the centres. "He's playing with them every week these guys and understands their game," Maroons coach Kevin Walters said after selecting Munster at No.6.

"Obviously the spine is a big part of what we do and certainly Cameron, Cooper and Billy are a major part of that." Smith, Cronk and Slater play an influential role in the Queensland team, with their innate understanding of attacking plays paramount to the Maroons' chances.

Slater and Cronk are expected to make an announcement on their Origin futures after Wednesday's crunch game.

"Hopefully we'll find out after this series is done where Cooper's at for next year, Bill's a bit different," Smith said.

"I think he's very keen to play on, it's just whether he feels his body's up to it. "I try to take the emotion out of it. It's probably one of the biggest games we have been involved in, but we have to get a job done," he added. After amassing a record 41 Origins - including 17 as skipper - Smith said this year's title would be his most enjoyable.

"It'd be the most satisfying, no doubt about that given the injuries we've had and the personnel that are unavailable," he said.

The Blues are bidding to clinch their first Origin series since 2014 after decisively winning the opening game 28-4 in Brisbane. Laurie Daley is in line to become only the second NSW coach after Phil Gould to claim more than one series triumph for NSW.

Daley has named an unchanged side, although skipper and back-rower Boyd Cordner is battling a calf injury to be ready in time for the match.

Teams (1-17)

Queensland: Billy Slater; Valentine Holmes, Will Chambers, Michael Morgan, Dane Gagai; Cameron Munster, Cooper Cronk; Dylan Napa, Cameron Smith (capt), Jarrod Wallace; Gavin Cooper, Matt Gillett; Josh McGuire. Interchange: Ben Hunt, Josh Papalii, Coen Hess, Tim Glasby.

NSW: James Tedesco; Brett Morris, Josh Dugan, Jarryd Hayne, Blake Ferguson; James Maloney, Mitchell Pearce; Aaron Woods, Nathan Peats, Andrew Fifita; Boyd Cordner (capt), Josh Jackson; Tyson Frizell. Interchange: David Klemmer, Wade Graham, Jake Trbojevic, Jack Bird. Referees: Matt Cecchin, Gerard Sutton. —AFP

KAZAN: France's Amelie Mugner (C) vies with Irish Lucy Mulhall (L) and Lucy Mulhall (R) during the women's Rugby Sevens Grand Prix Series match between France and Ireland in Kazan on Monday. — AFP

CRICKET

England's 10-wicket Ali a 'batter who bowls'

LONDON: Moeen Ali may have taken 10 wickets in England's first Test win over South Africa at Lord's, but the best way for him to continue to be successful as a bowler is to think of himself as a batsman. That was the somewhat convoluted position outlined by England coach Trevor Bayliss, who stressed neither he nor the all-rounder himself were thinking of the Worcestershire man as a frontline spinner.

Ali starred with both bat and ball as England launched Joe Root's reign as captain with a commanding 211-run victory in the series opener against the Proteas, the win achieved with more than a day to spare.

During the match, Ali became the second-quickest England player after Tony Greig to complete the all-rounder's double of 2,000 runs and 100 wickets in Test cricket. His match figures of 10 for 112 allied to a first-innings 87 also helped him move above England team-mate Ben Stokes into fourth place in the International Cricket Council's list of leading Test all-rounders.

And yet Bayliss believes it will help "complex character" Ali if left-armer Liam Dawson is regarded as England's leading spinner should they retain the same side for Friday's second Test of a four-match series at Nottingham's Trent Bridge. "We'll stick with one spinner and one batter that bowls a little ... and that's important for Mo more than anything," said Bayliss. Of course, England won't care a bit how they or Ali views himself if he keeps on taking wickets following his Test-best six for 53 at Lord's on Sunday that was key to South Africa's collapse to 119 all out in their second innings.

'PRESSURE OFF'

"If he goes into the match as a batter and the second spinner, as we saw in this is probably more so for Mo's benefit, to take a little bit of that pressure off him," added Australian coach Bayliss. Hampshire's Dawson bagged a pair at Lord's, his third nought in two career Tests after an unbeaten fifty on debut away to India last year. After an uncertain start at Lord's, his bowling became more of a threat on an increasingly helpful pitch and he finished with match figures of four for 101.

"Liam admitted himself that he was very nervous in the first innings, first Test match at home, first Test at Lord's," said Bayliss. "But I thought he showed the character we know he has to come back and bowl better in the second innings-and bowl in a good partnership with Mo." The match was a triumph for Root, whose first-innings 190 put England in a strong position. "Before this Test match, he was a little more on edge than I've seen him before," said Bayliss. "But he didn't try to be something he's not. He's a pro-active, confident sort of a young bloke, and I thought that came across in the way he led the team."

Former captain Alastair Cook made a valuable fifty in the second innings and Bayliss said he was enjoying his return to the ranks. "He's loving it! I was having a bit of a laugh about it, just watching him in the field.

"For someone in that stage of his career, it's a good sign." Meanwhile Jonny Bairstow's increasingly assured wicket-keeping, allied to his proven run-scoring ability was exemplified by his excellent legside catch to dismiss Heino Kuhn on Sunday. "That first catch was probably the best he's taken since I've been here in the last three summers," said Bayliss. "So that will give him a lot of confidence." —AFP

Shastri hot favourite to be new India coach

NEW DELHI: Former skipper Ravi Shastri has emerged as the front-runner to be the new coach of India, but a final decision remains on hold until captain Virat Kohli has been consulted. Shastri, 55, was among five high-profile candidates interviewed on Monday for the post left vacant by ex-Test captain Anil Kumble, who resigned amid difficulties over his relationship with Kohli which he described as "untenable".

An advisory committee of Sachin Tendulkar, Sourav Ganguly and VVS Laxman has been tasked with selecting the new coach to head the world's number-one ranked Test team. The cricketing greats considered presentations from Shastri, Virender Sehwag, Australia's Tom Moody, Englishman Richard Pybus and former India manager Lalchand Rajput.

But after a gruelling round of interviews the committee decided there was "no hurry" to name the coach, and felt Kohli should be consulted before the final decision was made.

Speculation has been rife that Shastri, who served as India's team director between 2014 and 2016, is on friendly terms with Kohli and will therefore get the nod. "All members of the Indian cricket team are in favour of cricketer-turned-commentator Shastri taking over the role," reported The Times of India yesterday. "All 15 members of the team are unanimous on this. It's not even 14-1," the daily reported, citing an unnamed member of the Indian cricket team. Ganguly told reporters that Kohli would be briefed on the developments once the team returned from their limited-overs tour of the West Indies. "Sri Lanka tour is in a week's time, the board headed by (secretary) Amitabh Choudhary and (chief executive) Rahul Johri will probably continue with the same set for the time being," said Ganguly.

"We want to speak to Virat Kohli once he is back from America, all three of us along with the respective people concerned. "We will explain to him that the coaches want to function in a certain way and make sure that everybody is on the same page before we make the announcement."

Kohli made no recommendation for who should fill the coaching role, Ganguly added, which would run until the World Cup in 2019. Shastri, who has represented India in 80 Tests and 150 one-day internationals between 1981 and 1992, originally applied when a one-year contract to coach India was made available in 2016.

A decision by India's cricket board to allow Shastri to interview via Skype while on holiday at the time angered Ganguly, who complained publicly about the selection process. Shastri was then pipped to the post by Kumble. —AFP

Ravi Shastri

Saudis to allow girls to play sports in public schools

DUBAI: Saudi Arabia said yesterday that it will grant girls in public schools access to physical education, a decision that comes after years of calls by women across the kingdom demanding greater rights and access to sports.

The Education Ministry said it will introduce the physical education classes "gradually" and "in accordance with (Islamic) Shariah regulations." At least one Saudi activist took to Twitter questioning whether this implied that girls will be required to seek the permission of their male guardians, such as a father, before they can play sports. It was also unclear if the classes would be extracurricular or mandatory.

The decision to allow girls to play sports in public schools is significant in Saudi Arabia because women taking part in exercise is still seen as a taboo. Some of the kingdom's ultraconservatives shun the concept of women's exercise as "immodest" and say it blurs gender lines.

It was only four years ago that the kingdom formally approved sports for girls in private schools. Women first participated in Saudi Arabia's Olympic team during the 2012 London games. Despite incremental openings for Saudi women, tight restrictions remain in place. Women are banned from driving and must seek the permission of a male guardian to travel abroad or obtain a passport. Restrictive male guardianship rules give men, usually the father or husband, huge sway over a woman's life in Saudi Arabia.

ACCESS TO SPORTS

The move to grant girls access to sports comes after years of campaigning by women's rights activists, who have led calls to end male guardianship rules and lift the ban on women driving. Outside of a few upscale gated compounds where foreigners live, women do not jog or exercise in public spaces, and they are banned from attending sporting matches in the country's male-only stadiums.

Women in Saudi Arabia must wear loose flowing robes known as "abayas" in public, and most also cover their hair and face with black veils.

Access to sports has largely been a luxury for those women who can afford it and whose families permit it. A handful of private sports clubs have emerged over the years, allowing some women to join in female basketball leagues. In recent years Saudi Arabia has approved some licenses for female-only gyms, but membership costs are beyond the reach of many.

A new, sprawling female-only university in the capital, Riyadh, has a large gym, outdoor soccer pitches, running tracks and indoor swimming pools. Despite such facilities, the country's top consultative body, the Shura Council, rejected a proposal earlier this year to establish sports education colleges that would train women in how to teach fitness and well-being, such as physical education courses in schools.

Saudi Arabia implements strict gender segregation rules that often require women to sit in "family only" sections of restaurants and cafes, or to be banned entirely from establishments where segregated seating is unavailable. Boys and girls are segregated in schools and university to prevent unrelated males and females from mixing. The Education Ministry said the decision to introduce sports for girls was in line with the country's sweeping Vision 2030 plan , a wide-reaching government plan to overhaul society and the economy. It is being spearheaded by the kingdom's young heir to the throne, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.

The plan specifically calls for encouraging the participation of all citizens in sports and athletic activities. It says 13 percent of the Saudi population exercises once a week. The government aims to bump that up to 40 percent and raise life expectancy from 74 years to 80 years. — AP

Zdravko Mamic

Croatia's Mamic faces new corruption charges

ZAGREB: Croatia's football strongman and former Dinamo Zagreb chief Zdravko Mamic was charged yesterday for funnelling money from the club which allegedly cost it nearly 20 million euros ($22.8 million). Along with Mamic, national anti-graft prosecutors charged six other people including his brother Zoran, a former Dinamo Zagreb coach, son Mario and former club director Damir Vrbanovic.

Mamic is charged of having organised a "criminal enterprise with the aim to get pecuniary gain for himself and others, all at Dinamo's detriment," a prosecutors' statement said.

The offences took place between December 2004 and December 2016, it said. The suspects were allegedly arranging fictious deals between Dinamo and foreign firms based in the United Kingdom, Switzerland, the United Arab Emirates and elsewhere for "non-existent mediation services during players' transfers," the statement said. The companies were then issuing receipts for non-existent services that the club was paying. "In such way...at least 144 million kunas (19.4 million euros) were paid on foreign companies' accounts at Dinamo's detriment," the statement said. The Mamic brothers and Vrbanovic are already being tried in another case for abuse of power and graft that cost Dinamo more than 15 million euros and the state 1.5 million euros.

Cash was allegedly embezzled through fictitious deals related to player transfers. Real Madrid midfielder Luka Modric testified in June over the details of his 2008 transfer from Dinamo to Tottenham Hotspur. However, he is now himself being probed over alleged false testimony and was questioned by prosecutors earlier this month. Another Croatian international, Liverpool defender Dejan Lovren, is to appear as a witness in September.

Mamic's trial, which opened in April, has attracted huge interest from media and residents of the eastern city of Osijek, where it is being held reportedly to avoid Mamic's influence on judges in the capital Zagreb. Mamic is considered to be the most powerful man in Croatian football and his connections extend into many spheres of public life. Most Croatian football fans see him as the real boss of the Croatian Football Federation and believe its formal chief Davor Suker is merely Mamic's puppet. The 57-year-old repeatedly argued that the probes against him were politically motivated.—AFP

CYCLING

'Proud' Kittel continues Tour sprint domination

BERGERAC: Marcel Kittel cantered to a fourth stage win of the Tour de France at the end of yesterday's 178km 10th stage from Perigueux to Bergerac with Chris Froome retaining the overall lead.

The 29-year-old German was imperious as he won easily ahead of compatriot John Degenkolb with Dutchman Dylan Groenewegen third. "It's true, it's amazing, I can't even tell you how proud I am," said Quick-Step's Kittel.

"it's a fourth stage win in 10 days, that's a great achievement for me and the team." But it was the manner of Kittel's victory that was most impressive. Once he accelerated from around half a dozen bodies back, he simply breezed past the competition and streaked clear to win by a couple of bike lengths, even having time to raise his arms in celebration before crossing the line.

It means he is well set to make this his best Tour yet as he has already matched his previous top effort-four stage wins in both 2013 and 2014 — less than half the way through this year's race.

In fact, Kittel has won four of the five flat sprint finishes at the Tour this year, and in the one he didn't win he was held up by a crash in the final kilometer. A tilt at the record of eight stage wins from a single Tour has now become a viable possibility.

Kittel also broke the record for stage wins by a German, moving one clear of the 12 mark he had shared with Erik Zabel following his stage victory on Friday.

And he increased his lead in the green points jersey competition, emphasising the possibility of Kittel holding it all the way to Paris-although he has a fair way to go to match Zabel's record of six wins in that category. Earlier in the day French pair Yoann Ofredo and Elie Gesbert took off from the get-go on Tuesday's stage and held a lead of five and a half minutes at one stage but their effort was always doomed to failure and they were inevitably caught with seven kilometres left. For Briton Froome, the reigning champion, and the other overall contenders it was a quiet and calm day in the saddle. The 10th stage followed Monday's rest day and Froome admitted Tuesday's stage "almost" felt like a second successive day off.

"It was a calmer day, there wasn't much wind and no stress today-it was a less complicated stage. "It's never easy but today was calmer." That would have been a relief after Sunday's calamitous stage that saw five riders crash out, including Australian contender Richie Porte.

Froome kept hold of the race leader's yellow jersey with an 18-second advantage to Italy's Fabio Aru. France's Romain Bardet is third at 51sec. —AFP

PERIGUEUX: Germany's Marcel Kittel celebrates his green jersey of best sprinter on the podium at the end of the 178 km tenth stage of the 104th edition of the Tour de France cycling race yesterday between Perigueux and Bergerac. — AFP

Everton gaining momentum on field, in boardroom

LIVERPOOL: Wayne Rooney's sentimental return to Everton after 13 years away fits the image of a club often criticized for living in the past amid the fast-evolving world of English soccer. The past 18 months have shown, however, that something exciting is brewing in the blue half of Merseyside: A newfound ambition and a determination to make up for lost time after falling behind the Premier League's elite.

There's a new 300-million-pound ($385-million) stadium on the horizon on the Mersey waterfront, replacing the atmospheric but cramped Goodison Park. There's a wealthy majority shareholder in place in Farhad Moshiri, an Iranian-British businessman who sold his share in Arsenal to get a stake in Everton in early 2016.

There's a highly regarded manager in Ronald Koeman, who holds a fine global reputation from his time as a player with Barcelona and the Netherlands, and a director of football in Steve Walsh, a super scout who was one of the unheralded architects behind Leicester's improbable Premier League title triumph in 2015-16.

And - arguably most important to Everton's success-starved fans - there's a team filled with a growing number of bright, bold and talented youngsters from England and abroad. The arrival of Rooney is the signature moment of a busy summer at Everton, a fact underscored by the lines outside the gates of Goodison Park on Monday to welcome home the club's so-called "prodigal son." But he's a blast from the past at a club looking forward, with momentum on the field and in the boardroom.

GOING PLACES

"We hit a level, and now we're going places," said Michael Graham, a 52-year-old Everton supporter who was outside the stadium waiting for a glimpse of Rooney. Everton's fans have been starved of success since the club's heyday in the mid-1980s, when it rivaled Merseyside rival Liverpool as England's most successful team. The last of Everton's nine top-flight titles came in 1987, its highest finish since the Premier League's inception in 1992 is fourth, and its last major trophy was the 1995 FA Cup.

A nine-year-old Rooney was at the old Wembley Stadium for that cup final against Manchester United, a big Everton follower just like his father and now his kids. They were the most pleased to see Rooney return to Everton after 13 trophy-laden years at United.

Rooney, a free transfer, is one of six players signed for a total of around 90 million pounds ($115 million) this offseason. There are sure to be more, although Everton has recouped 75 million ($97 million) in selling striker Romelu Lukaku to United. Koeman also oversaw the spending of 70 million pounds last season.

Fans are thrilled Everton is making its transfer moves early in the summer, instead of in the last days of the window as usual. Credit for that must go to Walsh for identifying the players and acting quickly, and also to Moshiri. Everton finally has a financial backer willing to spend big.

"I know from speaking to fans, my family, how excited they are," Rooney said about Everton's ambition on Monday. "It is great for everyone when a club makes new signings. There is a good feeling around Everton Football Club at the moment.

"We don't just want to limp around this season." Sitting alongside Rooney at his presentation on Monday, Koeman acknowledged the pressure was on Everton in his second season at Goodison. "The first season was to play good football and get good results," he said, "but now you need to make the next step."

The recent spending spree will not guarantee that improvement, though, as Liverpool and Tottenham know. Both clubs used money gained from a high-price player move (Luis Suarez at Liverpool in 2014 and Gareth Bale at Spurs in 2013) to strengthen the rest of the squad, but initially struggled to manage without their former star player.

Koeman has to decide where Rooney fits into his team and also how many of the club's youngsters, such as Ademola Lookman, Tom Davies, Dominic Calvert-Lewin and Mason Holgate, to start.

Still, there's optimism that Everton will bridge the gap to the top six by the end of the coming season, with Rooney providing the kind of leadership and experience - if not necessarily the goals - that Koeman's young team requires.—AP

James leaves Real, hopes for second chance at Bayern

MADRID: After capturing the world's attention with his stunning goal for Colombia against Uruguay at the 2014 World Cup, no limits could be set for James Rodriguez. Now, three seasons later, he's leaving Real Madrid under a cloud of frustration, deemed surplus to requirements at the Spanish side and looking for a second chance in a loan spell at Bayern Munich.

The Bundesliga side hopes that Carlo Ancelotti, who was in charge in Madrid when James joined, will again be able to get the best from a player who undoubtedly has the talent to count among the world's best. "Signing James Rodriguez was our coach Carlo Ancelotti's biggest wish, following their successful spell working together in Madrid," Bayern chairman Karl-Heinz Rummenigge said as the club announced James' arrival on Tuesday.

Bayern signed the 25-year-old James on a two-year loan arrangement with an option to make the move permanent. Already well-known after three seasons at Porto and one at Monaco, that goal at the World Cup, where he took the ball on his chest and swiveled before smashing a brilliant volley in off the underside of the bar, catapulted James to stardom. He scored again in that game, too, and finished as the tournament's top scorer with six altogether.

James was suddenly being compared to established superstars Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo, and was touted as a future Ballon d'Or winner, the trophy then given to the world's best player. Real Madrid certainly thought so, splashing out some 80 million euros ($91 million) to take the then 22-year-old from Monaco. He was given the prestigious No. 10 jersey, previously worn by the likes of Luis Figo and the Hungarian great Ferenc Puskas.

James enjoyed a stellar first season at Madrid under Ancelotti, scoring 17 goals and setting up 18 more in 46 competitive games in 2014-15, despite time sidelined with a broken metatarsal.

PERSONAL BATTLE

Ancelotti was forced to leave at the end of the season, however, and James failed to earn the same trust from his successor Zinedine Zidane. Last season he was relegated to Madrid's "B-team" under the French coach, playing only when preferred stars were being rested. James failed to feature in the big games, and Isco - with whom he had been competing for a place from the start - had won their personal battle, establishing himself and becoming a firm favorite among fans.

With the talented Marco Asensio also pushing for a place, along with Croatian midfielder Mateo Kovacic, Zidane had a wealth of options when it came to replacing one of the favored "BBC" - Karim Benzema, Gareth Bale and Cristiano Ronaldo.

James simply found himself to be a star too many. He didn't even make the substitutes' bench for the Champions League final win over Juventus in June. In all, he finished with two Champions League medals, two FIFA Club World Cup titles and a Spanish league title, scoring 36 goals and providing 41 assists in 111 competitive appearances for Madrid.

They're impressive numbers for any player, but James' time in Madrid can only be viewed with regret based on his potential. Now Bayern is hoping to take advantage. In a way, the German club can't lose. It will reportedly pay Madrid 5 million euros ($5.7 million) per season for James, and can then make the transfer permanent in 2019 for another 35 million euros ($40 million).

"James is a very versatile player. He's a goal-scorer himself, he sets up a lot of goals and on top of that he's great from set-pieces. There's no question that this transfer further increases the quality in our team," Rummenigge said.

While Madrid club president Florentino Perez had wanted James to stay so the club could capitalize on the player's marketing potential in South America, he left the final decision to Zidane, the first coach ever to lead a club to back-to-back Champions League titles in the modern era.

James cut a forlorn figure in his last season at the Spanish club, his frustration with Zidane clear when he was substituted off despite scoring in a rare start in a 4-2 league win at Leganes in April. Zidane defended his reaction, but James made only 13 league starts under the French coach last season, with nine appearances from the bench.

James was much happier under Ancelotti. Bayern can only benefit if the Italian coach manages to get him smiling again. — AP

James Rodriguez

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LAUSANNE: From left, Casey Wasserman, Chairman of Los Angeles 2024, Eric Garcetti, Mayor of Los Angeles, International Olympic Committee, IOC, President Thomas Bach, Anne Hidalgo, Mayor of Paris and Tony Estanguet, Co-president of Paris 2024, gesture, during a press conference after the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Extraordinary Session, at the SwissTech Convention Centre, in Lausanne, Switzerland, yesterday. —AP

Paris, LA to host Summer Games

LAUSANNE: The International Olympic Committee agreed yesterday to award the 2024 and 2028 Games at the same time, effectively guaranteeing that Paris and Los Angeles will be the hosts.

The French capital is tipped to stage 2024, with the California metropolis having hinted that it was prepared to wait four more years. The two cities were the remaining candidates for the 2024 Olympics, a contest that IOC boss Thomas Bach said created "a golden opportunity". The Olympic movement has had increasing trouble attracting prospective hosts given the soaring costs and taxpayer support required. Paris and Los Angeles mounted progressive, exemplary bids that would trim expenses by using existing facilities, the IOC said, making clear that it did not want to reject either candidate.

Bach lobbied for a double hosting plan, which won unanimous approval from IOC members at a meeting yesterday in Lausanne, Switzerland. With the deal in place, the IOC now has a two-month window to negotiate with Paris and Los Angeles over which city will go first. Bach said he wants a "tripartite agreement" before the IOC's main annual meeting in Peru's capital Lima on September 13, when a vote on the 2024 host had been scheduled. Immediately after the double hosting deal was approved, Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti and his Parisian counterpart Anne Hidalgo appeared on stage arm-in-arm to thank the IOC members, a clear sign that the desired three-way pact was achievable.

PARIS 'READY', LA TO WAIT?

Delegations from the two cities-led by French President Emmanuel Macron and LA's Garcetti-were in Lausanne to make fresh pitches to IOC voters. Paris has maintained a tougher line on the 2028 question, insisting it was focused narrowly on 2024, the centenary anniversary of the city's last Games.

"I am here to convey a message to say our people are ready to host these Games," Macron told reporters. "After three failed bids we don't want to lose a fourth one," he said. Paris mounted losing bids for the 1992, 2008 and 2012 Games.

The Los Angeles team did little to quell speculation it was open to 2028. "LA is ready to throw these Olympics in two months if we are asked, or two decades if it came to that because we have everything ready," Garcetti said, while noting the city was still "competing for 2024." Bid chairman Casey Wasserman reminded that Los Angeles had not given the IOC "ultimatums" over the 2024 question. The city last hosted the Games in 1984. "Working hard to get the Olympics for the United States (L.A.). Stay tuned!" President Donald Trump said in a tweet, without making reference to a particular year.

'GREAT' OLYMPIC CITIES

The Olympic movement has been stained by Games that erected grand multi-million dollar facilities that were left to crumble and rot, while the billions spent in public money offered no long-term benefit to the host communities.

Los Angeles has stressed its near entire reliance on private funding while vowing to use the Games to broaden access to sports across the city, something it won praise for doing following the 1984 edition.

While Paris has equally focused on leaving a positive legacy, Macron also highlighted the opportunity for France to rally around the "Olympic values" of tolerance and inclusivity, saying they were embedded in the country's "DNA." "It truly is a tale of two great Olympic cities," said a report released last week by the IOC's 2024 Evaluation Commission. — AFP

TENNIS

Venus, Muguruza into Wimbledon s-finals

LONDON: Venus Williams became the oldest Wimbledon semi-finalist for 23 years as the five-time champion brushed aside French Open winner Jelena Ostapenko, while Garbine Muguruza powered past Svetlana Kuznetsova to make it back to the last four yesterday.

Williams' 73-minute masterclass on Centre Court clinched a 6-3, 7-5 victory that made her the most senior player to reach the semi-finals since Martina Navratilova in 1994. The American star, who reached the last of her eight Wimbledon finals in 2009, faces Britain's Johanna Konta or Romania's Simona Halep in the last four on Thursday.

World number 11 Williams, beaten in this year's Australian Open final, was knocked out in the 2016 semi-finals and is chasing a first major title since winning Wimbledon in 2008. Williams' victory equalled her sister Serena's total of 86 main draw match victories at Wimbledon, the most among any active player.

She will climb back into the top 10 thanks to her Wimbledon run, but breaking Serena's record to become the tournament's oldest champion in the Open era is her sole focus. "I love this game. That's why I put in the effort and the time. It's a beautiful game. It's been so good to me," Venus said.

"The competition keeps you growing. You have to get better if you want to stay relevent. "I love the challenge. It's not always easy dealing with the pressure. It's only you that can have the answer."

Twenty years after making her Wimbledon debut, Venus was playing in her 100th singles match at the All England Club, while Ostapenko was in only her eighth. That gulf in experience was immediately apparent when Venus broke in the second game and cruised through the first set in serene fashion.

Having stunned the tennis world by becoming the first unseeded player to win the French Open last month, Ostapenko was riding an 11-match winning streak at the majors.

But Ostapenko, 20, was the youngest player left in the tournament and Venus has scythed through the draw by dispatching a series of opponents almost half her age, many of whom idolised the seven-time Grand Slam champion when they were growing up. Williams was just too canny for the fresh-faced Ostapenko, manoeuvering her out of position time and again before delivering the kill shot. After breaking in the third game of the second set, Williams moved into a 3-1 lead, then endured her only wobble as Ostapenko broke back. Williams was unfazed and shattered Ostapenko's spirit with another break before serving out a commanding win. Muguruza powered into her second Wimbledon semi-final in the last three years with an emphatic 6-3, 6-4 win over Russian seventh seed Kuznetsova.

Since winning her maiden Grand Slam title at the French Open last year, Muguruza has struggled to return to the top and this is her first major semi-final since that Roland Garros triumph.

STORMY

Muguruza, beaten by Serena in the 2015 Wimbledon final, will face Coco Vandeweghe or Magdalena Rybarikova in the last four.

The 23-year-old is being coached by Conchita Martinez, who became the only Spanish woman to win Wimbledon in 1994, and the lessons appear to have done the trick. "I played good. I'm trying not to think a lot, just go for it and play my game. I'm happy it worked out," Muguruza said. "It seems far away since I last made the final here. I'm a completely different player. "It means a lot to make the semi-finals again, my breakthrough was here." Following Venus onto Centre Court is Johanna Konta, who takes on Simona Halep bidding to become the first British woman to reach the semi-finals since Virginia Wade in 1978.

Not since Jo Durie in 1984 has Britain had a female representative in the last eight and Konta, hoping to become the first home winner of the Wimbledon women's title since Wade in 1977, has added incentive to go a step further against Halep after their stormy Fed Cup encounter earlier this year. Konta was reduced to tears by what she felt were threats and intimidation from the Romanian fans in Constanta during her match against Sorana Cirstea, but Halep fanned the flames this week when she claimed her compatriots had done nothing wrong. Halep has extra motivation of her own as a victory over Konta will guarantee she takes over from Angelique Kerber as the new world number one. — AFP

WIMBLEDON: Spain's Garbine Muguruza returns against Russia's Svetlana Kuznetsova during their women's singles quarter-final match on the eighth day of the 2017 Wimbledon Championships at The All England Lawn Tennis Club in Wimbledon, southwest London, yesterday. —AFP

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NBK POSTS KD 164.7M NET PROFITS

KUWAIT: National Bank of Kuwait NBK reported net profits of KD 164.7 million (USD 543.5 million) for the period of 1H 2017 compared to KD 150.6 million (USD 497.1 million) for the same period in 2016. NBK's profits during the 1H 2017 grew by 9.3% compared to the same period last year. NBK's 2Q 2017 net profits reached KD 79.3 million (USD 261.8 million), compared to KD 71.7 million (USD 236.6 million) for the same period in 2016 recording an increase of 10.7% YoY.

As of end of June 2017, NBK's total assets grew by 5.8% on annual basis, to reach KD 25.5 billion (USD 84.0 billion), while total shareholders' equity increased by 1.0% to KD 2.9 billion (USD 9.5 billion). Customer loans and advances, as of end of June 2017, have also grown by 4.6% compared to the same period last year, to reach KD 14.3 billion (USD 47.3 billion) while customers' deposits grew by 8.0% to reach KD 13.6 billion (USD 44.8 billion).

Non-performing Loans (NPLs) dropped to 1.23% as of end of June 2017 from 1.40% as of June 2016, while coverage ratio increased to 371% compared to 330% last year. Capital adequacy ratio reached 17.5% as of end of June 2017 ahead of all regulatory requirements.

NBK's Chairman Nasser Musaed Al-Sayer, said: "The continuity of growth in NBK's profits during the 1H 2017, is yet another evidence and confirmation of the strength and soundness of the Bank's financial position and its prudent operational vision and successful strategy which the Bank has consistently adopted."

Nasser Musaed Al-Sayer

Isam Al Sager

Al-Sayer has also shed light on the continuing improvement of the quality of the Bank's assets in addition to the conservative policies which represent secure buffers against adverse regional developments and their impact on the general economic environment in the different markets that the Bank operates in.

Al-Sayer reiterated that NBK's results in the 1H 2017 reflect the solid growth of the real banking activities, indicating the increase in the net operating income by 10.1% YoY, which asserts the strong position of the bank in all its markets, capitalizing on emerging opportunities domestically, and regionally.

Al-Sayer highlighted that the progress in the economic activity in Kuwait on the back of the strong project tendering and awarding activities, supported a strong pipeline of transactions which reflected positively on private sector activity. Lending growth momentum for key government projects continues and expansionary plans despite the impact of falling oil prices remained strong. This confirms the limited impact of lower oil prices on the Kuwaiti economy compared to other economies in the region, which is a result of the huge reserves and the solid financial position that Kuwait possesses.

Al-Sayer added that in recognition of the Bank's strong funding base, strong deposit franchise and healthy liquidity profile; NBK continues to be in a very favorable position as a key player in financing mega infrastructure projects.

NBK's Group CEO, Isam Jasim Al-Sager, highlighted that during the 1H 2017, the Bank successfully issued a $750 million five-year Senior Unsecured Securities under 144A/Regulation S. The issuance came under NBK's new USD 3.0 billion Global Medium-Term Note (GMTN) Program. The receipts from the issuance will be used to further diversify the Bank's funding base, boost liquidity and increase liability durations. The transaction was very well received by regional and international investors with the Order Book closing at USD 2.2 billion; translating to around 2.9x oversubscription for the deal. The notes carry a fixed interest rate of 2.75% per annum payable semi-annually in arrears and were rated Aa3 by Moody's and AA- by Fitch, in line with NBK's ratings.

Al-Sager also stated that the issuance comes in line with the Bank's strategy of enhancing its funding profile by diversifying the funding sources and extending the liabilities duration. US-based investors dominated the deal with 57% share of the issuance, followed by MENA investors at 26%, European investors at 13% and 4% from Asia. The strong demand along with the diversified, high-quality investor base are testimony to NBK's superior name in international markets and how it is perceived as being a top-quality institution by international investors.

Al-Sager also emphasized the position of NBK and its important role in leading huge multi-billion schemes and financing of large strategic projects, placing the Bank in a unique position to be the prime partner for companies' expansionary plans domestically, regionally and globally.

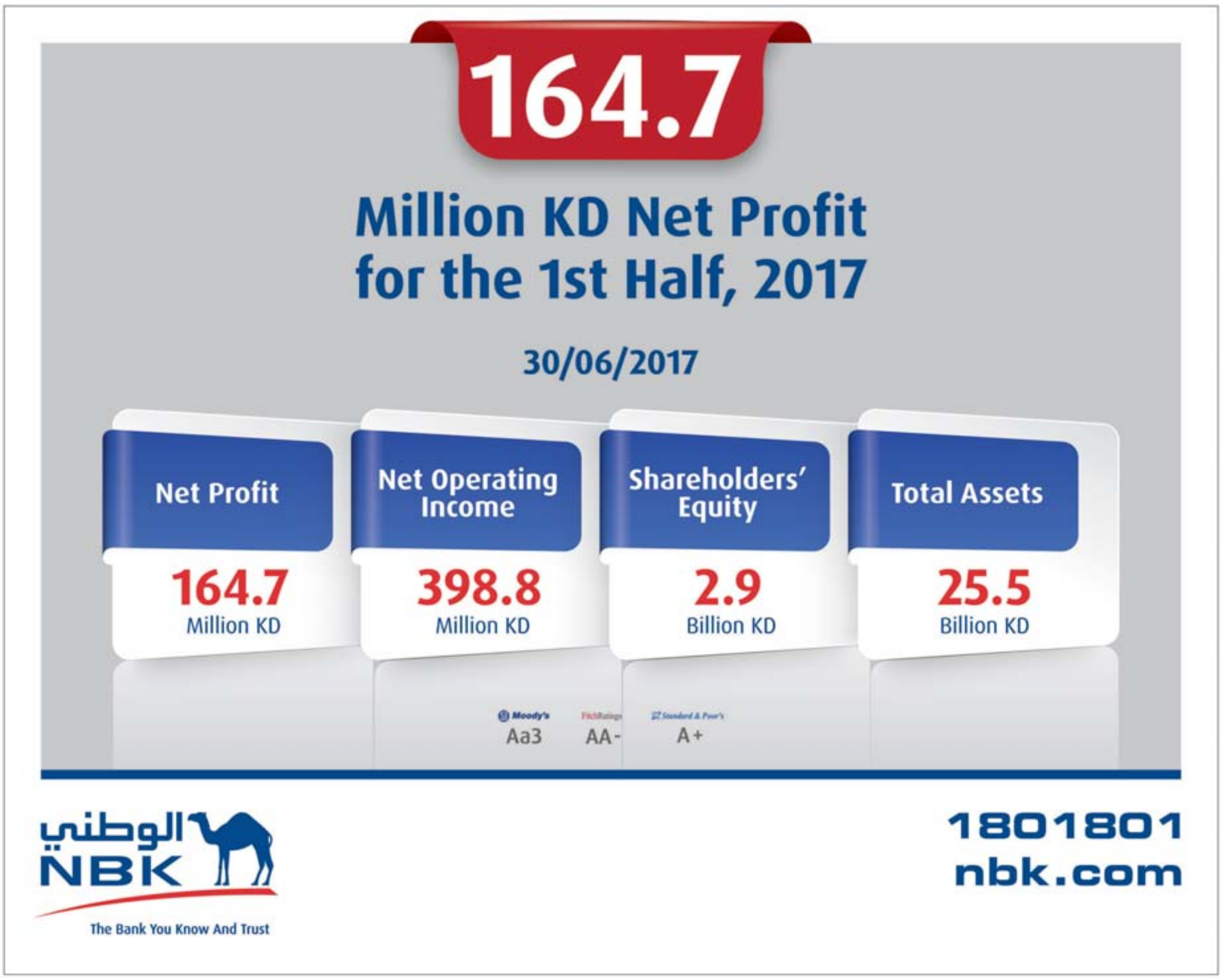
In addition, Al-Sager praised the Bank's continuous efforts in diversifying its sources of income and revenue streams, while enhancing its leading position domestically and regionally through developing business and services provided to customers. Domestically, NBK maintained its high market share and continued to improve its earnings from its ownership in Boubyan Bank whose performance is witnessing strong growth since NBK's acquisition of 58.4% of its shares in 2012.

On the regional and international fronts, Al-Sager confirmed that the contribution from non-Kuwait operations continues to demonstrate the ongoing benefits that the Bank is earning. During the 1H 2017, NBK generated 27% of its net profits from its operations outside Kuwait, confirming its successful diversification strategy.

NBK continues to enjoy collectively one of the highest ratings among all banks in the Middle East from the three international rating agencies Moody's, Fitch Ratings and Standard and Poor's. The Bank's ratings are supported by its high capitalization, prudent lending policies, and its disciplined approach to risk management, in addition to its highly recognized and very stable management team. NBK was also named among Global Finance's list of the 50 safest banks in the world for the eleventh consecutive time and was awarded as the Best Bank in Kuwait in 2016 by the Banker, Euromoney and Global Finance.

NBK enjoys the widest banking presence with a local and international network reaching 4 continents. NBK's international presence spans many of the world's leading financial centers including New York, Europe, GCC, Middle East, Singapore as well as China (Shanghai).

- 9.3% year on year growth in profit sdriven by higher interest and investment income
- Al-Sayer: "NBK's 1H 2017 profits confirm the Bank's strong financial position, its market leadership and its high asset quality locally and internationally.
- 1H 2017 results reflect the strong growth in business volumes and the growth in operating income despite the challenges posed by the general sentiment
- Al-Sager: NBK has earned the utmost trust of high-quality investor base as demonstrated by almost 3-times coverage of its recent bond issuance.
- We are determined to enhance and diversify our sources of income as well as maintain NBK's leading position in all the markets it operates in.
- NBK reported evident growth in all business segments capitalizing on its successful decision making process.
- Total assets reached KD 25.5 billion up 5.8% YoY, while shareholders equity grew by 1.0% to KD 2.9 billion, during the same period.
- Customer loans and advances reached KD 14.3 billion up 4.6% YoY while customers' deposits grew by 8.0% to KD 13.6 billion.
- Non-performing Loans (NPLs) at1.23% and coverage ratio reached 371%



Boubyan Bank records KD 21.9m in net profits

16% growth in profits for the First Half of 2017

KUWAIT: Boubyan Bank has recorded a net profit growth of 16% in the First half of 2017. The bank's net profits was KD 21.9 Million, with an earnings per share of 8.51 fils compared to 8.33 fils for the comparative period of 2016. Mr Adel Abdul Wahab Al-Majed, the Bank's Vice-Chairman & Chief Executive Officer, stated that such positive results is a continuation to the successful journey which started in 2010 that led to the growth in profitability and market share in various sectors despite the challenges faced by the Kuwaiti Banking Industry whether for Islamic or conventional banks.

Mr Adel Abdul Wahab Al-Majed

Mr Al-Majed added that all of the Bank's main indicators witnessed a remarkable growth during the firsthalf where the total assets increased to KD 3.7 billion at a growth rate of 10% while the operating income increased to KD 60 million at a growth rate of 17% in addition to the increase in customers' deposits by 14%, amounting to KD 3.2 billion.

He further added that the total equity of the bank increased to KD 352 million compared toKD 326 million for the comparable period of last year and that there was an increase in the financing portfolio to KD 2.8 billion ata growth rate of 18% in addition to the continuous growth of the bank's customers' base. Al-Majed stated as well that the market share, in financing, increased to approximately 7.6% in the meantime, while Boubyan's share of the retail finance increased specifically to approximately 11%.

Remarkable awards

Mr Al-Majed also stated that since the beginning of the current year the Bank received a number of remarkable awards, the most prominent of which was the "Best Islamic Bank in Kuwait"award from Global Finance for the third year in a row due to the bank's achievements whether in terms of increasing the profitability rates or increasing its market share.

Mr Al-Majed went on to add: "The bank managed to establish itself as one of the best institutions in the Kuwaiti private sector in the field of customer service, evidenced by continuing to receive the first place award, for the seventh year in a row atop all Islamic Banks in customer service from Service Hero, the international consumer-driven customer satisfaction index, in addition to being named the Best Private Sector Institution in Customer Service in Kuwait for the 2nd time."

He further stated: "These kind of awards once more reiterates our bank's superb competitive abilities, and its ability to provide its customers with the highest levels of services and the best products customers may seek, whether they are existing customers or potential customers targeted in the Kuwaiti market."

Expansion of Branches & Technology Services

On the other hand, Al-Majed stressed the continuity of the Bank's plans to expand in the local market by opening new branches which have now reached 39 branches compared to 15 branches only 5 years ago. He went on to add: "In line with our domestic geographical expansion to be closer to our clients, we are continuing our investment in e-services and e-banking products which placed us ahead of other local banks. We are doing that in order to cater for the needs of our clients." "Customer service has always been our recipe for success, as we have always taken into account that all our customers are special and that they deserve the best because meeting their aspirations and ambitions should be up to the level of their expectations when they chose us. In other words, by choosing us, customers should be rewarded with special care and attention.", Al-Majed concluded.

Human Resources and Serving the society

Al-Majed stated that the bank's success is attributed to the Grace of Allah and then to the efforts of the bank's human resources who are the secret behind the success achieved over the past years. He further explained that the percentage of national manpower exceeded 76% which is one of the highest percentages in the private sector. Al-Majed also stated that the bank managed to reach out to the various segments of the society through its activities and events, especially during the past Holy Month of Ramadan, which made the bank closer to the society within the framework of its corporate responsibility.

Mt Gox CEO denies embezzling millions of dollars of bitcoins

TOKYO: The head of the failed Japan-based bitcoin exchange Mt. Gox pleaded not guilty Tuesday to charges of embezzlement and data manipulation. France-born Mark Karpeles said he had tried to save the bankrupted exchange by using a kind of automated computer software called a "Willy bot," also described as an "obligation exchange," to help cover its rising debts by pushing bitcoin values higher. "I am innocent of all the charges," he said. "I did not in any way dishonestly manipulate data or misuse the customers' money," he said.

Mt. Gox shut down in February 2014, saying it had gone bankrupt after losing about 850,000 bitcoins, possibly to hackers. Speaking after the hearing, Karpeles said he was not guilty and that he was still analyzing data, trying to track down the missing bitcoins. He said the main cause of the bankruptcy was "hacking of bitcoins by outsiders." "As the person responsible for Mt. Gox I must recover the stolen bitcoins. To do so, I must figure out how they leaked out and where they went," Karpeles said.

The "Willy bot" transactions were legal, he said, and intended to save the company. "I faithfully performed those obligation exchanges, but not for my own personal profit," he said. Karpeles was arrested in August 2015 and released last year. If found guilty of embezzlement, he could face up to five years in prison, or a fine of up to 500,000 yen ($4,000).

Stunned community

Prosecutors have argued that money Karpeles obtained from Mt Gox was the property of the customers. Karpeles and his defense team contend that the funds were revenues of Mt Gox. People affected by Mt. Gox's failure are still trying to get back funds they lost and are hoping the trial will help explain what happened. Mt Gox was one of the world's biggest bitcoin exchanges and its failure stunned digital currency community. Critics said the debacle highlighted the risks of bitcoin transactions, while bitcoin proponents contended Mt. Gox was just an exception. The case has posed a challenge for authorities unfamiliar with digital currencies and the technologies involved in their creation and trading.

Japan has enacted new laws to regulate bitcoins and other cryptocurrencies, whose use has been rapidly expanding. One of the country's biggest electronics retailers, Bic Camera, has begun allowing bitcoin payments at its outlets. The government also has spelled out regulations to help prevent misuse of bitcoins and other virtual currencies for terrorism or other illegal activities, including requiring banks and other businesses to verify identities, keep records and report suspicious transactions. The regulations implemented in April require virtual currency traders to keep customers' assets separate from their own, partly because of the losses suffered in the Mt Gox bankruptcy. — AP

TOKYO: French national Mark Karpeles (C), former CEO of collapsed Bitcoin exchange MtGox, bows with his lawyers at the end of a press conference held after his first hearing. — AFP

CANTON: In this March 4, 2017, file photo, thousands march to Nissan Motor Co's Canton, Mississippi, plant, following a pro-union rally.—- AP

Union files for workers vote at Mississippi Nissan plant

JACKSON: The United Auto Workers filed petitions Monday to force a unionization election at a Nissan plant in Mississippi after a yearslong campaign to build support in a region typically unwelcoming to organized labor. The UAW declined comment but has scheduled an event yesterday at its office near the plant in Canton, just north of Jackson. Sandra Hightower of the National Labor Relations Board confirmed that the board received the UAW's election petition in its New Orleans office.

The union has long struggled to organize foreign-owned auto plants across the South, working for years to build support for a vote among the 6,500 employees at the Mississippi complex. Monday's move sets the stage for a key showdown. The UAW and community allies also have pushed Nissan to stay neutral in a vote, claiming the company has intimidated workers. The labor board has backed some of those claims in pending litigation. Nissan Motor Co spokeswoman Parul Bajaj reiterated the company's stance that workers get to choose whether they have a union but management opposes the move. "While it is ultimately up to our employees who will represent them, we do not believe that UAW representation is in the best interest of Nissan Canton and its workers," Bajaj said.

Celebrity support

The pro-union campaign has sought to link support for the union with civil rights for African-Americans. Workers at Nissan's plant in Smyrna, Tennessee, rejected the UAW in 1989 and 2001 votes, but no election has been held at the Mississippi plant in Canton. The Mississippi campaign has featured support from the NAACP and actor Danny Glover, as well as a rally in March headlined by US Sen Bernie Sanders, a Vermont independent and former Democratic presidential candidate.

Hightower said the UAW asked to represent all production and maintenance workers at the Canton plant, a group that could include contract workers employed by two other companies. She said the labor board would seek to schedule an election "as soon as possible." However, she noted that pending unfair labor practice complaints filed by the UAW could block the vote. The UAW filed a new round of charges June 26.

Thirty percent of workers must sign petitions seeking an election. Hightower could not immediately say how many workers have signed. "We have a pile of paper," she said. Bishop Thomas Jenkins of New Dimensions Church in Jackson recorded a video and spoke at a Sunday workers meeting at the UAW office. He said he has long advocated for better wages and working conditions in Mississippi. "We've been talking about this for a long time," Jenkins told the AP in a phone interview Monday. "It's time to go forth."

The union lost a 2014 vote among all workers at Volkswagen AG's plant in Chattanooga, Tennessee, but then won a vote among 160 maintenance workers. That was the first-ever win for the UAW at a foreign-owned auto plant in the US South. German-based Volkswagen had refused to bargain with those workers, saying representation decisions should be made by the entire hourly workforce. — AP

EXCHANGE RATES

Al-Muzaini Exchange Co.

ASIAN COUNTRIES	
Japanese Yen	2.701
Indian Rupees	4.693
Pakistani Rupees	2.899
Srilankan Rupees	1.976
Nepali Rupees	2.941
Singapore Dollar	221.380
Hongkong Dollar	389.200
Bangladesh Taka	3.753
Philippine Peso	6.016
Thai Baht	8.957
GCC COUNTRIES	
Saudi Riyal	81.081
Qatari Riyal	83.510
Omani Riyal	789.631
Bahraini Dinar	807.360
UAE Dirham	82.782
ARAB COUNTRIES	
Egyptian Pound - Cash	20.650
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	16.715
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.220
Tunisian Dinar	125.040
Jordanian Dinar	428.680
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.026
Syrian Lira	2.167
Morocco Dirham	31.984
EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES	
US Dollar Transfer	303.850
Euro	348.360
Sterling Pound	396.520
Canadian dollar	234.391
Turkish lira	86.940
Swiss Franc	318.330
Australian Dollar	234.720
US Dollar Buying	302.650
GOLD	
20 Gram	254.190
10 Gram	130.01
5 Gram	65.850

Dollarco Exchange Co. Ltd

Rate for Transfr	Selling Rate
US Dollar	303.750
Canadian Dolla	235.465
Sterling Pound	393.975
Euro	346.455
Swiss Frank	294.730
Bahrain Dinar	805.645
UAE Dirhams	83.095
Qatari Riyals	84.315
Saudi Riyals	81.895
Jordanian Dinar	428.335
Egyptian Pound	16.990
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.977
Indian Rupees	4.696
Pakistani Rupees	2.895
Bangladesh Taka	3.766
Philippines Pesso	6.015
Cyprus pound	167.630
Japanese Yen	3.685
Syrian Pound	2.415
Nepalese Rupees	2.940
Malaysian Ringgit	71.550
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	45.110
Thai Bhat	9.925
Turkish Lira	85.715

Bahrain Exchange Company WLL

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
Europe		
British Pound	0.386296	0.396296
Czech Korune	0.005309	0.017309
Danish Krone	0.042675	0.047675
Euro	0. 341695	0.350695
Norwegian Krone	0.032382	0.037582
Romanian Leu	0.084278	0.084278
Slovakia	0.009085	0.019085
Swedish Krona	0.032070	0.037070
Swiss Franc	0.309450	0.320450
Turkish Lira	0.080639	0.090939
Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.223403	0.235403
New Zealand Dollar	0.215603	0.225103
America		
Canadian Dollar	0.231035	0.240035
Georgina Lari	0.137347	0.137347
US Dollars	0.300000	0.304420
US Dollars Mint	0.300500	0.304420
Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003429	0.004013
Chinese Yuan	0.043216	0.046716
Hong Kong Dollar	0.037098	0.039848
Indian Rupee	0.004212	0.004900
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000019	0.000025
Japanese Yen	0.002590	0.002770
Kenyan Shilling	0.002985	0.002985
Korean Won	0.000253	0.000268
Malaysian Ringgit	0.067221	0.073221
Nepalese Rupee	0.002944	0.003114
Pakistan Rupee	0.002690	0.002980
Philippine Peso	0.005982	0.006282
Sierra Leone	0.000067	0.000073
Singapore Dollar	0.214935	0.224935
South African Rand	0.016836	0.025336
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001607	0.002187
Taiwan	0.009735	0.009915
Thai Baht	0.008596	0.009146
Arab		
Bahraini Dinar	0.799528	0.808028
Egyptian Pound	0.015200	0.021108
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000085
Iraqi Dinar	0.000191	0.000251
Jordanian Dinar	0.424311	0.433311
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000156	0.000258
Moroccan Dirhams	0.019770	0.043770
Nigerian Naira	0.001257	0.001892
Omani Riyal	0.783450	0.789130
Qatar Riyal	0.079239	0.084179
Saudi Riyal	0.080007	0.081307
Syrian Pound	0.001289	0.001509
Tunisian Dinar	0.122212	0.130212
Turkish Lira	0.080639	0.090939
UAE Dirhams	0.081370	0.083070
Yemeni Riyal	0.000988	0.001068

Village women transform into clean energy entrepreneurs

KATHMANDU: Hundreds of rural women in Nepal are turning from housewives to entrepreneurs to bring clean, energy smart products such as solar panels, lanterns and batteries to power-starved villages in an initiative aiming to help women out of poverty. The social enterprise Empower Generation http://www.empowergeneration.org/ provides technical training and support to women in the impoverished Himalayan nation to set up clean energy businesses and provide loans to poorer customers.

Since it began operations in 2012, Empower Generation has created over 20 women-led businesses, employing 300 female distribution agents who go from village-to-village, selling, maintaining and collecting repayments for products. In that time they have sold almost 60,000 products such as solar-powered mobile phone chargers, flashlights, and rechargeable batteries, providing around 300,000 Nepalis with access to cleaner, safer light and power.

"There are many slogans to empower women. But in reality little has been done," Empower Generation's co-founder Sita Adhikari told the Thomson Reuters Foundation in an interview.

"If we want to really empower women, we must train them in business skills so they can generate income and become economically self-dependent." Wedged between India and China, Nepal - famed as the birthplace of Buddha and home to Mount Everest - is one of the world's poorest countries. One in four people live on less than $1.90 a day - the World Bank's measure of extreme poverty.

Smash the patriarchy

Deep-rooted patriarchy means women and girls are often marginalized and vulnerable to exploitation such as human trafficking and sexual slavery.

Female participation in the formal workforce is low and few opportunities are available. In addition, more than half of the country's 28 million population do not have reliable access to electricity and daily power cuts lasting up to 18 hours are common.

The poorest spend around 20 percent of their income on kerosene and candles which impacts women and children the most by exposing them to fumes from fuels with millions of women and children dying each year from respiratory problems. Adhikari, 43, a social activist and mother of two, said she and her partner, US national Anya Cherneff, wanted to boost the financial independence of Nepali women by addressing the issue of energy poverty. The entrepreneurs are trained in business skills such as maintaining accounts and inventory control while Empower Generation provides marketing materials.

They then recruit and train female distribution agents in their communities to go out and sell the products and earn a commission on each sale. They are also piloting selling "pay-as-you-go" solar home systems using mobile money.

Empower Generation's business model has received much praise and last month won the International Ashden Award for Clean Energy for Women and Girls for its innovative approach to propagate sustainable energy among Nepal's rural poor. Adhikari said the company wanted to expand the number of female energy entrepreneurs from all of Nepal's 75 districts from the current 11 where it works. "We want to scale up to 100 entrepreneurs and 1,000 sales agents by 2020," she said. "This way more rural community will benefit and more women will be empowered," she said. — Reuters

Thai seafood giant commits to major fishing reforms

BANGKOK: Thai Union, one of the world's largest seafood conglomerates, said yesterday it will overhaul its fishing practices to protect against labor abuses and unsustainable trawling, a move hailed by Greenpeace as "huge progress". The Thai food giant-which owns major global brands such as Chicken of the Sea, John West and Petit Navire-has long been a bete noire to those campaigning against overfishing and abusive working conditions on boats. But yesterday it released a joint statement with Greenpeace announcing a series of reforms that both said should encourage other seafood behemoths to follow suit.

"This marks huge progress for our oceans and marine life and for the rights of people working in the seafood industry," Greenpeace International Executive Director Bunny McDiarmid said in the statement. "Now is the time for other companies to step up, and show similar leadership." Among the commitments Thai Union has made is to cut the number of fish aggregating devices (FADs) it uses by 50 percent by 2020 and reduce longline fishing.

FADs, which float on the surface to attract fish, and longlines are effective ways of catching large hauls of lucrative fish like tuna. But they often result in reams of other animals being caught, including endangered sharks and turtles.

The reforms will also target working conditions on board Thai Union boats and those of its suppliers including an extended moratorium on "transshipping". Transshipping is a method many fishing giants use to keep trawlers at sea as long as possible, often for years at a time.

Catches are transferred to refrigerated transport vessels at sea, saving the time and fuel costs of returning to port. While economically efficient, environmental groups have long warned that transshipping allows trawlers to hide illegal catches and often leads to slavery-like conditions for many of the low-paid fishermen who spend years onboard their boats.

Thai Union have also agreed to allow independent observers or digital tracking devices onto all their longline boats and will meet with Greenpeace every six months to assess implementation.

In the joint statement, CEO Thiraphong Chansiri said his company "has fully embraced its role as a leader for positive change as one of the largest seafood companies in the world."

Thai Union posted worldwide sales of $3.8 billion in 2016 and is targeting $8 billion revenue by 2020. Thailand is the world's third largest seafood exporter but the industry has been dogged by allegations of rights abuses and cheap labor in its fishing fleets and many food processing factories. The sector is mainly staffed by poor migrant workers from Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia. The European Union has threatened to ban all its seafood products unless the military government tackles rampant illegal fishing among its fleets. — AFP

HARMONY: In this photo taken Feb 12, 2015, cut panels of steel used to make blades to build fans for industrial ventilation systems are stored on the production floor. — AP

Despite promises, no decision yet from Trump on steel tariffs

Plenty of wiggle room on direction he'll take

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump pledged during the campaign to help US factory workers by slapping tariffs on foreign steel. But his long-awaited decision on the issue is running behind schedule and administration officials are leaving plenty of wiggle room on what direction he'll take. Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross initially hoped to finish a report on tariffs last month, but his department has been holding off as the Pentagon weighs in about impact of steel tariffs on national security. The delay is an example of the difficulty Trump faces in delivering on his ambitious policy agenda - on taxes, health insurance and more - as quickly as he told voters he could.

White House officials have hinted that tariffs still are coming. Asked on "Fox News Sunday" over the weekend if the president planned to impose sanctions on foreign steel, White House chief of staff Reince Priebus responded: "My guess is that he will because he promised he would."

There are trade-offs from taxing foreign steel that include higher prices for consumers and manufacturers that rely on steel, as well as strained relationships with trade partners. The possible risks became more apparent last week at the summit of the 20 leading rich and developing nations in Germany. The summit ended with a declaration that governments would develop "concrete policy solutions that reduce steel excess capacity" by November 2017, but the U.S. position was aggressive enough that there were concerns about a potential trade war.

Supporters of the tariffs say the move would help crack down on excess steelmaking by China. Opponents say it would raise prices for consumers and manufacturers that turn steel into cars, furniture and other products. Scott Paul, president of the Alliance for American Manufacturing, supports higher steel tariffs but notes that the initial timeline set by the administration was "very ambitious." He says that tariffs could help domestic steel mills while encouraging other countries to take similar moves against China. Paul said that some officials and advocacy groups have slowed the process to fine-tune the policy, while others are hoping that a slower pace of discussions will derail the debate. He said he trusts that "at the conclusion of the process, there will be a well thought-out rationale for whatever relief is provided."

In April, Trump asked the Commerce Department to launch an investigation into whether foreign steel imports posed a threat to national security, on the grounds that the American military relies on steel for airplanes, ships and other equipment. Steel also goes into roads, bridges and other critical infrastructure. The investigation reflects the administration's determination to use existing trade laws more aggressively to combat what it sees as unfair practices by US trading partners. Restricting steel imports, it reasoned, would help restore US manufacturing jobs and reduce an American trade deficit that came in at $502 billion last year. The administration's trade team is heavy with steel industry veterans: US Trade Rep Robert Lighthizer represented US steelmakers as a Washington trade attorney. As a private investor, Ross, the commerce secretary, bought and turned around several bankrupt steel companies. But the Pentagon is also providing its own input on the issue while the Commerce Department's report has yet to be finalized. To critics, the administration's national security case against steel imports looks shaky. The American military does not appear critically dependent on steel imports. The US produces 70 percent of the steel it consumes. And just 3 percent of steel shipments go to national defense or homeland security, according to the American Iron and Steel Institute.

Low prices

Many of the steel industry's troubles can be traced to low prices resulting from massive overproduction by China, which churns out nearly half the world's steel. But the United States has already put up big barriers to Chinese steel imports. So any restrictions or tariffs on steel would land elsewhere - on US ally Canada (which supplies 17 percent of US steel imports), Brazil (13 percent) and South Korea (12 percent). "If we were to impose tariffs and quotas because of the Chinese problems, but we really hit our friends and allies - then how does all this advance our interests?" says Amanda DeBusk, head of the international trade department at the law firm of Hughes Hubbard & Reed.

Then there are America's steel-consuming industries, such as automakers and equipment manufacturers. They say they would be hurt if sanctions drove up steel prices. Daniel Pearson, senior fellow at the libertarian Cato Institute, says steel mills employ just 140,000 workers - a fraction of the 6.5 million who work for manufacturers that consume steel.

Stuart Speyer, the president of Dickson, Tennessee-based Tennsco Corp, employs 650 workers making cabinets, lockers, bookcases and other storage containers made of steel. He said Tennsco recently lost a 50-year customer who discovered cheaper prices elsewhere and that new tariffs would make things worse. "In an attempt to protect the US steel industry, many more American jobs will inadvertently be lost," Speyer said. — AP

VINA DEL MAR, Chile: In this March 15, 2017, file photo, Chile's Foreign Minister Heraldo Munoz, center, speaks during a press conference after the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) meeting. — AP

Japan to host TPP Pacific Rim trade pact talks, minus US

TOKYO: Members of a Pacific Rim trade initiative rejected by US President Donald Trump are to hold working-level talks today in the Japanese mountain resort town of Hakone, west of Tokyo. The three-day meeting among envoys from the 11 remaining members of the Trans-Pacific Partnership follows a breakthrough last week on a Japan-European Union trade deal seen as a repudiation of the US moves to pull back from such arrangements.

Last week, Japan named a new chief negotiator for TPP talks, Kazuyoshi Umemoto, a former ambassador to Italy. Trump pulled the US out of the pact soon after taking office, saying his "America First" policy favors one-on-one agreements with other nations rather than multinational pacts like the TPP. Other TPP members hope to make progress on an alternative that does not include the U.S. before an Asia-Pacific summit in Vietnam in November.

The administration of President Barack Obama helped lead the five-year effort that yielded a TPP agreement in 2015. That deal has to be restructured since as originally agreed it can only take effect after it is ratified by six countries that account for 85 percent of its original members' combined gross domestic product. The US made up 60 percent of the TPP's combined GDP, so it could not be implemented as it stands now.

Japanese officials say they are hoping the TPP talks will get a boost from the Economic Partnership Agreement reached with the EU, which dismantles trade barriers and eases tariffs on a wide range of products for the two markets accounting for almost a third of world economic activity. The other TPP member countries are Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore and Vietnam.

Supporters of the TPP say it would set high standards for modern trade rules, labor, environmental and intellectual property protections. Critics say it puts corporate interests ahead of the public good and national sovereignty. In Asia, the US withdrawal is seen as a step back for US influence that leaves wider leeway for Chinese geopolitical and business interests. — AFP

EU seeking collective approach to dealing with bad bank loans

BRUSSELS: European Union finance ministers have backed proposals to jointly address the issue of non-performing loans in the banking sector, which has been an economic problem particularly in Italy and Spain. At a regular gathering yesterday, the finance ministers outlined policy actions to reduce the EU's total stock of bad loans, which amounted to nearly 1 trillion euros ($1.14 trillion) at the end of 2016 - equivalent to 6.7 percent of the bloc's annual GDP, or 5.1 percent of total loans.

"Non-performing loans are a problem for the banking industry for which solutions have until now been mainly defined at the national level," said Toomas Toniste, Estonia's finance minister who was chairing the meeting as his country has taken over the rotating 6-month presidency of the EU. "We need a more collective approach," he added. Among the measures proposed is reform of insolvency and debt recovery frameworks, changes in bank supervision and developing so-called secondary markets where "distressed" assets can be sold. The scale of the problem varies hugely between EU countries, according to a report prepared for ministers. Sweden's bad loans amount to only 1 percent of the nation's economy, while Greece's account for a massive 46 percent.

Italy gone bad

Italy is one big economy that's been contending with loans gone bad. Its banks have been worn down by some 360 billion euros ($400 billion) in loans that won't be paid back in full as a result of years of crisis and subdued growth that's made it difficult for firms and households to service their debts. The scale of the non-performing loans stands a little below 20 percent of the banks' total loan stock, a level that weighs on their propensity and ability to lend. Last week, the Italian government took control of bank Monte dei Paschi di Siena under a relaunch plan that includes the disposal of 28.6 billion euros in bad loans at a big discount to their original value. The bailout includes the use of taxpayer money to shore up the bank, something new EU rules try to avoid, but was cleared by EU authorities.

The hope is that by getting a grip on bad loans, the Italian economy can move on. Spain has also had its problems. Banco Santander, for example, paid the symbolic sum of 1 euro to take over local rival Banco Popular, a long-troubled lender that the European Central Bank warned was "failing or likely to fail." That was the first time the ECB had effectively pulled the plug on a bank since it getting new powers aimed at preventing financial institutions from disrupting government finances through bailouts, as they did during the eurozone's debt crisis. — AP

BRUSSELS: Italy's Finance Minister Pier Carlo Padoan, right, talks with Spain's Finance Minister Luis de Guindos, left, and Luxembourg's Finance Minister Pierre Gramegna prior to a meeting of EU finance ministers at the EU Council building. — AP

Eyeing sleepy office workers, China's opens nap capsules

BEIJING: For China's sleep-deprived white-collar workers needing a place for a nap, a booming "sharing economy" offering a growing range of services has come up with a cheap, mobile-friendly solution: capsule hotels. With an easy phone scan, customers can book a nap in a sleek white capsule - designed to look like a space pod - for just 10 yuan ($1.50) for half an hour during the midday rush. The rate drops to only 6 yuan at other times.

"It's really meeting a rigid demand as many professionals have a difficult time finding a nice private place to nap," said Han Yue, operations manager at Xiangshui Space, a Beijing-based start-up which launched the services in Beijing in May and has since opened up in Shanghai and Chengdu. Han said her capsules were different to Japan's capsule hotels, because she was targeting a different type of customer, those looking for a quick nap, not a full night of sleep.

The company plans to extend to cities such as Qingdao, Nanjing and Shenzhen by the end of July or early August, she said.

China's rapidly expanding "sharing economy", exemplified by the success of bike-sharing companies such as Mobike and Ofo, has inspired a wave of "sharing" enterprises backed by a funding frenzy powered by so-called angel investors and venture capital firms.

China's "sharing economy" is expected to grow about 40 percent this year to 4.83 trillion yuan ($705 billion). By 2020, it could account for a tenth of gross domestic product. — AP

Emerging market currencies' selloff resumes

LONDON: The dollar hit a four-month high against the yen and world's top bonds and emerging market currencies were back under pressure yesterday, on bets for higher interest rates in a small but growing group of major economies. With the expectations fuelled by increasingly robust-looking global growth, MSCI's 47-country All World share index was up for a third day running, though it was forced to cling on as Europe's main bourses faltered despite a fresh flurry of M&A activity.

They were unsettled by some heavy falls among defensive consumer staples and property stocks, a dip in the commodity sector as oil stumbled and as futures markets pointed to flat start to US trading for Wall Street. Treasuries and benchmark European bond yields resumed their march upwards, having paused on Monday, as the focus shifted back to the pace of monetary tightening in the world's largest economies.

Federal Reserve chief Janet Yellen starts two days of testimony today as it prepares to unwind the massive hoard of bonds it bought to ease the financial crisis, while top ECB and Bank of England policymakers were due to speak in Europe yesterday. Germany's 10-year yield edged up 2 basis points to 0.56 percent having more than doubled over the last few weeks. The South African rand, Turkish lira and Russia rouble all dropped around 1 percent as some unusually concentrated selling resumed to emerging markets too.

Roger Webb, Head of European Credit at Aberdeen Asset Management said slightly stronger-than-expected global growth numbers recently had boosted expectations of higher interest rates. "I think the increased hawkishness we have seen from the central banks has led to a fear that we could see a mini-taper tantrum," he said. "I don't think there is too much alarm. I think the move to slightly higher yields in Europe and the US, UK and elsewhere is probably understandable."

The dollar ground higher against most major currencies, including to a four-month high of 114.43 yen as traders played the past fortnight's 25 basis-point rise in US government bond yields against the Bank of Japan's vow to keep its stimulus flowing. The New Zealand dollar fell to its lowest in over two weeks meanwhile after an 6.8 magnitude earthquake hit the country's south island.

The Canadian dollar was down slightly too as investors awaited a Bank of Canada interest rate decision today which could be its first hike since the financial crisis. Forecasters are still divided on whether it will pull the trigger, but money markets seem convinced it will and are also 80 percent priced for a follow-up rise by December.

Fine China vs toxic trio

In commodities, crude oil slipped back after pushing higher overnight in Asia. Increased drilling activity in the United States and uncertainty over Libyan and Nigerian production cuts clouded the future supply outlook, leaving US crude down a third of a dollar at $44.13 a barrel and Brent at $46.57. BNP Paribas slashed its forecasts for Brent by $9 to $51 a barrel for 2017 and by $15 to $48 for 2018. Barclays also cut its 2017 and 2018 Brent forecasts to $52 a barrel.

Gold edged lower to $1,212.13 an ounce as it headed back towards a four-month low and copper dipped too as the prospect of a strike at one of Chile's big mines failed to offset data showing a rapid build-up of inventories. Stainless steel ingredient nickel, however, gained after Chinese steel prices reached their highest in 3-1/2 years.

That came as bluechip Chinese stocks also hit an 18-month high as investors chased firms with stronger fundamentals and the central bank resumed liquidity injections having kept the taps closed for last 12 sessions. Other emerging markets heavyweights were on the ropes though. South Africa's rand hit a two-month low while Turkey's lira and Russia's rouble both lost almost 1 percent to trade just off recent respective 2-1/2 month and six-month lows.

They have become a new 'toxic trio' for traders having been hammered over the last few weeks despite other major EM currencies, such the Mexican peso, Brazilian real and Polish zloty, all faring relatively well. "We have been emphasizing the fundamental weakness of the South African macro story for some time, and believe that market pricing on ZAR (the rand) showed a degree of complacency that in part was explained by low G3 bond yields," analysts at Morgan Stanley wrote in a note. "It is thus not much of a surprise that it is the worst-performing EM currency now that liquidity conditions look less supportive." —Reuters

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report

جلوبل Global

Tuesday 11 July 2017

Index		Change	Closing	Last Closing
Price index	▲	30.08	6,778.62	6,748.54
Weighted index	▲	4.10	404.91	400.81
KSX 15	▲	9.28	923.22	913.94

Volume	99,569,032
Value (KWD)	15,787,679
Number of Trades	3,539

Security	High	Low	Trades Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last		Change
IFG	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	330	—	0.0
NAPESCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,560	—	0.0
ENERGYH	38.0	36.5	47,176	1,706	9	36.6	▼	-3.3
GFI	41.0	39.7	630,588	25,231	32	40.3	▼	-0.4
ABAR	85	82	4,573	375	12	82	▼	-7.0
Oil & Gas			**682,337**	**27,313**	**53**	**1035.29**	▼	**-8.20**
KFOUC	258	255	53,345	13,742	5	258	▼	-7.0
BPCC	560	560	111,691	62,547	8	560	—	0.0
ALKOUT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	690	—	0.0
ALQURAIN	239	230	245,743	81,416	18	239	▲	8.0
Basic Materials			**410,779**	**157,706**	**31**	**1218.62**	▲	**4.70**
KCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	460	—	0.0
CABLE	430	419	17,777	7,594	4	419	▼	-11.0
SHIP	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	209	—	0.0
PCEM	920	920	17,500	16,100	5	920	▲	20.0
PAPER	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	300	—	0.0
MRC	80	79	1,210	97	8	80	▼	-7.0
ACICO	260	260	3,000	780	3	260	▲	9.0
HCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	208	—	0.0
KBMMC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	136	—	0.0
NCBM	189	188	11,000	2,039	2	188	▲	1.0
EQUIPMENT	52	48.9	1,781,580	88,204	45	51	▲	1.0
NCCI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	119	—	0.0
GYPSUM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	95	—	0.0
SALBOOKH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	61	—	0.0
AGILITY	797	783	1,142,509	903,871	154	786	▲	15.0
EDU	362	353	253,762	89,811	52	360	▲	11.0
CLEANING	45.0	44.3	32,910	1,565	15	48.5	▲	0.1
KGL	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	60	—	0.0
KCPC	165	165	2,500	413	1	165	—	0.0
HUMANSOFT	4,260	4,259	57,646	245,567	14	4,260	—	0.0
NAFAIS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	150	—	0.0
GFC	70	68	9,436	617	2	79	▲	10.0
MAYADEEN	27.7	26.5	750,168	20,237	11	27.7	▲	0.8
CGC	618	617	57,500	35,556	7	618	▼	-1.0
MTCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	58	—	0.0
UPAC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	881	—	0.0
ALAFCO	318	317	36,000	11,432	2	318	▲	1.0
MUBARRAD	72	72	10,000	720	1	72	—	0.0
LOGISTICS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	51	—	0.0
SCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	84	—	0.0
GCEM	74	74	80,000	5,904	3	74	▲	0.2
QIC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	78	—	0.0
FCEM	81	79	1,267,900	100,198	22	79	—	0.0
RKWC	85	85	5,000	425	1	85	▼	-5.0
SPEC	87	83	353,801	29,684	20	86	▼	-0.5
Industrials			**5,871,198**	**1,560,813**	**378**	**1906.37**	▲	**7.70**
PAPCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	100	—	0.0
CATTL	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	220	—	0.0
DANAH	70	69	144,000	9,996	11	69	▼	-2.9
FOOD	2,418	2,418	9	22	1	2,418	▲	16.0
Consumer Goods			**144,509**	**10,018**	**13**	**1070.16**	▼	**-5.60**
MKC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	495	—	0
ATC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,100	—	0
VIACO	181	181	50	9	1	181	▲	20
Health Care			**50**	**9**	**1**	**1722.50**	▲	**20.20**
KCIN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,350	—	0
KHOT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	350	—	0
SULTAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	57	—	0
CABLETV	30.9	28.0	4,510	129	5	30.9	▼	0
EYAS	900	841	11,701	10,139	17	900	▲	1
IFAHR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	286	—	0
OULAFUEL	120	118	96,350	11,347	11	119	▲	1
MUNTAZAHAT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	82	—	0
JAZEERA	476	475	27,750	13,196	3	476	▲	1
SOOR	125	119	15,092	1,797	11	125	▲	2
FUTUREKID	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	105	—	0
ALRAI	120	120	25,546	3,066	3	120	—	0
ZIMAH	51	48.0	10,005	480	2	51	▲	2
Mezzan	942	942	21,391	20,150	2	942	▲	2
Consumer Services			**211,348**	**60,305**	**54**	**1061.97**	▲	**2.90**
ZAIN	437	418	7,682,289	3,312,725	300	437	▲	20
OOREDOO	1,170	1,101	16,135	18,526	13	1,165	▲	65
HITS/TELEC	40.9	39.9	3,275,000	132,953	116	40.8	▲	1
VIVA	824	796	39,508	32,169	63	822	▲	25
Telecommunications			**11,012,932**	**3,496,375**	**492**	**603.33**	▲	**22.79**
NBK	690	683	2,102,229	1,442,483	169	686	▲	1
GBK	244	238	550,133	132,816	22	244	▲	5
CBK	312	311	3,819	1,190	3	312	▲	1
ABK	327	327	1,569	513	1	327	—	0
ALMUTAHED	408	398	12,600	5,022	3	398	▼	-8
KIB	251	247	2,778,294	692,308	85	249	—	0
BURG	333	331	95,229	31,625	14	333	▲	3
KFIN	494	488	3,087,725	1,516,853	132	493	▲	6
BOUBYAN	411	407	976,484	399,622	49	409	▲	1
AUB	207	206	2,492,220	514,370	46	207	—	0
ITHMR	46.0	44.4	1,477,245	66,275	61	46.9	▲	2
WARBABANK	269	262	773,356	206,020	152	269	▲	3
Banks			**14,390,903**	**5,009,168**	**737**	**925.85**	▲	**6.70**
KINS	260	260	10	3	1	260	—	0
GINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	501	—	0.0
AINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	430	—	0.0
WINS	88	84	4,208	364	4	86	▲	14.4
KUWAITRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	186	—	0.0
FTI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	51	—	0.0
WETHAQ	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	55	—	0.0
BKIGWT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	355	—	0.0
Insurance			**4,218**	**368**	**5**	**1018.80**	▲	**16.40**
SOKOUK	47.0	46.5	875,70	4,072	6	47.0	▲	0.3
KRE	56	56	703,900	39,983	22	58	▲	1.7
URC	88	88	30	3	1	88	▼	-0.2
NRE	115	112	1,728,242	196,789	67	115	▲	2.0
SRE	385	370	51,000	18,885	3	385	▲	1.0
TAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	400	—	0.0
AREEC	138	136	158,674	21,837	8	138	▲	2.0
MASSALEH	43.9	43.9	60	3	1	43.9	▲	3.9
ARABREC	33.2	32.1	1,577,199	50,786	59	33.1	▲	1.1
ERESCO	43.5	40.9	2,828,996	117,868	99	41.0	▼	-2.0
MABANEE	770	755	286,339	219,314	19	770	▲	10.0
INJAZZAT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	90	—	0.0
INVESTORS	24.1	23.3	3,711,054	88,821	33	24.1	▲	1.1
IRC	32.5	29.0	1,459,600	43,479	67	30.7	▼	-1.8
ALTUARIA	74	73	2,063,280	150,622	22	74	▲	0.8
SANAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	90	—	0.0
AAYANRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	85	—	0.0
AQAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	66	—	0.0
ALAQARIA	38.0	38.0	1,000	38	1	38.0	▲	3.0
MAZAYA	113	111	933,611	103,971	18	113	▲	1.0
THEMAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	70	—	0.0
TIJARA	58	58	4,000	232	1	58	—	0.0
TAAMEER	37.5	35.6	4,496,906	162,915	104	36.0	—	0.0
ARKAN	86	82	76,000	6,455	5	82	▼	-3.5
ARGAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	160	—	0.0
ABYAAR	34.7	33.9	9,648,656	334,022	175	34.6	▲	0.5
MUNSHAAT	54	52	996,700	52,375	36	54	▲	1.1
FIRSTDUBAI	49.4	47.0	97,000	4,649	12	48.3	▲	0.4
KBT	47.0	46.0	160,000	7,428	10	47.0	▲	0.2
REAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	399	—	0.0
MENA	23.8	22.5	82,700	1,913	14	23.8	▼	-0.7
ALMUDON	39.5	38.1	418,506	16,299	38	39.4	▲	1.4
MARAKEZ	42.5	42.5	100	4	1	42.5	—	0.0
REMAL	81	80	2,864,100	230,417	57	80	—	0.0
AWJ	75	75	10,840	813	4	75	▲	0.1
Real Estate			**34,445,743**	**1,773,970**	**883**	**945.67**	▲	**6.00**
KINV	96	90	2,056	195	3	96	▼	-1.3
FACIL	171	171	84,050	14,373	5	171	—	0.0
IFA	33.9	32.0	1,509,560	49,165	62	33.5	▲	1.7
NINV	104	103	153,950	15,987	7	103	—	0.0
KPROJ	355	335	912,408	307,455	29	350	▲	17.0
COAST	40.4	39.0	2,241,371	89,667	57	40.4	▲	1.0
SECH	43.0	41.2	1,475,200	61,577	52	42.9	▲	2.0
ARZAN	34.0	32.5	166,595	5,477	7	33.0	▲	1.0
MARKAZ	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	109	—	0.0
KMEFIC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	29.0	—	0.0
ALAMAN	42.5	42.5	80,000	3,400	2	42.5	▲	0.2
ALOLA	46.5	46.0	115,750	5,325	6	46.0	—	0.0
ALMAL	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	15.0	—	0.0
GIH	36.5	35.5	160,700	5,752	15	36.4	▲	0.5
AAYAN	40.9	39.9	3,236,722	130,905	99	40.9	▲	0.8
BAYANINV	52	50	1,099,300	56,005	51	51	▲	0.2
OSOUL	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	59	—	0.0
KFIC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	40.0	—	0.0
KAMCO	78	77	110,500	8,583	6	78	▼	-1.3
NIH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	60	—	0.0
UNICAP	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	45.0	—	0.0
MADAR	21.4	21.0	984,800	20,815	47	21.1	▼	-0.2
ALDEERA	31.4	29.1	6,399	192	2	31.4	▲	0.9
ALSALAM	46.0	46.0	204,407	18,446	20	47.0	▲	0.6
EKTTITAB	37.5	37.3	42,000	1,567	2	37.3	▲	0.3
ALMADINA	46.9	45.0	202,000	9,117	5	45.2	▼	-1.8
NOOR	52	52	572,000	29,509	11	52	▲	0.5
TAMINV	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	300	—	0.0
EXCH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	158	—	0.0
KSHC	34.0	31.6	72,150	2,306	11	33.0	—	0.0
AGIYA	43.4	43.3	4,535	201	3	43.4	—	0.0
GNAHC	36.0	34.9	337,990	11,959	12	35.9	▲	0.2
AMWAL	50	45.0	589,606	27,554	81	45.0	▼	-3.0
ALMTIAZ	172	168	14,793,551	2,510,431	205	169	▼	-2.0
MANAZEL	45.3	44.7	374,010	16,794	17	45.3	▲	0.1
NIND	125	122	960,339	118,521	38	123	▼	-2.0
BIHC	38.5	38.2	83,700	3,045	7	38.5	▼	-0.5
SENERGY	37.0	36.0	26,200	955	3	37.0	—	0.0
AGHC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	85	—	0.0
KPPC	48.0	47.8	154,000	7,385	8	48.0	▲	0.8
TAHSSILAT	30.5	30.5	11,500	351	2	30.5	▼	-1.4
EKHOLDING	178	178	30,000	5,340	2	178	▼	-2.0
GFH	175	171	20,640	3,561	6	175	—	0.0
INOVEST	108	103	1,429,586	150,441	45	107	▲	4.0
Financial Services			**22,447,672**	**3,692,476**	**908**	**675.33**	▲	**1.10**
Investment Instruments			**0**	**0**	**0**	**1081.97**	—	**0.00**
ASC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	181	—	0.0
OSOS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	122	—	0.0
HAYATCOMM	89	80	334,976	27,807	55	89	▲	8.0
Technology			**334,976**	**27,807**	**55**	**632.66**	—	**0.00**
SANAD	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	100	—	0.0
AFAQ	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	130	—	0.0
EFFECT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	32.0	—	0.0
AJWAN	88	88	100	9	1	88	▲	14.4
MASAKEN	75	65	2,000	140	2	75	—	0.0
DALQAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	350	—	0.0
ALEIO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	90	—	0.0
MIDAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,220	—	0.0
THURAYA	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	204	—	0.0
AMAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	49.0	—	0.0
Parallel Market			**2,100**	**149**	**3**	**1192.86**	▲	**34.00**

National Bank of Kuwait Financial Markets Daily Report

الوطني NBK

At 02:00 PM Previous Day

Global Stock Indices

Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Change		Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %
Dow Jones	21,414.34	21,408.52	-5.82	▼	-0.03	8.36
NASDAQ	5,005.08	4,927.88	-77.20	▼	-1.54	4.05
S&P 500	2,423.18	2,427.43	2.25	▲	0.09	8.47
Financial Times	7,370.03	7,312.96	-57.07	▼	-0.77	2.40
DAX	12,445.92	12,469.71	23.79	▲	0.19	8.61
CAC 40	5,165.64	5,159.22	-6.42	▼	-0.12	6.13
Swiss	8,943.84	8,896.68	-47.16	▼	-0.53	8.23
Nikkei 225	20,080.98	20,195.48	114.50	▲	0.57	5.66
Topix	1,615.48	1,627.14	11.66	▲	0.72	7.15
Hang Seng	25,500.06	25,877.64	377.58	▲	1.48	17.62
Straits Times	3,246.35	3,218.80	-27.55	▼	-0.85	11.73

MENA Stock Indices

Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Change		Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %
Kuwait	6,748.54	6,778.62	30.08	▲	0.45	14.82
Saudi Arabia	7,236.94	7,259.92	22.98	▲	0.32	0.37
Dubai	3,417.94	3,439.88	21.94	▲	0.64	-3.20
Abu Dhabi	4,397.96	4,408.66	10.70	▲	0.24	-3.26
Bahrain	1,308.25	1,311.82	3.57	▲	0.27	7.19
Qatar	8,995.12	9,030.16	35.04	▲	0.39	-13.81
Oman	5,158.83	5,171.19	12.36	▲	0.24	-10.79
Lebanon	1,151.41	1,150.33	-1.08	▼	-0.09	-5.06
Jordan	2,174.16	2,183.08	8.92	▲	0.41	0.18
Egypt	13,483.04	13,669.17	186.13	▲	1.38	9.22
Morocco	12,326.01	12,331.88	5.87	▲	0.05	5.91
Tunisia	6,184.44	6,210.77	26.33	▲	0.43	12.67

Global Currencies Exchange Rate

Currency	Kuwaiti Dinar	Saudi Riyal	US Dollar	Euro	Sterling Pound	Swiss Franc	Japanese Yen	Australian Dollar
Kuwait Dinar		12.2520	3.2808	2.8787	2.5407	3.1772	375.03	4.3112
Saudi Riyal	0.08162		0.2678	0.2350	0.2074	0.2593	30.61	0.3519
US Dollar	0.30480	3.7344		0.8774	0.7744	0.9684	114.31	1.3141
Euro	0.34738	4.2561	1.1397		0.8826	1.1040	130.30	1.4982
Sterling Pound	0.39359	4.8222	1.2913	1.1330		1.2507	147.62	1.6974
Swiss Franc	0.31475	3.8563	1.0326	0.9058	0.7996		118.06	1.3569
Japanese Yen	0.00267	0.0327	0.0087	0.0077	0.0068	0.0085		0.0115
Australian Dollar	0.23195	2.8419	0.7610	0.6675	0.5891	0.7370	86.99	

MENA Currencies Exchange Rate

Currency	US Dollar	Kuwaiti Dollar	Saudi Riyal	Bahraini Dinar	Qatari Riyal	Omani Riyal	Emirates Dirham	Egyptian Pound
US Dollar		0.30480	3.7344	0.3755	3.6274	0.3835	3.6574	17.8400
Kuwaiti Dinar	3.2808		12.2520	1.2320	11.9009	1.2580	11.9993	58.5302
Saudi Riyal	0.2678	0.08162		0.1006	0.9713	0.1027	0.9794	4.7772
Bahraini Dinar	2.6631	0.81172	9.9451		9.6602	1.0212	9.7401	47.5100
Qatari Riyal	0.2757	0.08403	1.0295	0.1035		0.1057	1.0083	4.9181
Omani Riyal	2.6079	0.79489	9.7389	0.9793	9.4599		9.5381	46.5250
Emirates Dirham	0.2734	0.08334	1.0211	0.1027	0.9918	0.1048		4.8778
Egyptian Pound	0.0561	0.01709	0.2093	0.0210	0.2033	0.0215	0.2050	

Global Interest Rates

Currency	1-Week	1-Month	3-Month	6-Month	1-Year
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.19	1.50	1.75	2.00	2.31
US Dollar	1.18	1.22	1.30	1.46	1.75
Euro	-0.40	-0.40	-0.37	-0.30	-0.18
Sterling Pound	0.23	0.25	0.29	0.44	0.65
Swiss Franc	-0.78	-0.78	-0.72	-0.65	-0.48
Australian Dollar	1.56	1.62	1.60	1.64	1.70
Japanese Yen	-0.04	-0.03	-0.01	0.01	0.11

Global Bond Yields

Country	2-Year	5-Year	10-Year	30-Year
United States	1.39	1.94	2.39	2.94
Europe	-0.61	-0.11	0.55	1.35
United Kingdom	0.30	0.67	1.28	1.90

Commodities

Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Change		Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %
Kuwait Oil	43.82	43.66	-0.16	▼	-0.37	-21.43
Brent	46.83	45.93	-0.90	▼	-1.92	-16.72
West Texas	44.45	44.35	-0.10	▼	-0.22	-20.92
Gold	1213.95	1210.33	-3.62	▼	-0.30	5.12
Silver	15.63	15.54	-0.09	▼	-0.60	-1.97

Source: National Bank of Kuwait

Wataniya Airways launches three new flights to Tbilisi

KUWAIT: Wataniya Airways, the latest Kuwaiti aviation company, launched its first scheduled flights from Kuwait International Airport to Tbilisi, the capital of Georgia, with three flights to and from Kuwait per week. Wataniya Airways celebrated the event in the Georgian capital Tbilisi, with an event attended by His Excellency Mubarak Mohammed Al-Sahejan, the Kuwaiti Ambassador to Georgia, and His Excellency Roland Beridze, the Georgian Ambassador to Kuwait, as well as members of the Wataniya Airways board and top executive management of the company. The event was covered by different local media outlets.

On this occasion Riyad Al-Saeed, Vice Chairman of Wataniya Airways, said that the launch of the first flight with the beginning of the summer season is considered an initiation of the commercial operations of this airline carrier after a long stoppage. It is also considered an important stage in the history of aviation in Kuwait, in line with the desire of the political leadership to develop the local aviation sector to keep pace with the rapid growth of the Kuwaiti market.

Al-Saeed added that Wataniya Airways is experiencing a new stage in all administrative and technical aspects, aiming to provide distinctive services in a non-conventional style to all Kuwaiti citizens and expatriates of different segments against competitive prices. He continued that there are three direct flights to and from Kuwait to Tblisi on Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays onboard an Airbus A320, which consists of 155 seats, including 12 in business class.

Al-Saeed asserted that the management of Wataniya Airways is keen to provide a unique travel experience after its comeback to the local market. He noted that new flights are to be launched to Baku, Azerbaijan and Sarajevo, Bosnia in the coming week.

These destinations are highly sought after by passengers in Kuwait. At the end of his statement, Al-Saeed expressed his thanks and appreciation to the government and civil aviation authorities of Georgia for their support in facilitating the operation of Wataniya Airways flights. As a result, tourism and trade, promoted between the two countries, will flourish. Lana Al-Rasheed, manager of Public Relations and Media at Wataniya Airways emphasized that, launching the first flight to Tbilisi, Georgia, situated at the heart of Caucasus Mountains, meets the ambitions of travel lovers and provides direct flights to the desired destinations.

She added that cities of Georgia and other countries which Wataniya Airways are now flying to were missed, as direct flights were not available from Kuwait. "Wataniya Airways is keen to meet the travelers' needs so as to facilitate crossing these distances and to enjoy luxurious travels on Wataniya Airways." Al-Rasheed noted that Wataniya Airways aim at to be the most sought by passengers. "We aim to make them enjoy all travels. Selecting our planes and considering the crew as friends with the passenger is our objective."

The flight to Tblisi was an exclusive event. There was an onboard performance of a Kuwaiti traditional music band during the trip, and various gifts were distributed. The flight was attended by a group of different media outlets from Kuwait as well as a group of dignitaries of various social networking sites amid an atmosphere of joy and happiness. The event included a draw for two free tickets to the guests onboard the flight.

INFINITI organizes an exclusive artistic experience with the new Q60 Coupe

KUWAIT: To celebrate the launch of the new Q60 Coupe, INFINITI Middle East hosted a diverse group of prominent bloggers to "The INFINITI Signature Drive" - an exclusive media event in Dubai on May 17th 2017. The bloggers were invited from a bouquet of creative fields such as food, travel, lifestyle, and automotive. The INFINITI Signature Drive was crafted with the intention of bringing together artists and influencers who share INFINITI's values of being Progressive Challengers. Lebanese-Dutch Tarek Atrissi, a pioneering artist in the Arab World led the group to create leave their artistic imprints in the city of Dubai.

The bloggers were welcomed by an overview of the new INFINITI Q60 Coupe, and were presented with a number of luxuries, heightening anticipation for the drive. After the overview, they were treated to driving a convoy of Q6O Coupes around the bustling avenues of Dubai. Still kept under the wraps to them however was that the drive was designed with an artistic touch! On completion of the drive, Tarek revealed to the audience the route they had taken by painting it onto a giant map of Dubai city. Much to their amazement, the bloggers found that their route was the word "Daring" in Arabic calligraphy.

Following the artistic drive, the bloggers were given a chance to freewheel the Q60 Coupes to experience their dynamic road performance.

Concluding an exhilarating day, the bloggers were treated to an exclusive Yacht cruise inside which they competed to mix the finest cocktail. The competition saw guests come up with a wide variety of innovative cocktails. The event highlighted INFINITI's spirit to empower the drive by partnering with influencers who've dared to empower in their own artistic fields.

GBK to hold Al Danah and Red draws on 88.8 FM 'Rabaa Al-Diwaniya'

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank invites you to tune into its live Al Danah and red account draws on 88.8 FM 'Rabaa Al-Diwaniya' show, tomorrow Thursday, 13 July 2017, at 1PM. During the show, Gulf Bank representatives Meshal Al-Sallal and Aisha Al-Nasrallah will be announcing the winners for the second quarterly Al Danah draw for KD 250,000 and the red draw for Apple products.

As with all Gulf Bank product draws, this will be held under the supervision of a representative from the Ministry of Commerce. The Al Danah account is Gulf Bank's flagship account. It offers four quarterly cash prizes (KD 200,000; KD250,000; 500,000KD; and KD 1 Million), in addition to daily draws with two winners per working day, each receiving KD 1,000. The Al Danah account's annual prize for KD 1 Million is not only the largest bank prize in Kuwait; it has additionally been recognized by Guinness World Records achievement for the largest prize linked to a bank account in the world!

The third Al Danah quarterly draw for the prize of KD 500,000 will be held on 28 September, 2017 and the final Al Danah draw for 1 Million Kuwaiti Dinars will be held on 11 January 2018, where the Kuwait's new Al Danah Millionaire will be announced. Account holders can increase their chances of winning by depositing more into their Al Danah account, through the Bank's Interactive Teller Machines, ATMs, the new "ePay" service or by visiting any of the banks' branches across Kuwait.

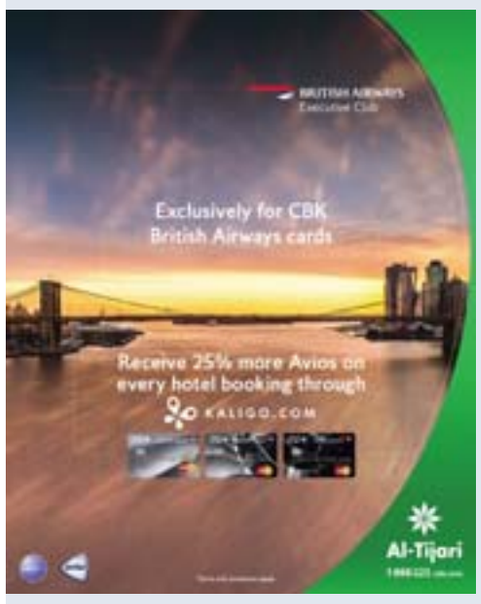
Meanwhile, red is a dedicated account for high school, college and university students aged between 15 and 25, and does not require a minimum deposit. Eligible customers will get the chance to enter the monthly draw automatically, upon transferring their student allowances. Each month, an iPhone 7 Plus, an iPad Pro and an Apple Watch will be gifted to three lucky winners. The draws will run until January 2018 and the next draw will be held on 24 July 2017.

Other benefits of the red account include the opportunity to win a Fiat 500c-Model 2017 at the annual car draw, upon transferring their allowance. Also, movie tickets at all Cinescape theatres will be available for only KD 2 seven days a week. red customers can also shop from the USA or the UK with a dedicated company (edfa3ly), which provide a mail box for internet shopping services from their website.

Moreover; red customers can now also transfer money from anyone, from any local bank into their Gulf Bank account through the all new e-pay service, which also allows customers to pay their mobile bills for Zain, Ooredoo, and Viva and buy iTunes and Google Play cards,

instantly using the new "ePay" service available on Gulf Bank's Online Banking and Mobile Banking App.

Distinct offer available for CBK British Airways cardholders



KUWAIT: Commercial Bank of Kuwait announced its new partnership with Kaligo.com in collaboration with British Airways to provide all CBK British Airways cardholders an exclusive offer. As for the offer details, the Bank explained that customers will receive base Avios on every hotel booking made on Kaligo.com. An additional 25% Avios will be added on top of the base Avios on every hotel booking when payment is made by using any of CBK British Airways cards.

Customers can benefit from this offer for hotel reservation during the period from April 1, 2017 till March 31, 2018 and for hotel accommodation during the period from April 1, 2017 till September 30, 2018. Kaligo.com is a leading global hotel booking platform that rewards customers with incredible miles & points through a wide range of favorite loyalty programs. Launched in 2014, Kaligo offers great rates and a large selection of 465,000 properties across more than 200 countries.

Warba Bank contributes to co-financing deal with the Ziraat Participation Bank of Turkey

KUWAIT: Warba Bank, Kuwait's best investment bank and corporate consultancy institution, announced the success of a Shari'ah-compliant, joint, multi-currency, financial deal of USD 236M for the Ziraat Participation Bank of Turkey. In partnership with a range of other global and regional banks, Warba Bank acted as the Lead Arranger and Subscription Manager of the deal, which was initially launched at USD 160M. Due oversubscription, which surpassed the expectations with 1.6 times, the deal was increased so as to reach USD 236M, with an increase of 52%. Warba Bank's share of the deal is USD 25M.

The Murabaha-based financing deal includes both US Dollars and Euros. It will be employed mainly in SME financing and income diversification at the Ziraat Participation Bank of Turkey. The Bank's contribution is in support of its dedication to a leading Islamic corporate banking and investment services and in the framework of its plan to enhance its global investment and maintain investors' confidence.

Shaheen Hamad Al-Ghanem, Warba Bank's CEO said: "The Bank's involvement in this deal emphasizes the growth of the Bank's asset portfolio and serves as a compelling proof of its commitment to extend its growth roots in line with its expansion strategy to support the Islamic banking sector and the economic sector locally, regionally and globally in emerging markets by selecting viable investment opportunities. " Al-Ghanem also asserted that the Turkish economy is full of opportunities.

Shaheen Hamad Al-Ghanem

He added, "The Bank is proud to be entrusted, along with an elite of big regional and global names in the banking industry, with playing a vital role in the promotion of this economy, especially that the Ziraat Participation Bank of Turkey contributes to the financing of the agricultural sector, which is one of the pillars of the rise of the Turkish economy." It is worth mentioning that this is the second participation of Warba Bank in arranging a financing transaction for the Ziraat Participation Bank of Turkey. In 2016, it contributed to a USD 155M multi-currency co-financing transaction for the said Turkish Bank. Moreover, Warba Bank also participated in that transaction as the Lead Arrangement Manager and Lead Manager of the subscription.

Bank ABC appoints new Group Chief Credit and Risk Officer

DOHA: Bank ABC has recently appointed Grant Lowen as Group Chief Credit and Risk Officer based at its head office in Bahrain. Lowen joins Bank ABC from QNB in Qatar, where he served as Group Chief Risk Officer (GCCRO) since 2012. He has extensive experience in the banking industry and worked internationally in several countries around the world over the past 30 years. Lowen also brings with him extensive expertise in areas such as risk appetite, ICAAP, IFRS9 and other topics on the contemporary regulatory agenda of financial institutions. The outgoing Acting GCCRO, Paul Howard, will be relocating from Bahrain in line with his original plans. The Bank takes this opportunity to express gratitude for his excellent contributions and wishes him well for the future.

Bank ABC Group CEO, Khaled Kawan, said: "I am pleased with the new appointment, which builds on the Bank's recent efforts aimed at strengthening its risk infrastructure to support business growth". "Mr Lowen's appointment will help the management team continue implementing its strategy of transformation and growth while maintaining excellent risk management parameters. It will augur well, as the bank expands its international footprint across 18 countries where it operates to foray into Dubai and Singapore as well as boosting relationship to better serve our clients globally," he said.

Bank ABC is a leading international wholesale bank operating from presences across MENA, Europe, Asia, USA and Brazil and provides innovative wholesale financial products and services that include corporate banking, trade finance, project and structured finance, debt capital markets, syndications, treasury products and Islamic banking. It also provides retail banking services through its network of retail banks in Jordan, Egypt, Tunisia and Algeria.

Boursa launches new 'Market Watch' Service

KUWAIT: Boursa Kuwait yesterday announced that the new Market Watch service is now active on the company's website; a new service that aims to offer delayed and real time market data.

The new Market Watch service provides a summary of the Price Index, Value and Volume Traded, Advanced, Declined, Unchanged Trades and Status. The real-time feature will be available to subscribers only, and can be acquired free of charge through few simple steps. The current quotes page will remain available however, it will be delayed for a total of 15 minutes effective the date of the new Market Watch service launch. Market Watch can be accessed via Boursa Kuwait Official website.

Boursa Kuwait has made it possible for subscribers to search for the required data by sector, such as Oil and Gas, Basic Materials, Industrials, Consumer Goods, Health Care, Consumer Services, Telecommunications, Banks, Real Estate, and others. Also available is a summary table, which provides information about the sectors, the gainers, the losers, the top volume and the top value. Boursa Kuwait continuously seeks new methods and techniques that support with the provision of exceptional services its stakeholders, while ensuring that the element of transparency is at the heart of all it does.

Lincoln voted the most satisfying premium brand among owners

KUWAIT CITY: Owners of new Lincoln vehicles have voted Lincoln the top luxury brand, according to this year's Vehicle Satisfaction Awards from AutoPacific, a future-orientated automotive marketing research and product-consulting firm. The awards are based on owner responses to survey questions regarding the overall ownership experience. "The Vehicle Satisfaction Awards look at the big picture," said George Peterson, AutoPacific president. "They measure 49 separate attributes, ranging from interior comfort and styling to fuel economy and performance. They go deeper into the heart of the ownership experience."

This year marks the 21st anniversary of AutoPacific, which identifies the most satisfying vehicles based on survey responses from more than 54,000 owners of new 2016 and 2017 cars and light trucks. "Regaining leadership in the premium brand category is not just a clear statement on the quality of Lincoln vehicles, but also a nod to the exemplary service we offer our customers," said Alex Schaeffer, Director, Lincoln Middle East. "With the arrival of the Continental to the Middle East, Lincoln has delivered on its promise and commitment to the region to

bring four vehicles in four years." Lincoln has, this year, regained leadership from Tesla in the premium brand category, thanks in part to the Lincoln Continental, Lincoln MKZ, and Lincoln Navigator, which were voted winners in the Luxury Car, Luxury Midsize Car, and Luxury SUV segments respectively in the AutoPacific survey. The Lincoln Motor Company's strong lineup of vehicles continues to draw more people to the brand, having the luxury segment's highest loyalty rate among new luxury-vehicle buyers for the first quarter of 2017, based on IHS Markit Loyalty data.

Key facts about the world's most widely used crypto currency

TOKYO: Mark Karpeles, the former CEO of collapsed Bitcoin exchange MtGox, went on trial in Tokyo on charges stemming from the disappearance of hundreds of millions of dollars worth of the virtual currency from its digital vaults. Here are some key facts about the world's most widely used crypto currency:

What is Bitcoin?

Bitcoin is a virtual currency created from computer code. Unlike a real-world unit such as the US dollar or euro, it has no central bank and is not backed by any government. Instead, Bitcoin's community of users control and regulate it. Advocates say this makes it an efficient alternative to traditional currencies because it is not subject to the whims of a state that may devalue its money to boost exports, for example.

Just like other currencies, Bitcoins can be exchanged for goods and services-or for other currencies-provided the other party is willing to accept them.

Where does it come from?

Bitcoin was launched in 2009 as a bit of encrypted software written by someone using the Japanese-sounding name Satoshi Nakamoto. Last year secretive Australian entrepreneur Craig Wright said he was the creator of Bitcoin, but some have raised doubts over his claim.

Hundreds of other digital currencies followed but Bitcoin is by far the most popular, with an increasing number of merchants accepting digital currencies for payments. Transactions happen when heavily encrypted codes are passed across a computer network. The network as a whole monitors and verifies the transaction in a process that is intended to ensure no single Bitcoin can be spent in more than one place simultaneously.

Users can "mine" Bitcoins-bring new ones into being-by having their computers run complicated and increasingly difficult processes. However, the model is limited and only 21 million units will ever be created.

What's it worth?

Like any other currency, it fluctuates. But unlike most real-world units, Bitcoin's value has swung wildly in a short period.

When it first came into existence it was worth a few US cents. Several years later Bitcoin topped $1,000. It's now worth more than $2,300, with commentators suggesting some are buying it as an alternative bet in times of global economic uncertainty.

The chaotic withdrawal of high-value notes in India, and Chinese controls on the purchase of foreign currency have also been cited for its meteoric rise. There are presently more than 16 million units in circulation. Some economists say the limited number of Bitcoins mean its price will increase over the long run, making it less useful as a currency and more a vehicle to store value, like gold.

But detractors point to Bitcoin's volatility, security issues and other weaknesses as flaws that will eventually undermine it.

What's the future?

Some commentators say that like many technological developments, the first iteration of a product will encounter difficulties, possibly terminal ones. But the trail it blazes might smooth the way for the next crypto currency. Problems include an apparent vulnerability to theft when Bitcoins are stored in digital wallets.

A major Hong Kong-based Bitcoin exchange suspended trading last year after $65 million in the virtual unit was reportedly stolen by hackers. The virtual currency movement also faces legitimacy issues because of the way it allows for anonymous transactions-the very thing that libertarian adopters like about it. Detractors say bitcoin's use on the underground Silk Road website, where users could buy drugs and guns with it, is proof that it is a bad thing. If Bitcoin does become more widely accepted, experts say, it could lead to more government regulations, which would negate the very attraction of the concept. — AFP

HAWTHORNE: In this March 31, 2016, file photo, Tesla Motors unveils the new lower-priced Model 3 sedan at the Tesla Motors design studio in Hawthorne, Calif. Electric car maker Tesla said on Monday, July 3, 2017, that its Model 3 car will go on sale on Friday. — AP

Tesla adding service centers as Model 3 goes on sale

DETROIT: Electric car maker Tesla is expanding its service operations and hiring more than 1,000 technicians to meet expected demand for its new Model 3 sedan.

The Model 3, cheaper than Tesla's existing cars, goes on sale this month and is expected to attract hundreds of thousands of new customers to the brand. To accommodate them, the company is adding 100 new service centers worldwide over the next year, bringing its total number of service centers to 250. The new service centers will be in areas that have the most reservation-holders for the Model 3.

Tesla also is adding 350 vans to its mobile service fleet, mostly in the U.S. The vans go to owners' homes or offices and repair their cars while they wait, typically for about one hour. The vans are equipped with tools and replacement parts as well as an espresso machine, snacks and kids' toys. Until now, Tesla had around 30 mobile repair vans, which were used mostly in cases where the owner lived too far from a service center. About six months ago, the company began deploying the vans in the San Francisco area in order to ease the burden on its service centers and see if they could help meet anticipated demand for the Model 3. Customers were happy with the new arrangement, so the company decided to roll out mobile service in more locations.

At a starting price of $35,000, the Model 3 is about half the cost of Tesla's two other models. Tesla hasn't said how many people hold refundable, $1,000 reservations for the car, but it has said it expects to make 500,000 vehicles in 2018. That's up from 84,000 last year.

Like its stores, which are owned by the company and not by franchised dealers, Tesla has upended the auto industry with its service model. Tesla CEO Elon Musk said several years ago that unlike traditional dealerships, Tesla didn't intend to make a profit on service and repairs. U.S. dealers made $110 billion in service and parts sales last year, according to the National Automobile Dealers Association.

Tesla said it's charging the same amount for non-warranty repairs done at service centers or through mobile vans. It hasn't released details on the warranty plan for the Model 3, so it's not yet clear if it will match Tesla's other vehicles. The Model S and Model X have a four-year, 50,000-mile vehicle warranty and an eight-year battery warranty with unlimited miles.

Unlike traditional dealers, Tesla also doesn't want customers to have to go to a service center for repairs that can be done remotely. The company says 80 percent of repairs to its cars, including replacing the tires or fixing electronic glitches, can be done without a lift, which means it's just as easy to perform them out of a mobile repair van. That leaves service centers free to concentrate on more complicated repairs that require a lift, like motor or battery problems. Tesla is hiring 1,400 new service technicians this year to staff the service centers and mobile repair vans. — AP

Cybersecurity starts with training your employees

DUBAI: The Petya ransomware attack that hit computers around the world recently, the second in two months, is yet another reminder that computers play key roles in most enterprises, and that it does not take much to disable those computers. Irrespective of how robust your information security systems are, users are still the weakest link in your company's cybersecurity.

Mohammed Basheer

It's a business cliche that staff are a company's greatest asset and potentially its greatest risk. And while that has always been true in the area of customer relations, it's now equally applicable to data security. Users are the first line of defence against cyber-attack, and also - potentially - a business's most glaring vulnerability. People are just a very large attack surface but organizations can reduce the attack surfaces by implementing an effective organisation wide security awareness program.

Untrained employees are the linchpins for most data breaches. Those who attack businesses have no wish to spend a lot of time and money defeating its technology. Instead they would prefer to infect the user with ransomware, their favourite bait - "spray & pray" phishing attacks, which involves spamming with email that carries malicious content.

It has become increasingly important to embed ICT security awareness at all levels of an organisation. While awareness is the key, there also needs to be a balance struck. Employees need to know the risk their online activities pose and how to manage it, without being rendered unproductive by overly complex procedures.

Computer security training isn't just a matter of giving employees information. Knowing best practices and organization policy is important, but it helps only if employees understand that they make a difference and should feel they are part of the organizations information security. The truth is that user ignorance to security make most malware attacks possible, and that employees who are aware can avoid most of the attacks.

Information Security Awareness should be part of an organization culture, business leaders need to make sure their awareness programs cover all the important aspects of cybersecurity which ensure that their employees are well trained to tackle the current security threats. At the end of an education and awareness initiative, all users should be able to understand:

1. **How to identify security threats?**
   The user should be able to identify the difference between normal emails and malicious email. They should understand best practice in internet usage and understand the organizations security policies.

2. **Response to the security incidents**
   The user must be aware of the security incident response procedure. Should they suspect a security incident in progress, they should be able to follow the security incident management procedure to curtail the incident from spreading across the organization.

As they say people are the weakest link in the information security chain, hence employee involvement is crucial for the success of an organization's security strategy. There is often a disconnect between what employees know they should do security-wise and what they actually do in practice. Organizations which continue to implement and reinforce effective awareness programs, have seen reduced number of security incidents, in turn maintaining better uptimes for the IT environment supporting the business processes, helping the organizations to upkeep their reputation resulting in better financial rewards.

Many organizations banned in Pakistan thrive online

ISLAMABAD: It's dusk. The shadows of three men brandishing assault rifles welcome the reader to the Facebook page of Lashkar-e-Islam, one of 65 organizations that are banned in Pakistan, either because of terrorist links or as purveyors of sectarian hate.

Still more than 40 of these groups operate and flourish on social media sites, communicating on Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp and Telegram, according to a senior official with Pakistan's Federal Investigation Agency, or FIA, who is tasked with shutting down the sites. They use them to recruit, raise money and demand a rigid Islamic system. It is also where they incite the Sunni faithful against the country's minority Shiites and extoll jihad, or holy war, in India-ruled Kashmir and in Afghanistan.

"It's like a party of the banned groups online. They are all on social media," the FIA official told The Associated Press. He spoke on condition his name not be used because agency officials are not allowed to be quoted by name.

Meanwhile, Pakistan is waging a cyber crackdown on activists and journalists who use social media to criticize the government, the military or the intelligence agencies. The Interior Ministry even ordered the FIA, Pakistan's equivalent of the American FBI, to move against "those ridiculing the Pakistan Army on social media." The FIA official said the agency has interrogated more than 70 activists for postings considered critical. All but two have been released and a third is still under investigation, he said.

Activists, journalists and rights groups who monitor Pakistan's cyberspace say the banned groups active on social media operate unencumbered because several are patronized by the military, its intelligence agencies, radical religious groups and politicians looking for votes.

Even the FIA official concedes state support for some of the banned groups but said it is a global phenomenon engaged in by all intelligence agencies.

"Everyone is protecting their own terrorists. Your good guy is my bad guy and vice versa," he said, adding that some sites belonging to banned groups are intentionally ignored to gain intelligence.

On one Facebook page, the Afghan TalEban flag welcomes viewers, its masthead emblazoned with Arabic script identifying the page as belonging to the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. Still another Facebook site features one of India's most wanted, Hafiz Saeed, the founder of Lashkar-e -Taiba, another banned organization and a US declared terrorist group. Saeed even has a $10 million US-imposed bounty on his head. Yet his group, which has been resurrected under several names, is billed as a charity and has several Facebook pages. Currently called Falah-e-Insaniat, the group boasts of its community work, but its pages feature anti-India videos, call Syria a bleeding wound, rail against India and chastise the Pakistan government for siding with the US following the 9/11 attacks.

Facebook and Twitter have said that they ban "terrorist content." In the second half of last year, Twitter said on its site it had suspended 376,890 accounts because they were thought to promote terrorism, although they say less than 2 percent of the removals were the result of requests from governments. Facebook, meanwhile, said in a blog last month it uses artificial intelligence and human reviewers to find and remove "terrorist content."

"There is no place on Facebook for terrorism," Facebook spokeswoman Clare Wareing said in an email reply to The Associated Press. "Our Community Standards do not allow groups or people that engage in terrorist activity, or posts that express support for terrorism. We encourage people to use our reporting tools if they find content that they believe violates our standards, so we can investigate and take action."

Shahzad Ahmed, of the Islamabad-based social media rights group BytesForAll, said Pakistan's powerful military and intelligence agencies are waging a "communication war" against progressive, moderate voices and those who criticize the government and more particularly the military and its agencies. They use radical religious groups to promote their narrative, he said.

"Their connectivity on the ground, the mosques, madrassas and supporters translates into social media strength and they are (further) strengthened because they feel 'no one is going to touch us,'" he said.

Ahmed Waqass Goraya is a blogger who was picked up and tortured by men he believes belonged to the country's powerful intelligence agency, known by its acronym ISI. He said Pakistan's social media space is dominated by armies of trolls unleashed by the military, intelligence agencies and allied radical religious groups to push their narrative. That narrative includes promoting anti-India sentiment - India is Pakistan's longtime enemy against whom it has fought three wars.

Critics who openly accuse the military of using extremists as proxies are under attack, said Goraya. He fled Pakistan after social media was used to suggest the he and other bloggers were involved in blasphemy, a charge that carries the death penalty. In Pakistan even the suggestion that someone insulted Islam or its prophet can incite mobs to violence.

Earlier this month, Taimoor Raza, a minority Shiite, became the first person sentenced to death under Pakistan's blasphemy law for a social media posting.

ISLAMABAD: In this Friday, July 7, 2017 photo, Haroon Baloch, a Pakistani social media rights activist looks at a Facebook page of a religious group, that refers to their leader as a "true leader," in Islamabad, Pakistan. A senior Pakistani government official said more than 40 of 65 organizations banned in Pakistan operate flourishing social media sites, communicating on Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp and Telegram to recruit, raise money and demand a rigid Islamic system. Meanwhile Pakistan is waging a cyber war against activists and journalists who use social media to criticize the government and its agencies. — AP

Taha Siddiqui, a Pakistan-based journalist with France 24 and an active social media user who often criticizes heavy handed actions of the military or its agencies, has taken the FIA to court to demand to know why he is under investigation after being ordered to come in for questioning. His resistance is taking its toll with family, friends and colleagues, who plead for him to be silent, he said. "They worry someday I will just disappear."

At FIA headquarters in the capital, Islamabad, the official told the AP that banned groups use proxy servers that reveal IP addresses buried somewhere in other countries, making it impossible to track.

That explanation was called "lame" by Haroon Baloch, a social media rights activist who has studied the free-wheeling use of social media by banned groups and purveyors of sectarian hate. He said sites can be blocked, users located and the persons running the pages stopped.

Bloggers like Goraya had elaborate safeguards but still were tracked down by authorities, said Baloch. Unlike the banned groups, Baloch said bloggers, social media activists and journalists are found and stopped because Pakistan's civilian and military intelligence agencies are on the offensive against them.

"Agencies have established a new wing to monitor 24/7, to counter liberal and progressive debate and particularly anything that criticizes their policies," he said. — AP

Microsoft puts partners at the center of $4.5 trillion transformation opportunity

KUWAIT: Microsoft Corp. on Monday kicked off Microsoft Inspire in Washington, DC where the company unveiled Microsoft 365, a new set of commercial offerings that draws from the best of the company's commercial products across Office 365, Windows 10, and Enterprise Mobility + Security. Microsoft 365 is designed to empower all companies and all workers, recognizing that people are at the heart of digital transformation. It puts people at the center, giving them flexibility to work where and how they want, and giving them new ways to collaborate with others - all while protecting company data.

Microsoft introduced two Microsoft 365 offerings today. Microsoft 365 Enterprise is the evolution of the company's Secure Productive Enterprise offering, and includes Office 365 Enterprise, Windows 10 Enterprise, and Enterprise Mobility + Security. It provides customers with the latest and most advanced technology for empowering employees. Microsoft 365 Business, available in public preview starting Aug 2, is designed to give small-to-medium sized businesses a complete productivity and security solution, while streamlining IT management. It includes Office 365 Business Premium, security and management features for Office apps and Windows 10 devices, all managed in a centralized console for deploying and securing devices and users in one location.

Microsoft 365 represents a new and more cohesive approach to how Microsoft goes to market with commercial offerings, and reflects the shift partners and mutual customers are making - from viewing productivity, security and device management as individual workloads, to seeking a comprehensive approach to secure productivity. Microsoft 365 represents a significant opportunity for partners to increase deal size, differentiate offerings, and grow managed services revenue. According to Forrester Consulting, Microsoft 365 Enterprise increases partner revenue opportunity by more than 50 percent vs. selling and deploying Office 365 alone.

To fuel Microsoft partners' success and help meet the company's goal of a $20 billion cloud run rate by 2018, Microsoft announced with launch hardware partners, Dell EMC, HPE and Lenovo, that Microsoft Azure Stack is now available to order. Azure Stack is an extension of Azure that brings the agility and fast-paced innovation of cloud computing to on-premises environmentsand enables entirely new hybrid cloud scenarios.

Azure Stack offers a truly consistent hybrid cloud platform, providing an ideal fit for customers who want flexibility without having to build applications in a different way. From Azure datacenters to the edge of the cloud - whether miles underground in a mine shaft, away at sea on a ship, or on a factory floor dependent on continuous real-time operation - Azure Stack enables modern cloud applications that meet all business and regulatory requirements. A truly consistent hybrid cloud helps customers execute on their cloud strategy faster, and in a way that makes the most sense for their business.

Satya Nadella

SUCCESSFUL

Azure Stack extends the Azure ecosystem opportunity by helping partners grow their Azure business and reach a larger addressable market through hybrid cloud scenarios. Many Microsoft partners have already begun to capitalize on the power of Azure Stack including Rackspace, Tieto, and Resello. Partners can learn more about how to build a successful cloud practice through Practice Development Playbooks or sharpen their Azure skills through online trainings here.

Microsoft also announced two new ways it is helping partners connect with customers and bring innovative solutions to market. Last year, Microsoft piloted a new Azure co-sell program to provide comprehensive sales and marketing support for partners building solutions with Azure. In its first six months in market, this program helped close more than $1 billion in annual contract value for Azure partners, created $6 billion in Azure partner pipeline opportunity and generated more than 4,500 partner deals.

Azure is the only public cloud providing partners with this incredible benefit through which Microsoft sales reps are paid up to 10 percent of the partner's annual contract value when they co-sell qualified Azure-based partner solutions. This means Microsoft is uniquely incenting its sales reps to work hand-in-hand with Azure partners to drive new business together and enabling partners to leverage the Microsoft salesforce to grow their business globally.

'Sixth extinction' of wildlife faster than feared

PARIS: The sixth mass extinction of life on Earth is unfolding more quickly than feared, scientists have warned. More than 30 percent of animals with a backbone - fish, birds, amphibians, reptiles and mammals - are declining in both range and population, according to the first comprehensive analysis of these trends. "This is the case of a biological annihilation occurring globally," said Stanford professor Rodolfo Dirzo, co-author of a study published on Monday in the peer-reviewed US journal, Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS).

Around a decade ago, experts feared that a new planetary wipeout of species was looming. Today, most agree that it is underway - but the new study suggests that the die-out is already ratcheting up a gear. It provides much-needed data about the threat to wildlife, mapping the dwindling ranges and populations of 27,600 species. For 177 mammals, researchers combed through data covering the period 1900 to 2015. The mammal species that were monitored have lost at least a third of their original habitat, the researchers found. Forty percent of them - including rhinos, orangutans, gorillas and many big cats - are surviving on 20 percent or less of the land they once roamed. The loss of biodiversity has recently accelerated. "Several species of mammals that were relatively safe one or two decades ago are now endangered," including cheetahs, lions and giraffes, the study showed.

Globally, the mass die-off - deemed to be the sixth in the last half-billion years - is the worst since three-quarters of life on Earth, including the non-avian dinosaurs, were wiped out 66 million years ago by a giant meteor impact. On average, two vertebrate species disappear every year. Tropical regions have seen the highest number of declining species. In South and Southeast Asia, large-bodied species of mammals have lost more than four-fifths of their historical ranges.

Habitat loss

While fewer species are disappearing in temperate zones, the percentage is just as high or higher. As many as half of the number of animals that once shared our planet are no longer here, a loss the authors described as "a massive erosion of the greatest biological diversity in the history of Earth". There is no mystery as to why: Our own ever-expanding species - which has more than doubled in number since 1960 to 7.4 billion - is eating, crowding and polluting its planetary co-habitants out of existence.

By comparison, there are as few as 20,000 lions left in the wild, less than 7,000 cheetahs, 500 to 1,000 giant pandas, and about 250 Sumatran rhinoceros. The main drivers of wildlife decline are habitat loss, overconsumption, pollution, invasive species, disease, as well as poaching in the case of tigers, elephants, rhinos and other large animals prized for their body parts. Climate change is poised to become a major threat in the coming decades, with some animals - most famously polar bears - already in decline due to rising temperatures and changing weather patterns.

"The massive loss of populations and species reflects our lack of empathy to all the wild species that have been our companions since our origins," said lead author Gerardo Ceballos of the National Autonomous University of Mexico. Beyond any moral imperative, there are practical reasons to rue the eclipse of animals, whether megafauna or smaller and less "charismatic" creatures, the researchers cautioned.

The vanishing of a top-level carnivore or herbivore can have a cascading effect down the food chain, disrupting entire ecosystems. Other species directly provide "services" to humans, such as honeybees that pollinate crops or birds that ensure pest control. Previous studies show that ecosystems under stress, while resilient, have a breaking point - rapid change can lead to collapse. —AFP

BRISBANE: A handout photo taken on Monday shows an escaped circus camel following its recapture. —AFP

Hump in the road: Camel caught on Aussie green

SYDNEY: A runaway circus camel caused traffic chaos and trespassed onto the ninth green of a military golf course before bemused Australian police recaptured it Monday. Rush hour drivers in the Northern Territory's capital Darwin had to dodge the rogue animal as police chased it onto the Royal Australian Airforce Darwin Golf Club, where it was cornered. "It caused a bit of traffic mayhem for a few minutes as it ran down a few streets," said Police Duty Superintendent Rob Burgoyne.

Witnesses described the scene as "bizarre" as attempts were made to tame the beast. "I just walked and heard one man yell to another 'don't run or the camel will run more,'" onlooker Meng-Hsuan Lee told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. "When they tried to catch it, the camel started to run and cross the road."

Police admitted in a Facebook post the incident had presented an unusual challenge. "It appears the fine men and women of the NT Police also have hidden talents in camel wrangling after they quickly tracked it down, secured it and handed it back over to circus personnel," it said. "And it wasn't even hump day!" Camels were first introduced to Australia in the 19th century and their population in the wild has exploded, now numbering up to one million. —AFP

One step closer to gonorrhoea shot?

PARIS: A discontinued vaccine against a bacteria that causes brain inflammation also shielded people against gonorrhoea, the first drug ever to offer such protection against the sexually transmitted disease, researchers said yesterday. Using a condom or abstaining from sex are currently the only ways to avoid contracting gonorrhoea, which infects about 80 million people every year, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

As drug resistance spreads, doctors are diagnosing more and more cases that cannot be treated by antibiotics, making it a major public health concern. Just last week, the WHO said there was an urgent need for new drugs to prevent and treat gonorrhoea, often called "the clap", which is spread by vaginal, oral and anal sex. Untreated, it can cause painful pelvic inflammation in women, and infertility in both genders. In extreme cases, the bacteria can spread in the blood to cause life-threatening infections in other parts of the body. —AFP

West Africa fights to keep bad medicine off shelves

DAKAR: As West Africa declares war on the market for expired and counterfeit medicines, start-ups are putting quality control in the hands of patients to stop them risking their lives trying to get well. Not only can such drugs fail to treat the diseases they are bought to combat, experts say, but they may encourage resistance to antibiotics and even cause death as diseases continue to course unchecked through the body. At an April meeting in Liberia, the 15-member Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) announced a region-wide investigation into the trafficking of expired and counterfeit drugs, and a public awareness campaign.

Traffickers in bad medicine prey on some of the world's poorest and most in need, who also face high costs for health care and often lack insurance, said Adama Kane, who founded the health start-up JokkoSante in Senegal to tackle the problem. Perversely, piles of perfectly good medication go unused in Senegal, Kane noted - a problem that JokkoSante tackles by organizing the collection of unused drugs from people who are awarded points in exchange to obtain other medicines later. Handing in asthma medication at an exchange point in a health centre in Passy, central Senegal, JokkoSante user Marie Gueye is one of those to benefit. "My family and I no longer have problems getting medication. All we have to do is come here and collect the points," she told AFP.

Rewards

For Senegal's rural households, up to 73 percent of health-related expenses go on medication, according to JokkoSante research. Half the overall population has no health insurance coverage. "Our app is used by hospitals, pharmacies and health centres," Kane said, adding it was still at the pilot stage with 1,500 users so far. People create an account and operate the points system all via their mobile phone. For those too poor to buy drugs at all, JokkoSante has teamed up with large company sponsors, including phone operator Sonatel, who cover the cost of providing patients with free medicine.

Again, the system operates through a mobile app. At Diamniadio children's hospital, near Senegal's capital, Dakar, Yacina Ba described the fear of coming to the end of the 50,000 CFA Francs ($85, 75 euros) she scraped together to buy treatment and medication for her sick six-month-old baby, finally begging a doctor for help. "She had rashes all over her arms," Ba told AFP, explaining how the free treatment sponsorship scheme made all the difference.

'Most vulnerable people'

A health worker at the hospital, who asked not to be identified, conceded that a lack of specialists meant medics often over-prescribe medication to those able to pay. This can lead to stockpiles of unused, expired drugs which may then fall into the wrong hands. "Fake drugs are usually bought by the most vulnerable sections of society," said JokkoSante's Kane, who now oversees a small network of pharmacies using his platform, while the government considers a nationwide rollout.

DAKAR: This file photo taken on April 21, 2015 shows people working to destroy about 4 tonnes of counterfeit and illegal medicine seized in an operation as part of the fight against pharmaceutical crime called "Porc-Epic" (porcupine) at the Champ de tir des Mamelles. —AFP

The American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene estimated in 2015 that 122,000 children under five died due to taking poor-quality antimalarials in Sub-Saharan Africa, which, along with antibiotics as the two most in-demand, are the medicines most likely to be out-of-date or cheap copies.

China, India drive trafficking

Counterfeited drugs from China and India are awash in west African markets, according to the Paris-based International Institute of Research Against Counterfeit Medicines (IRACM). And they are often indistinguishable from the genuine item, it warned. A joint IRACM and World Customs Organization (WCO) seizure of medical supplies at 16 African ports late last year yielded no fewer than 113 million items of fake medication, 5,000 medical devices and even veterinary products. Everything from fake cancer drugs to fake sutures for operations can be found in such hauls. IRACM is working with MPs on drafting legislation to crack down on trafficking in west Africa, but two innovative companies have already taken the matter in hand.

Battling fakes

Sproxil, an anti-counterfeiting start-up established in 2009, works by attaching a scratch panel to drug packets. Consumers can check their product is the real deal by sending an SMS verification code to the company, which confirms the authenticity. In the last six years, the firm has had 50 million text messages from customers across Africa and India. Ireti Oluwagbemi, its Nigeria-based spokeswoman, said fraudsters "target brands based on their market share", making household names the biggest targets.

There is plenty of money to be made. The global counterfeit drug market is currently worth around $85 billion, according to IRACM, and the proceeds drive organized crime. Sproxil's clients include pharma giants such as GlaxoSmithKline and Novartis, firms which lose millions each year from pirated products carefully stamped with their branding. "The consequences of ingesting these chemicals can range from discomfort to persistence of the disease it's supposed to be treating, to death," Oluwagbemi told AFP. —AFP

(From Left) Nazih Yousef Abu Assi, Deputy Chairman Anwar A Al-Mulla, Ramzan Ali Bhatti and CAO- Abdulla Najeeb Al-Mulla.

Anwar Abdulla Al-Mulla honors Ramzan Ali Bhatti

Anwar Abdulla Al-Mulla honors Nazih Yousef Abu Assi

Al-Mulla Group awards its employees

Deputy Chairman of Al-Mulla group presented 40-year service awards to Ramzan Ali Bhatti and Nazih Yousef Abu Assi during the awarding ceremony held on June 1, 2017 at Al-Mulla Group Headquarter- Free trade zone Kuwait. Anwar Abdulla Al-Mulla praised staffs for their contribution towards the growth and progress of the company and appreciated their loyal service over the years. The award presentation ceremony also provides a warm gathering for the long-serving staff and an opportunity for the group to publicly acknowledge their years of dedicated service, where it is an important milestone to commemorate the success achieved in the past four decades. The ceremony was concluded by awarding the hosted employees valuable prizes, honoring shields and appreciation certificates in a friendly and warm atmosphere combining the management and the staff together in rare and unique panorama.

Wendy's opens third restaurant in Kuwait

Wendy's, the third largest Burger chain in the world, is keeping the burger fans of Kuwait happy with a new restaurant opening in the Fahaheel opposite Al-Kout Mall. This stand-alone venue that can fit up to 32 seated diners is now open for all Kuwait foodies to enjoy.

Owned by Alghanim Industries, one of the largest privately owned companies in the region, Wendy's continues to make its mark with its deliciously different attitude in the F&B market, following the huge success of its first two restaurants, located on Blajat Street, Salmiya and Marina Mall.

Burger fans will love the 100 percent Halal Angus beef burgers at Wendy's, a brand well known for never cutting corners in producing tasty menu items with quality ingredients. Located opposite Al-Kout Mall, it is the ideal location for shoppers to take a break and enjoy the awesome taste of an original Dave's Single or a classic creamy Frosty. All meals from Wendy's are made with quality ingredients only after you order. Wendy's lettuce and fresh tomatoes are locally sourced and freshly prepared daily in the restaurants.

LOYAC organizes trip to Morocco

LOYAC organized a 10-day trip to Morocco sponsored by the National Bank of Kuwait under the slogan "ATAI." Participants stayed with Moroccan families to boost their knowledge of the Moroccan culture, and to get to know the customs and culture of the country. They were acquainted with Moroccan dishes through specialized lessons. Participants also volunteered in planting and landscaping in schools. Historical places were also visited as well as main landmarks of Rabat.

Animal Planet HD

00:45 Animal Cops Philadelphia
01:40 Guardians Of Rescue
02:35 Tanked
03:25 Wildest Latin America
04:15 Dr. Dee: Alaska Vet
05:02 River Monsters: Lair Of Giants
05:49 Guardians Of Rescue
06:36 Meet The Orangutans
07:25 Dr. Dee: Alaska Vet
08:15 Guardians Of Rescue
09:10 Wildest Latin America
10:05 Tanked
11:00 Dr. Dee: Alaska Vet
11:55 Animal Cops Philadelphia
12:50 Guardians Of Rescue
13:45 River Monsters: Lair Of Giants
14:40 Wildest Latin America
15:35 Tanked
16:30 River Monsters: Lair Of Giants
17:25 Dr. Jeff: Rocky Mountain Vet
18:20 Insane Pools: Off The Deep End
19:15 Tanked
20:10 Dr. Dee: Alaska Vet
21:05 Dr. Jeff: Rocky Mountain Vet
22:00 Insane Pools: Off The Deep End
22:55 Wildest Latin America

crime & investigation network

00:00 The Jail Atlanta: 60 Days In
01:00 Fred Dinenage: Murder Casebook
02:00 I Didn't Do It
03:00 It Takes A Killer
04:00 The Jail Atlanta: 60 Days In
05:00 Fred Dinenage: Murder Casebook
06:00 Evil Up Close
08:00 The First 48
09:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
10:00 Leah Remini: Scientology And The Aftermath
14:00 The First 48
15:00 Crimes That Shook Australia
16:00 Evil Up Close
17:00 Homicide Hunter
18:00 Homicide Hunter
19:00 The First 48
20:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
21:00 Crimes That Shook Australia
22:00 My Haunted House
23:00 Paranormal State
23:30 Paranormal State

Discovery Family

0:30 Unchained Reaction
01:20 The Next Great Magician
02:10 Guinness World Records Smashed UK
03:00 Destroyed In Seconds
03:25 Destroyed In Seconds
03:50 Ultimate Survival
04:40 How It's Made
05:05 How It's Made
05:30 Dirty Jobs
06:20 Mythbusters
07:00 Doki
07:25 Kids vs Film
07:50 Bad Dog
08:40 How It's Made
09:05 How It's Made
09:30 Unchained Reaction
10:20 Mythbusters
11:10 Incredible Food Race
12:00 Incredible Food Race
12:50 Incredible Food Race
13:40 Incredible Food Race
14:30 Doki
14:55 Kids vs Film
15:20 Bad Dog
16:10 Unchained Reaction
17:00 Bondi Vet
17:50 Kings Of The Wild
18:40 Breaking Magic
19:05 Breaking Magic
19:30 How It's Made
19:55 How It's Made
20:20 Mythbusters
21:10 Bondi Vet
22:00 Kings Of The Wild
22:50 Destroyed In Seconds
23:15 Destroyed In Seconds
23:40 Ultimate Survival

ID

00:30 The Coroner: I Speak For The Dead
01:20 Is O.J. Innocent? The Missing Evidence
02:10 Grave Secrets
03:00 Adnan Syed: Innocent Or Guilty?
03:48 Unravelled
04:36 Unravelled
05:24 Unravelled
06:12 Unravelled
07:00 California Investigator
07:25 California Investigator
07:50 California Investigator
08:15 California Investigator
08:40 California Investigator
09:05 California Investigator
09:30 California Investigator
09:55 California Investigator
10:20 The Locator
10:45 The Locator
11:10 Betrayed
12:00 Unravelled
12:50 Unravelled
13:40 Unravelled
14:30 Unravelled
15:20 The Locator
15:45 The Locator
16:10 I'd Kill For You
17:00 I Almost Got Away With It
20:20 The Locator
20:45 The Locator
21:10 Love The Way You Lie
22:00 Murder Calls
22:50 Murder Chose Me
23:40 Grave Secrets

Disney Channel HD

00:00 Hank Zipzer
00:25 Alex & Co.
00:45 The Hive
00:50 Evermoor Chronicles
01:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
01:40 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
02:05 Binny And The Ghost
02:30 Binny And The Ghost
02:55 Hank Zipzer
03:15 The Hive
03:20 Hank Zipzer
03:45 Alex & Co.
04:10 Alex & Co.
04:35 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
05:00 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
05:25 Binny And The Ghost
05:45 The Hive
05:50 The 7D
06:00 Jessie
06:50 The Adventures Of Disney Fairies
07:15 Tsum Tsum Shorts
07:20 Elena Of Avalor
07:45 The Zhuzhus
08:10 Bizaardvark
08:35 Bunk'd
09:00 Stuck In The Middle
09:25 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
09:50 Best Friends Whenever
10:15 Liv And Maddie
10:40 Cheetah Girls: One World
12:15 Tangled Before Ever After Sneak Peek
12:20 Jessie
12:45 Jessie
13:10 Girl Meets World
13:35 Austin & Ally
14:00 Austin & Ally
14:25 Lolirock
14:50 The Zhuzhus
15:15 Whisker Haven Tales With The Palace Pets
15:20 Bizaardvark
15:45 Elena Of Avalor
16:10 Liv And Maddie
16:35 Tangled Before Ever After Sneak Peek
16:40 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
17:05 Stuck In The Middle
17:30 Bunk'd
17:55 Girl Meets World
18:20 Disney Mickey Mouse
18:25 Alex & Co.
18:50 Best Friends Whenever
19:15 Star Darlings
19:20 Liv And Maddie
19:45 Mako Mermaids
20:10 The Adventures Of Disney Fairies
20:35 Cracke
20:40 Bizaardvark
21:05 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
16:00 Disney Lights, Camera, Lexi!
16:05 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
16:50 PJ Masks
17:05 Doc McStuffins Toy Hospital
17:35 The Lion Guard
18:05 PJ Masks
18:35 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
19:05 Sofia The First
19:35 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
20:05 The Lion Guard
20:35 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
21:00 Goldie & Bear
21:25 Doc McStuffins
21:50 Minnie's Bow-Toons
22:00 Sofia The First

Discovery Channel HD

00:20 Wheeler Dealers
01:05 The Island With Bear Grylls
01:50 The Wheel: Survival Games
02:35 Running Wild With Bear Grylls
03:20 Fast N' Loud
04:05 Deadliest Job Interview
04:50 Gold Rush
05:35 How Do They Do It?
06:00 Gold Divers
06:45 Wheeler Dealers
07:30 Fast N' Loud
08:15 Deadliest Job Interview
09:00 Baggage Battles
09:25 How Do They Do It?
09:47 How Do They Do It?
10:10 The Island With Bear Grylls
10:55 The Wheel: Survival Games
11:40 Running Wild With Bear Grylls
12:25 How Do They Do It?
12:47 Baggage Battles
13:10 Gold Rush
13:55 Deadliest Job Interview
14:40 Gold Divers
15:25 Fast N' Loud
16:10 Wheeler Dealers
17:00 How Do They Do It?
17:25 How Do They Do It?
17:50 Baggage Battles
18:20 Storage Hunters
18:50 Deadliest Job Interview
19:40 How Do They Do It?
21:00 Blowing Up History
21:50 Strip The City
22:40 Made By Destruction

XD

06:00 Gravity Falls
06:25 Disney11
06:50 Supa Strikas
07:15 Right Now Kapow
07:40 Future-Worm!
08:05 Marvel's Rocket And Groot
08:10 K.C. Undercover
08:35 Milo Murphy's Law
09:00 Walk The Prank
09:25 Supa Strikas
09:50 Gravity Falls
10:15 Marvel's Rocket And Groot
10:20 K.C. Undercover
10:45 Right Now Kapow
11:10 Lab Rats
11:35 Mech-X4
12:00 Zapped
13:30 Milo Murphy's Law
13:45 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything

SPOOKS: THE GREATER GOOD ON OSN MOVIES ACTION HD

17:10 WAGs Miami
18:05 WAGs Miami
19:00 E! News
20:00 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian
21:00 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian
22:00 Famously Single

Food Network

00:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
00:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
01:00 Man Fire Food
01:30 Man Fire Food
02:00 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
08:00 The Pioneer Woman
08:30 The Pioneer Woman
09:00 Siba's Table
09:30 Siba's Table
10:00 The Pioneer Woman
10:30 The Pioneer Woman
11:00 The Kitchen
12:00 The Pioneer Woman
12:30 The Pioneer Woman
13:00 Siba's Table
13:30 Siba's Table
14:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
14:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
15:00 Chopped
16:00 The Kitchen
17:00 The Pioneer Woman
17:30 The Pioneer Woman
18:00 Chopped
19:00 Chopped Junior
20:00 Chopped
21:00 The Great Food Truck Race
22:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
22:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives

E! HD

00:05 WAGs Miami
00:55 WAGs Miami
01:50 E! News
02:50 Celebrity Style Story
03:20 Celebrity Style Story
03:50 So Cosmo
04:40 So Cosmo
05:30 Celebrity Style Story
06:00 Just Jillian
06:55 E! News
07:10 Just Jillian
08:10 E! News: Daily Pop
09:10 WAGs
10:05 WAGs
11:00 WAGs
12:00 E! News
12:15 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
13:10 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
14:05 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
15:00 E! News
15:15 E! News: Daily Pop
16:15 WAGs Miami

OSN Movies HD

00:40 While You Were Sleeping
02:20 Rocky III
04:00 The Walk
06:05 Ghostbusters II
08:15 Rocky III
10:00 X-Men: First Class
12:15 The Walk
14:25 The Invention Of Lying
16:10 Rocky IV
17:45 How Do You Know
19:45 Concussion
21:50 Mystic River

OSN Movies HD Comedy

01:05 Highland Park
02:40 Cheech & Chong's The Corsican Brothers
04:15 Other Plans
05:45 Confessions Of A Shopaholic
07:30 Hanging Up
09:05 Other Plans
10:35 Confessions Of A Shopaholic
12:20 Hanging Up
13:55 Hard Promises
15:30 Babe: Pig In The City
17:05 Overboard
18:55 Liberal Arts
20:30 Deuce Bigalow: Male Gigolo
22:00 Joe Dirt 2: Beautiful Loser
23:50 Puerto Ricans In Paris

OSN Movies Festival

02:00 Quiz Show
04:30 2001: A Space Odyssey
07:00 A Birder's Guide To Everything
08:30 Of Mice And Men
10:25 Fast Girls
12:05 Quiz Show
14:20 Before I Disappear
16:05 The Great Gatsby
18:35 Brooklyn
20:30 The Selfish Giant
22:00 Carol

OSN Movies HD Kids

00:35 Lego DC: Justice League Gotham City Breakout
01:55 Tom And Jerry: Back To Oz
03:20 Bee Movie
04:55 Frog Kingdom
06:25 Pooh's Heffalump Movie
07:35 Blue Elephant 2
09:15 Yugo & Lala 2
10:35 Bunny Tales
11:50 Lego DC: Justice League Gotham City Breakout
13:10 Tom And Jerry: Back To Oz
14:35 Mickey's Twice Upon A Christmas
15:50 Yugo & Lala 2
17:10 The Swan Princess: Pirate Today, Princess Tomorrow
18:35 Marco Macaco
19:55 Mickey's Twice Upon A Christmas
21:10 Blue Elephant 2
22:50 The Swan Princess: Pirate Today, Princess Tomorrow

OSN Movies HD Action

01:25 Diggstown
03:05 Star Wars: The Force Awakens
05:25 Momentum
07:05 Spooks: The Greater Good
08:50 Diggstown
10:30 Star Wars: The Force Awakens
12:50 Hitting The Apex
15:10 Spooks: The Greater Good
16:55 Licence To Kill
19:10 Escape
20:35 Mission: Impossible - Rogue Nation
22:50 Hardcore Henry

OSN Movies HD Family

01:05 Alone For Christmas
02:35 Herbie Fully Loaded
04:15 Brother Bear
05:40 High School Musical 3: Senior Year
07:35 Alone For Christmas
09:05 Home On The Range
10:25 Meet The Robinsons
12:00 Herbie Fully Loaded
13:40 Home On The Range
15:00 Mars Needs Moms
16:30 Pan
18:25 Eight Below
20:25 Beverly Hills Chihuahua
22:00 Mars Needs Moms
23:30 Eight Below

OSN First HD Comedy

00:25 The Middle
00:50 The Middle
01:20 High Maintenance
01:50 High Maintenance
02:20 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
03:10 Late Night With Seth Meyers
04:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
04:50 The Bill Engvall Show
05:15 Two And A Half Men
05:40 Brooklyn Nine-Nine
06:05 New Girl
06:30 The Bernie Mac Show
06:55 Men At Work
07:20 Late Night With Seth Meyers
08:10 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
09:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
09:50 The Bill Engvall Show
10:15 Two And A Half Men
10:40 The Bernie Mac Show
11:05 Men At Work
11:30 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
12:20 Seinfeld
12:45 Seinfeld
13:10 The Middle
13:35 The Middle
14:00 The Bill Engvall Show
14:25 Two And A Half Men
14:50 The Bernie Mac Show
15:15 Brooklyn Nine-Nine
15:40 New Girl
16:05 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
17:00 Seinfeld
17:30 Seinfeld
18:00 The Middle
18:30 The Middle
19:00 The Last Man On Earth
20:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon

Discovery Science

00:30 How Do They Do It?
00:55 Food Factory
01:20 Man v Expert
02:10 Extreme Engineering
03:00 Da Vinci's Machines
03:48 Mythbusters
04:36 How Do They Do It?
05:00 Food Factory
05:24 Man v Expert
06:12 Extreme Engineering
07:00 How Do They Do It?
07:26 Da Vinci's Machines
08:14 Mythbusters
09:02 Extreme Engineering
09:50 How Do They Do It?
10:14 Food Factory
10:38 Man v Expert
11:26 Da Vinci's Machines
12:14 Mythbusters
13:02 How Do They Do It?
13:26 Food Factory
13:50 Extreme Engineering
14:38 Da Vinci's Machines
15:26 Man v Expert
16:14 Mythbusters
17:02 Extreme Engineering
17:50 Weird Or What?
18:40 Mythbusters
19:30 Invent It Rich
20:20 Mosquito
21:35 How Do They Do It?
22:00 Invent It Rich
22:50 Weird Or What?
23:40 Mythbusters

Nickelodeon HD

00:12 Henry Danger
00:36 Get Blake
01:00 Sanjay And Craig
01:24 Rabbids Invasion
01:48 Breadwinners
02:12 SpongeBob SquarePants
02:36 SpongeBob SquarePants
03:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
03:24 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
03:48 Henry Danger
04:12 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
04:36 Breadwinners
05:00 Breadwinners
05:24 Game Shakers
05:48 100 Things To Do Before High School
06:12 SpongeBob SquarePants
06:36 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
07:00 The Loud House
07:24 Rabbids Invasion
07:48 Get Blake
08:12 Harvey Beaks
08:36 Sanjay And Craig
09:00 Rank The Prank
09:24 Henry Danger
09:48 100 Things To Do Before High School
10:12 Game Shakers
10:36 Regal Academy
11:00 Winx Club
11:24 SpongeBob SquarePants
11:48 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
12:12 The Loud House
12:36 Breadwinners
13:00 School Of Rock
13:24 Hunter Street
13:48 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
14:12 The Thundermans
14:36 Henry Danger
15:00 Jinxed
16:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
16:36 The Loud House
17:00 Regal Academy
17:24 Harvey Beaks
17:48 Hunter Street
18:12 Henry Danger
18:36 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
19:00 School Of Rock
19:24 Game Shakers
19:48 The Thundermans
20:12 SpongeBob SquarePants
20:36 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
21:00 The Loud House
21:24 Sanjay And Craig
21:48 Rabbids Invasion
22:12 Breadwinners
22:36 Harvey Beaks
23:00 100 Things To Do Before High School
23:24 Game Shakers

GHOSTBUSTERS II ON OSN MOVIES HD

History HD

00:20 Ronnie O'Sullivan's American Hustle
01:10 Alone
02:00 Swamp People
02:50 Storage Wars
03:15 American Pickers
04:05 Pawn Stars
05:00 Mountain Men
06:00 Lost In Transmission
06:50 Duck Dynasty
07:40 Counting Cars
08:30 Pawn Stars
09:20 Storage Wars
10:10 American Pickers
11:00 Pirate Treasure Of The Knights Templar
11:50 Duck Dynasty
12:40 Counting Cars
13:05 Counting Cars
13:30 Ice Road Truckers
14:20 Mountain Men
15:10 Lost In Transmission
16:00 Storage Wars
16:25 Storage Wars
16:50 Pawn Stars
17:40 Alone
18:30 Swamp People
19:20 Mountain Men
20:10 American Pickers
21:00 Detroit Steel
21:50 Forged In Fire
23:30 American Pickers

National Geographic Channel HD

00:10 Continent 7: Antarctica
01:00 Wicked Tuna: North vs South
02:00 Air Crash Investigation
03:00 Explorer
04:00 Continent 7: Antarctica
05:00 Showdown Of The Unbeatables
06:00 Science Of Stupid
07:00 Cesar To The Rescue Compilation
08:00 Evacuate Earth
09:00 Showdown Of The Unbeatables
10:00 Cesar Millan's Dog Nation
11:00 Invasion Earth

Nat Geo People HD

00:45 Places We Go
01:10 What's For Sale?
01:40 A Is For Apple
02:05 Ariana's Persian Kitchen
03:00 Rustic Adventure Argentina
03:30 Health Secrets Behind Korean Cuisine
04:25 A Is For Apple
04:50 Great Escapes
05:20 Island Hunter
06:15 What's For Sale?
07:10 A Is For Apple
07:35 Ariana's Persian Kitchen
08:05 Ariana's Persian Kitchen
08:30 Rustic Adventure Argentina
09:00 Health Secrets Behind Korean Cuisine
09:55 A Is For Apple
10:20 Great Escapes
10:50 Island Hunter
11:45 What's For Sale?
12:40 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
13:35 Maximum Foodie
14:30 Rustic Adventure Argentina
14:55 Rustic Adventure Argentina
15:25 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia
16:20 Island Hunter
17:15 What's For Sale?
17:40 What's For Sale?
18:10 Charlie Luxton's Homes By The Sea
19:05 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia
19:30 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia
20:00 Island Hunter
21:00 What's For Sale?
21:30 What's For Sale?
22:00 Charlie Luxton's Homes By The Sea

Disney Junior

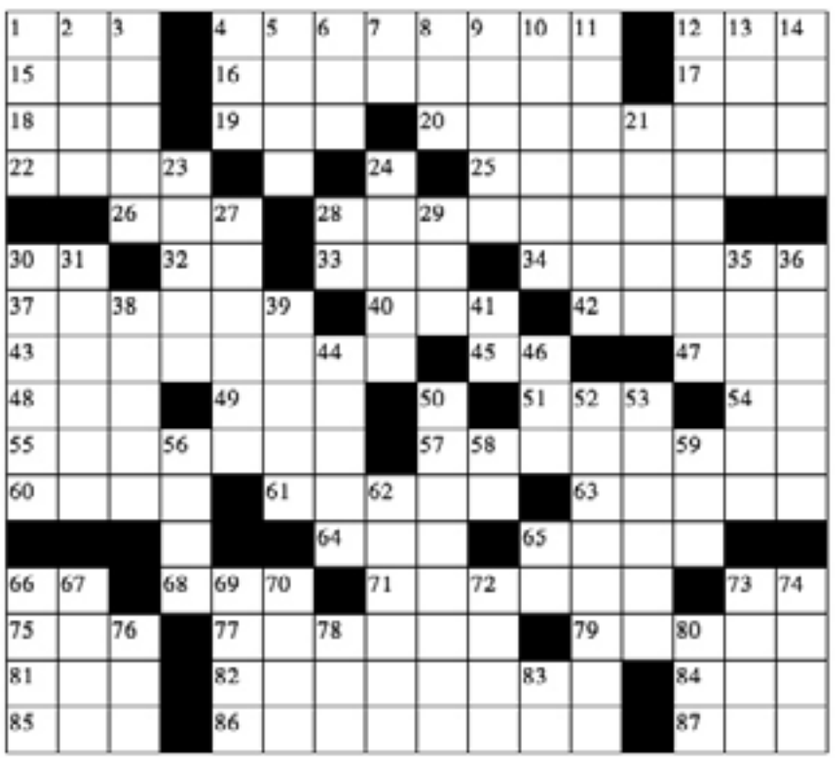
00:00 Henry Hugglemonster
00:15 Calimero
00:30 Art Attack
00:55 Zou
01:05 Loopdidoo
01:20 Henry Hugglemonster
01:35 Calimero
01:50 Zou
02:05 Art Attack
02:30 The Hive
02:40 Loopdidoo
02:55 Henry Hugglemonster
03:10 Art Attack
03:35 Loopdidoo
03:50 Calimero
04:05 Art Attack
04:30 Henry Hugglemonster
04:45 Zou
05:00 Art Attack
05:30 Henry Hugglemonster
05:45 Loopdidoo
06:00 Zou
06:15 Calimero
06:30 Loopdidoo
06:45 Henry Hugglemonster
07:00 Sofia The First
07:25 PJ Masks
07:50 The Lion Guard
08:15 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
08:40 Doc McStuffins
09:05 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
09:35 Disney Lights, Camera, Lexi!
09:40 Sofia The First: The Floatin Palace
10:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
11:00 PJ Masks
11:25 Goldie & Bear
11:50 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
12:15 Sofia The First
12:40 The Lion Guard
13:10 Doc McStuffins
13:35 PJ Masks
14:00 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
14:30 The Lion Guard
14:55 Unbungalievable
15:00 Goldie & Bear
15:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
14:10 Disney Mickey Mouse
14:15 Future-Worm!
14:40 Kirby Buckets
15:05 Lab Rats
15:30 Walk The Prank
15:55 Right Now Kapow
16:25 K.C. Undercover
16:50 Disney11
17:15 Mech-X4
17:40 Milo Murphy's Law
18:05 Disney Mickey Mouse
18:10 Gravity Falls
18:35 Lab Rats
19:00 Supa Strikas
19:25 Milo Murphy's Law
19:50 Marvel's Rocket And Groot
19:55 K.C. Undercover
20:20 Mech-X4
20:45 Disney11
21:10 Walk The Prank
21:35 Marvel's Rocket And Groot
21:40 Disney Mickey Mouse
21:45 Lab Rats
22:10 Lab Rats
22:35 Phineas And Ferb
23:00 Programmes Start At 6:00am KSA

itv hd Choice

00:10 Pick Me!
01:00 Emmerdale
01:30 Coronation Street
02:00 Coronation Street
02:30 Chopping Block
03:25 Grantchester
04:20 Doc Martin
05:15 Tonight At The London Palladium
06:10 Pick Me!
07:05 Chopping Block
08:00 Grantchester
09:00 Doc Martin
10:00 Tonight At The London Palladium
10:55 Pick Me!
11:50 Chopping Block
12:45 Emmerdale
13:15 Emmerdale
13:45 Coronation Street
14:15 Pick Me!
15:10 Chopping Block
16:00 This Is England '88
16:55 Lewis
17:50 Tonight At The London Palladium
18:45 Emmerdale
19:15 Emmerdale
19:45 Coronation Street
20:10 Chopping Block
21:00 This Is England '88
21:55 Lewis
22:50 Emmerdale

MEET THE ROBINSONS ON OSN MOVIES FAMILY HD

CROSSWORD 1657



ACROSS

1. Hawaiian dish of taro root pounded to a paste and often allowed to ferment.
4. A disorder of the lips marked by scaling and fissures at the corners of the mouth.
12. Counting the number of white and red blood cells and the number of platelets in 1 cubic millimeter of blood.
15. A drug combination found in some over-the-counter headache remedies (Aspirin and Phenacetin and Caffeine).
16. Marked by great carelessness.
17. A column of light (as from a beacon).
18. (usually followed by `to' or `for') On the point of or strongly disposed.
19. A belief (or system of beliefs) accepted as authoritative by some group or school.
20. Of a leaf or bean shape resembling the shape of kidney.
22. Any of a number of fishes of the family Carangidae.
25. Inability to stand due to muscular incoordination.
26. A unit of length of thread or yarn.
30. A state in north central United States.
32. A small pellet fired from an air rifle or BB gun.
33. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
34. An agency of the United Nations responsible for programs to aid education and the health of children and mothers in developing countries.
37. Distilled rather than fermented.
40. A workplace for the conduct of scientific research.
42. A benevolent aspect of Devi.
43. A game whose object is to form words from a group of randomly chosen letters.
45. A white metallic element that burns with a brilliant light.
47. Having a toe or toes of a specified kind.
48. Remaining after all deductions.
49. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
51. A bachelor's degree in theology.
54. A metric unit of volume equal to one tenth of a liter.
55. The father of your father or mother.
57. Struck with fear, dread, or consternation.
60. The time that has elapsed.
61. A heading that names a statute or legislative bill.
63. A partly sheltered anchorage.
64. A unit of surface area equal to 100 square meters.
66. A metallic element having four allotropic forms.
68. Not in operation or operational.
71. Forming or set at an angle.
75. The 19th letter of the Greek alphabet.
77. Type genus of the Alaudidae.
79. The eighth month of the civil year.
81. A defensive missile designed to shoot down incoming intercontinental ballistic missiles.
82. Succulent carpet-forming plant having small brilliant reddish-pink flowers.
84. The elementary stages of any subject (usually plural).
85. The cry made by sheep.
86. A great raja.
87. Large brownish-green New Zealand parrot.

DOWN

1. (football) Of advancing the ball by throwing it.
2. An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the sale of petroleum.
3. Of or relating to a seizure or convulsion.
4. A unit of pressure.
5. Other than what is under consideration or implied.
6. The shape of a raised edge of a more or less circular object.
7. A long-playing phonograph record.
8. The rate at which red blood cells settle out in a tube of blood under standardized conditions.
9. Relatively low in price or charging low prices.
10. The largest of the four main islands of Japan.
11. Putting something (as a literary work) into publishable form.
12. Cut or used for cutting crosswise or across the grain.
13. Capital city of the Apulia region on the Adriatic coast.
14. (classical architecture) A molding for a cornice.
21. A sheet or band of fibrous connective tissue separating or binding together muscles and organs etc.
23. Locate and correct errors in a computer program code.
24. A mountain range in western Russia extending from the arctic to the Caspian Sea.
27. Away from the mouth or oral region.
28. A rare silvery (usually trivalent) metallic element.
29. A constellation in the southern hemisphere near Telescopium and Norma.
31. Informal terms for money.
35. Worn away as by water or ice or wind.
36. United States comedian and film actor (1880-1946).
38. An Arab country on the peninsula of Qatar.
39. The capital of Morocco.
41. Date used in reckoning dates before the supposed year Christ was born.
44. Genus of sticky herbs with yellow flowers open in morning or evening but closed in bright light.
46. A nucleotide derived from adenosine that occurs in muscle tissue.
50. A system of timekeeping that defines the beginning and length and divisions of the year.
52. A city in northwestern Somalia.
53. Having or covered with or accompanied by blood.
56. (Babylonian) God of wisdom and agriculture and patron of scribes and schools.
58. The 17th letter of the Hebrew alphabet.
59. The act of slowing down or falling behind.
62. Any physical damage to the body caused by violence or accident or fracture etc..
65. A silvery ductile metallic element found primarily in bauxite.
67. A small cake leavened with yeast.
69. Found on a farm.
70. Any wingless blood-sucking parasitic insect noted for ability to leap.
72. (Greek mythology) Goddess of the earth and mother of Cronus and the Titans in ancient mythology.
73. A very young child (birth to 1 year) who has not yet begun to walk or talk.
74. Type genus of the family Arcidae.
76. A benevolent aspect of Devi.
78. Hormone secreted by the posterior pituitary gland (trade name Pitressin) and also by nerve endings in the hypothalamus.
80. Noisy talk.
83. A person who announces and plays popular recorded music.

Yesterday's Solution

F	T	P		A	T	A	K	A	P	A		A	N	A	S
T	O	E		B	A	L	A	G	A	N		B	A	N	E
H	E	A	P		K	A	R	E	N		R	A	I	T	A
M	A	R	A	C	A		M	E	G			S	A	I	L
			N	P		B	A		A	C	N	E	D		
T	A	E	G	U		E		H	E	R	A			P	S
O	G	R	E		D	A	B		A	I		E	C	H	T
M	O	S	A	N		D	A	T		M	O	R	A	L	E
B	U	T		I			B	A	K	E		A	B	O	R
A	T		C	C		K	A	L	I	A	N		B	E	E
K	I	C	H	A	G	A		C	E		A	L	A	M	O
			A	D	E	N			V	A	G	A	L		
A	L	A	R		E	N	I	D		K	A	W	A	K	A
K	E	B	A	B		A	R	U	B	A		M		I	R
H	O	B		P	E	D	I	C	A	B		A	I	D	E
A	N	E		H	A	A	S	T	I	A		N	A	D	A

STAR TRACK

Aries (March 21-April 19)

You are concerned with performing your job well and are stable in your ways of moving forward. You resist change and may have trouble getting started with initiating changes, but once on the move you can be unyielding. You may mistrust that which is new or untried. Given time, you will become more confident and trusting as well as understanding. You are a good employee and eventually you will be given more and more responsibility-just be a little more patient with yourself. Listen to your intuition-it is strong and can guide you accurately in making decisions. You know and understand more than you realize; others may experience growth quickly but will forget the basics; you are a strong worker and will teach the basics. You are an important asset.

Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Decisions made now may have to be rethought later; take your time with how you think you want to proceed on some project. You are a heavy-duty thinker and serious student, always ready to work an idea through, reducing it to what is essential. You enjoy mental efforts and discipline and will often work long and hard toward any project's end result. Teaching opportunities give you a way to coach others and see the positive results. You enjoy working with other people and may pour a lot of energy into helping those around you. Your home and surroundings reflect this as well. When it comes to educating young people, you are a natural and may be asked to motivate and inspire. Tonight could be a socially active evening.

Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You are able to act quickly and get things accomplished fast. You may find people coming to you for those odd jobs that nobody wants and that need to be completed and out of the way. You may like to be depended on in this way but it could cause some stressful moments in getting your own work accomplished. So that others will respect your time, you must learn to politely say no, occasionally. Your organizational abilities and sense of responsibility will be what guides you and proves successful. Your career could assume a much more determined and solid form. You naturally are a giving person, sacrificing your own interests for the sake of what you feel is right. A born psychologist, you may find yourself counseling a friend this evening.

Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You may find yourself very appreciative of your own career and practical skills. You might enjoy solving puzzles and technical problems-finding solutions. There is a renewed appreciation for your work that may be apparent to your superiors and to everybody. Put your back into whatever needs accomplishing today. You will be pleased at the outcome of your efforts. Circumstances may stimulate and encourage an appreciation and enjoyment of your life situation. Your system of values may deepen, providing you with a better sense of discrimination and good taste. Purchasing, selecting colors, etc., are easy for you. Plans to redecorate or perhaps, add a room or new entry to your existing home are looking like a done deal.

Leo (July 23-August 22)

It may be hard to organize or persevere today. Everything may seem to be falling apart and coming unglued. Do not force things. A little note-taking can bring the plans for the day back into focus. Be patient and let the chaos of others dissolve. It is time to dive into your work now-you seem to shine when it comes to practical matters or those involving work and career. You have an easy way with superiors or those in authority and can always manage to get the most out of any skill or ability you have. You may tend to fear that others find you too sense-oriented from time to time. You radiate energy and have to just accept the fact that people like to feel your warmth. Enjoy the attention you receive from your loved ones this evening.

Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You enjoy working hard and being organized and you exercise skill and discipline in anything that affects your career and reputation. Today you will enjoy working in the environment where higher-ups show off their independence and originality. You could find yourself engaged in nonconformist causes, always ready to promote what is independent and innovative. You like radical approaches and may find yourself in support of whatever new-wave product or breakthrough advance is next in line. Communication, computers, electronics and everything new excite you and these are the areas in which you excel now. You may discover new ways of working with traditional materials. This is a great time to reflect. Enjoy a walk this evening.

Libra (September 23-October 22)

Someone could challenge you on a very sensitive issue this day. This could result in a very intense discussion. You may find yourself analyzing a situation. Too much time spent in serious thought could undermine your progress. Lighten up! Tell some jokes and enjoy the company of others. Soon, you will find the most sensitive issues can be put to rest. You may become very interested in research surrounding life survival, scientific research or what have you. There is a passion for searching, finding out and communicating your discoveries. This may turn out to be a very interesting day with perhaps a renewed appreciation for all that is beautiful and fine. There is a time of meditation when that first sip of wine or a little evening refreshment is quite relaxing.

Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Things are happening, and your career or path depends upon your own ambition and drive, which can be quite strong now. There could be some discussions over business affairs but a compromise can be reached. Learn better time management by briefly monitoring your use of time. Schedule tasks so that they serve your larger goals and are achievable in time and circumstances. Build some time for breaks and rewards into your schedule. Leave some space for regular and periodic review. Last, but not least, provide time for exercise and relaxation as well as sleep and nourishment. Strength, perseverance and an attitude that emphasizes common sense will also enable you to help make proper decisions in family matters.

Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Your ability to work more efficiently with others eventually enables you to achieve even bigger and more encompassing goals. As a good detective or research person, you will find yourself having a passion for answers. Questioning and searching finds you in pursuit of some piece of useful information. It could only be that an accounting problem is solved. You enjoy a game of team sports this afternoon. When you are not involved in sports, create for yourself a regular period of vigorous exercise-and then use exercise to drain off tension. This evening you may want to dive into some interesting philosophical ideas with a love partner. Cultivate methods that enable you to get enough good sleep-wind down first, perhaps with a bit of relaxing music.

Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

You have a relentless drive to get at the heart of things this Wednesday, whatever is under the surface or behind the scenes. Your relentless pursuit of anything hidden or secret makes you a researcher or investigator bar none. Emotionally, you are also hot stuff, rushing into areas and handling subject matters that others would never come near. You may not like displays of emotion and pushy people, or at least find them challenging and thought-provoking. There is not much to slow your progress, however, and by this afternoon you are moving forward with your professional activities at full speed ahead. This evening is a good time to have a long talk with your partner about your future plans. You may decide on a new budget at this time.

Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

The word for today is accomplishment. If there is a job, you can do it. As a prodigious worker, you pour yourself into any task with absolute determination. You are responsible to the extreme and take on obligations as though you just cannot get enough. You enjoy discipline and limitations are seen as opportunities rather than handicaps. Home and family matters can play a big part in your life. Relatives take on greater importance than ever before. You are pleased with the results of your efforts and may busy yourself making new plans with family. This may mean a game of golf, a tennis match, camping, or some other activity. Music plays an important role and you enjoy photography, especially to capture the moments of family time.

Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Take a little trip, or get outside. You may want to break that routine and take a little walking exercise around the area where you work. Sometime today you may discover insights into day-to-day problems that will be of great value later. The encircling networks of friends and co-workers are crucial to your success. You are nourished in great measure by the atmosphere and conditions you are able to set up for yourself. You are happiest this afternoon as you accomplish your chores and improve your surroundings. All that is fine and luxurious may be what you enjoy most. You are very much the creature of habit and habitat as you go about making your own way and finding solutions to whatever problems may come about. Tonight is for romance.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Human Skeleton & Organs

Find and circle all of the skeletal parts and body organs that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell a secret message.

Note: TARSALS and METATARSALS are hidden separately and do not overlap. The same goes for CARPALS and METACARPALS, and BLADDER and GALLBLADDER.

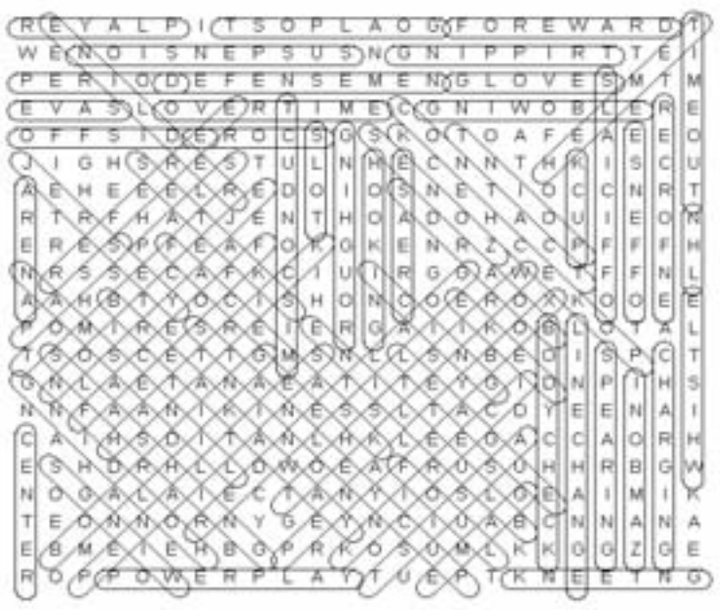
X	Y	C	C	O	C	P	S	S	P	T	S	H	E	R	A	V
S	E	R	A	G	A	L	E	P	S	A	E	F	E	M	U	R
A	T	E	H	T	A	G	M	L	U	U	N	V	M	A	N	A
N	D	E	E	P	N	U	E	E	V	O	I	C	E	B	O	X
L	L	L	R	A	T	S	T	E	K	L	T	D	R	E	L	E
U	L	A	L	N	E	T	A	N	O	N	S	M	A	E	T	M
A	C	A	S	S	U	T	T	E	H	A	E	S	L	R	A	T
W	H	R	T	U	A	M	A	O	L	T	T	U	H	N	R	S
P	X	E	O	R	I	H	R	N	A	C	N	U	D	F	S	N
S	I	D	M	E	B	E	S	C	I	G	I	I	B	I	A	V
C	D	D	A	M	I	A	A	B	S	M	B	V	R	B	L	E
A	N	A	C	U	T	R	L	D	I	L	O	R	A	U	S	R
P	E	L	H	H	P	T	S	E	E	R	D	N	I	L	A	T
U	P	B	A	A	N	C	R	A	N	I	U	M	N	A	C	E
L	P	D	L	N	I	K	S	Y	E	N	D	I	K	I	R	B
A	A	S	R	E	D	D	A	L	B	L	L	A	G	S	U	R
I	X	B	O	S	L	A	T	I	N	E	G	N	E	S	M	A

Skeleton:
- CARPALS
- CLAVICLE
- COCCYX
- CRANIUM
- FEMUR
- FIBULA
- HUMERUS
- INNOMINATE
- MANDIBLE
- METACARPALS
- METATARSALS
- PATELLA
- PHALANGES
- RADIUS
- RIBS
- SACRUM
- SCAPULA
- STERNUM
- TARSALS
- TIBIA
- ULNA
- VERTEBRA

Organs:
- APPENDIX
- BLADDER
- BRAIN
- GALLBLADDER
- GENITALS
- HEART
- INTESTINES
- KIDNEYS
- LIVER
- LUNGS
- PANCREAS
- SKIN
- SPLEEN
- STOMACH
- VOICE BOX

Yesterday's Solution

Hockey



ARENA, ASSIST, BLUE LINE, BOARDING, BOARDS, BODY CHECK, BREAKAWAY, CENTER, CHARGING, CONTACT, CREASE, DEFENSEMEN, DEKE, EJECTION, ELBOWING, ENFORCER, FACE MASK, FACE-OFF, FOREWARD, FOUL, GAME, GLOVES, GOALPOST, GOALTENDER, HAT TRICK, HELMET, HOLDING, HOOKING, ICE RINK, ICING, JERSEY, KNEEING, LEAGUE, LINE CHANGE, LINESMAN, MISCONDUCT, NHL, OFFENSE, OFFICIALS, OFFSIDE, OVERTIME, PASS, PENALTIES, PENALTY BOX, PERIOD, PLAYER, POINT, POKE CHECK, POWER PLAY, PUCK, RED LINE, REFEREE, ROUGHING, SAVE, SCORE, SKATES, SLAPSHOT, SLASHING, SLOT, SPEARING, STANLEY CUP, SUSPENSION, TIME-OUT, TRIPPING, WHISTLE, WINGS, WRIST SHOT, ZAMBONI, ZONES

Hidden sentence: I WENT TO A FIGHT THE OTHER NIGHT, AND A HOCKEY GAME BROKE OUT

Daily SuDoku

	4	3						1
	5	9	1					
8					3		6	
	3	6		8				
9	7			5			2	6
				7		9	3	
	6		7					3
					2	5	4	
5						6	7	

Yesterday's Solution

1	2	9	7	3	4	8	5	6
7	4	6	5	8	9	1	3	2
5	8	3	1	2	6	4	9	7
6	7	5	9	4	2	3	8	1
8	1	4	3	6	7	5	2	9
3	9	2	8	1	5	6	7	4
9	5	8	6	7	1	2	4	3
2	6	7	4	5	3	9	1	8
4	3	1	2	9	8	7	6	5

CLASSIFIEDS

Kuwait Times

WEDNESDAY, JULY 12, 2017

Kuwait CINEMA

KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (06/07/2017 TO 12/07/2017)

SHARQIA-1

PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: Dead Men Tell No Tales	11:30 AM
DESPICABLE ME 3	2:00 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3	4:00 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3	6:00 PM
TUBELIGHT (Hindi)	8:00 PM
THE MUMMY	10:45 PM
THE MUMMY	1:00 AM

SHARQIA-2

DESPICABLE ME 3	11:45 AM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	1:45 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	4:30 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	7:15 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	10:00 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	12:45 AM

SHARQIA-3

SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	11:30 AM
KHAMMIS & JUMMA (Horoob Ejbary)	2:30 PM
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: Dead Men Tell No Tales	5:00 PM
TISBAH ALA KHAIR	7:45 PM
TISBAH ALA KHAIR	9:45 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	11:45 PM

MUHALAB-1

TUBELIGHT (Hindi)	12:00 PM
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: Dead Men Tell No Tales	2:45 PM
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: Dead Men Tell No Tales	5:15 PM
TUBELIGHT (Hindi)	7:45 PM
THE MUMMY	10:30 PM
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: Dead Men Tell No Tales	12:45 AM

MUHALAB-2

DESPICABLE ME 3	11:30 AM
TISBAH ALA KHAIR	1:30 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3	1:30 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3	3:30 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3	5:30 PM
TISBAH ALA KHAIR	7:30 PM
TISBAH ALA KHAIR	9:30 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	11:30 PM

MUHALAB-3

SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	1:00 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3	1:45 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	3:45 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	6:30 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	9:15 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	12:15 AM

FANAR-1

TISBAH ALA KHAIR	11:30 AM
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: Dead Men Tell No Tales	1:30 PM
THE MUMMY	4:15 PM
MOM - HINDI	6:30 PM
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: Dead Men Tell No Tales	9:30 PM
THE MUMMY	12:15 AM

FANAR-2

SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	12:45 PM
TISBAH ALA KHAIR	3:30 PM
KHAMMIS & JUMMA (Horoob Ejbary)	5:30 PM
TISBAH ALA KHAIR	8:15 PM
TISBAH ALA KHAIR	10:15 PM
TISBAH ALA KHAIR	12:30 AM

FANAR-3

TUBELIGHT (Hindi)	11:30 AM
TAFASH WE ARB3EEN HARAMI	2:15 PM
TUBELIGHT (Hindi)	4:15 PM
TAFASH WE ARB3EEN HARAMI	7:00 PM
TUBELIGHT (Hindi)	9:00 PM
TAFASH WE ARB3EEN HARAMI	12:05 AM

FANAR-4

DESPICABLE ME 3	11:45 AM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	1:45 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	4:30 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	7:15 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	10:00 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	12:45 AM

FANAR-5

DESPICABLE ME 3	2:00 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3	3:00 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3	5:00 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3	7:00 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	9:00 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	11:45 PM

MARINA-1

SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	12:00 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	2:45 PM
TISBAH ALA KHAIR	5:30 PM
TISBAH ALA KHAIR	7:30 PM
TISBAH ALA KHAIR	9:30 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	11:30 PM

MARINA-2

DESPICABLE ME 3	11:30 AM
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: Dead Men Tell No Tales	1:30 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3	4:00 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3	6:00 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3	8:00 PM
THE MUMMY	10:00 PM
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: Dead Men Tell No Tales	12:15 AM

MARINA-3

TISBAH ALA KHAIR	11:30 AM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	1:30 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	4:15 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	7:00 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	9:45 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	12:30 AM

AVENUES-1

TUBELIGHT (Hindi)	12:45 PM
TRANSFORMERS: The Last Knight	3:30 PM
TUBELIGHT (Hindi)	6:30 PM
TUBELIGHT (Hindi)	9:15 PM
KHAMMIS & JUMMA (Horoob Ejbary)	12:05 AM

AVENUES-2

SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	11:45 AM
DESPICABLE ME 3 -3D-4DX	2:30 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING -3D-4DX	4:30 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3 -3D-4DX	7:15 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING -3D-4DX	9:15 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING -3D-4DX	12:05 AM

AVENUES-3

TISBAH ALA KHAIR	11:30 AM
TISBAH ALA KHAIR	1:30 PM
TISBAH ALA KHAIR	3:30 PM
KHAMMIS & JUMMA (Horoob Ejbary)	5:30 PM
TISBAH ALA KHAIR	8:00 PM
TISBAH ALA KHAIR	10:00 PM
TISBAH ALA KHAIR	12:15 AM

AVENUES-4

DESPICABLE ME 3	1:00 PM
Special Show "TUBELIGHT (Hindi)"	11:30 AM
TUBELIGHT (Hindi)	3:00 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3	5:45 PM
Special Show "THE MUMMY"	5:30 PM
TUBELIGHT (Hindi)	7:45 PM
TISBAH ALA KHAIR	10:30 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	12:30 AM

AVENUES-5

SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	12:00 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING -3D	2:45 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	5:30 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING -3D	8:15 PM
Special Show "SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING"	8:15 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	11:00 PM

AVENUES-6

DESPICABLE ME 3	11:30 AM
DESPICABLE ME 3	1:30 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3	3:30 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3	5:30 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3	7:30 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3	9:30 PM
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: Dead Men Tell No Tales	11:30 PM

360°- 1

DESPICABLE ME 3	12:30 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3 (3D)	2:30 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3	4:30 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3 (3D)	6:30 PM
Premiere Show "War For the planet of the Apes"	8:30 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3	8:30 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3	10:30 PM
TRANSFORMERS: The Last Knight	12:30 AM

360°- 2

TAFASH WE ARB3EEN HARAMI	11:30 AM
TAFASH WE ARB3EEN HARAMI	1:30 PM
TAFASH WE ARB3EEN HARAMI	3:30 PM
TAFASH WE ARB3EEN HARAMI	5:30 PM
TAFASH WE ARB3EEN HARAMI	7:30 PM
TAFASH WE ARB3EEN HARAMI	9:30 PM
TAFASH WE ARB3EEN HARAMI	11:30 PM

360°- 3

TUBELIGHT (Hindi)	12:00 PM
TUBELIGHT (Hindi)	2:45 PM
MOM - HINDI	5:45 PM
TUBELIGHT (Hindi)	8:45 PM
TUBELIGHT (Hindi)	11:45 PM

AL-KOUT.1

DESPICABLE ME 3	11:45 AM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	1:45 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	4:30 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	7:15 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	10:00 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	12:45 AM

AL-KOUT.2

KHAMMIS & JUMMA (Horoob Ejbary)	12:00 PM
TISBAH ALA KHAIR	2:45 PM
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: Dead Men Tell No Tales	4:45 PM
TISBAH ALA KHAIR	7:30 PM
KHAMMIS & JUMMA (Horoob Ejbary)	9:30 PM
TISBAH ALA KHAIR	12:05 AM

AL-KOUT.3

SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	12:15 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3	3:00 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3	5:00 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3	7:00 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	9:00 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	11:45 PM

AL-KOUT.4

TAFASH WE ARB3EEN HARAMI	11:30 AM
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: Dead Men Tell No Tales	1:30 PM
THE MUMMY	4:00 PM
TAFASH WE ARB3EEN HARAMI	6:15 PM
TAFASH WE ARB3EEN HARAMI	8:15 PM
TAFASH WE ARB3EEN HARAMI	10:15 PM
THE MUMMY	12:15 AM

BAIRAQ-1

DESPICABLE ME 3 (3D)	11:30 AM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	1:30 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING -3D	4:15 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	7:00 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING -3D	9:45 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	12:30 AM

BAIRAQ-2

PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: Dead Men Tell No Tales	11:30 AM
DESPICABLE ME 3	2:00 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3	4:00 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3	6:00 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3	8:00 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3	10:00 PM
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: Dead Men Tell No Tales	12:05 AM

BAIRAQ-3

TISBAH ALA KHAIR	12:00 PM
TISBAH ALA KHAIR	2:00 PM
KHAMMIS & JUMMA (Horoob Ejbary)	4:00 PM
TUBELIGHT (Hindi)	6:30 PM
TISBAH ALA KHAIR	9:15 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	11:15 PM

SITUATION WANTED

Accountant holding qualifications of ACCA, MBA Finance and B.Com, with 8 years of experience in Kuwait, looking for suitable job in reputed Audit Firms, Investment companies or Islamic banks. Contact: 55829223, email: acconline@ymail.com **(C 5324) 9-7-2017**

FOR SALE

Toyota Camry 2008, single driven 210000 KMs, good condition. Honda CRV 1999, lady driven 136000 KMs, good condition. Contact: 99535898. **(C 5326) 9-7-2017**

MATRIMONIAL

Suitable alliance invited from the parents of God fearing bride preferably engineers for a Keralite Christian boy (mechanical engineer 27 years) from an aristocratic Christian Orthodox family. Who is employed at Kuwait in a reputed company. Please Contact: mavilareji@gmail.com **(C 5327) 9-7-2017**

PRAYER TIMINGS

Fajr:	03:23
Shorook:	04:57
Duhr:	11:53
Asr:	15:28
Maghrib:	18:50
Isha:	20:21

Flight Schedule

Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page (www.kuwait-airport.com.kw)

DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Wednesay 12/7/2017

Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
THY	772	Istanbul	00:10
JZR	513	Sharm el-Sheikh	00:15
KAC	786	Jeddah	00:30
JZR	267	Beirut	00:35
KAC	102	London	00:55
DLH	635	Doha	01:00
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:15
JZR	539	Cairo	01:20
SYR	343	Damascus	01:30
MSR	618	Alexandria	01:35
UAE	853	Dubai	01:40
RJA	642	Amman	01:45
THY	1464	Istanbul	01:50
KKK	6506	Istanbul	01:55
KLM	446	Bahrain	02:05
QTR	1086	Doha	02:10
PGT	830	Istanbul	02:10
JZR	553	Alexandria	02:10
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:15
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15
AEE	942	ATH	02:25
THY	1404	AYT	02:30
KAC	418	Manila	02:50
THY	752	Istanbul	03:05
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:10
RJA	644	Amman	03:10
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15
FDB	069	Dubai	03:15
KAC	382	Delhi	03:15
QTR	1076	Doha	03:45
KAC	544	Cairo	03:50
KAC	796	Madinah	03:55
QTR	1090	Doha	04:05
RBG	559	Alexandria	04:10
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	04:15
UAE	873	Dubai	04:15
KAC	358	Kochi	04:50
KAC	784	Jeddah	05:00
FEG	931	Alexandria	05:00
THY	770	Istanbul	05:05
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:10
KAC	344	Chennai	05:30
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:40
KAC	362	Colombo	05:50
BAW	157	London	06:05
KAC	1802	Cairo	06:35
KAC	206	Islamabad	06:40
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:50
KAC	302	Mumbai	06:55
KAC	678	Dubai	06:55
KAC	156	Istanbul	07:05
JZR	1541	Cairo	07:10
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50
KAC	384	Delhi	08:00
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	08:55
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00
IRC	6511	ABD	09:10
QTR	1070	Doha	09:25
IRA	665	Shiraz	09:25
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40
IRM	1188	Mashhad	09:55
MSC	415	Sohag	10:15
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40
MEA	404	Beirut	10:55
SYR	341	Damascus	11:00
QTR	1074	Doha	11:00
AXB	889	Mangalore/Bahrain	11:05
JZR	561	Sohag	11:10
KAC	614	Bahrain	11:15
AZQ	4565	GYD	11:30
KAC	742	Dammam	11:45
JZR	165	Dubai	11:50
IRC	526	Mashhad	11:55
IAW	157	Al Najaf	12:00
JZR	239	Amman	12:25
KAC	774	Riyadh	12:45
UAE	871	Dubai	12:45
FEG	953	Asyut	12:55
THY	766	Istanbul	13:00
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00
WAN	954	GYD	13:00
KAC	514	Tehran	13:10
KAC	662	Abu Dhabi	13:15
CLX	792	Luxembourg	13:15
KAC	672	Dubai	13:55
IRC	6521	Lamerd	14:00
QTR	1078	Doha	14:10
KNE	231	Riyadh	14:10
SVA	500	Jeddah	14:15
GFA	221	Bahrain	14:15
KAC	364	Colombo	14:15
KAC	618	Doha	14:20
FDB	059	Dubai	14:20
KAC	540	Sharm el-Sheikh	14:35
JZR	357	Mashhad	14:50
KAC	304	Mumbai	14:55
KAC	692	Muscat	14:55
KNE	529	Jeddah	14:55
KAC	788	Jeddah	14:55
ETD	303	Abu Dhabi	15:05
KNE	683	Madinah	15:05
KAC	562	Amman	15:10
OMA	645	Muscat	15:10
KAC	502	Beirut	15:25
KAC	412	Bangkok	15:30
ABY	127	Sharjah	15:35
UAE	857	Dubai	15:45
SVA	504	Madinah	16:00
RJA	640	Amman	16:00
MSR	575	Sharm el-Sheikh	16:10
QTR	1072	Doha	16:15
FDB	051	Dubai	16:15
JZR	535	Cairo	16:20
KAC	118	New York	16:25
JZR	787	Riyadh	16:35
JZR	358	Mashhad	16:35
NIA	361	Alexandria	16:50
SAW	705	Damascus	16:50
KAC	542	Cairo	17:05
SVA	510	Riyadh	17:15
GFA	215	Bahrain	17:30
JZR	777	Jeddah	17:35
JZR	177	Dubai	17:45
QTR	1080	Doha	18:10
MSR	620	Cairo	18:30
JZR	483	Istanbul	18:30
KAC	512	Mashhad	18:40
UAE	875	Dubai	19:05
GFA	217	Bahrain	19:05
FDB	063	Dubai	19:10
ABY	123	Sharjah	19:20
KAC	154	Istanbul	19:30
KAC	616	Bahrain	19:40
KAC	674	Dubai	19:40
KAC	776	Riyadh	19:50
FDB	057	Dubai	19:50
KAC	104	London	20:00
OMA	647	Muscat	20:05
KAC	618	Doha	20:05
KNE	381	Taif	20:10
DLH	634	Frankfurt	20:15
MEA	402	Beirut	20:15
JZR	189	Dubai	20:25
QTR	1088	Doha	20:40
KAC	564	Amman	21:00
KAC	172	Frankfurt	21:05
JZR	1443	Doha	21:05
ETD	307	Abu Dhabi	21:10
KLM	445	Amsterdam	21:15
ALK	229	Colombo	21:15
UAE	859	Dubai	21:15
THY	764	Istanbul	21:30
GFA	219	Bahrain	21:50
QTR	1082	Doha	22:05
ETD	309	Abu Dhabi	22:10
JZR	125	Bahrain	22:15
AIC	975	Chennai/Goa	22:25
BBC	043	Dhaka	22:30
JZR	241	Amman	22:55
RBG	551	Alexandria	23:00
JZR	185	Dubai	23:00
RBG	555	Alexandria	23:25
MSR	2614	Cairo	23:30
FDB	071	Dubai	23:35
PIA	239	Sialkot	23:40

Departure Flights on Wednesay 12/7/2017

Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
AIC	988	Hyderabad/Chennai	00:05
JZR	1540	Cairo	00:20
JAI	573	Mumbai	00:30
MSR	2615	Cairo	00:30
MSC	406	Sohag	00:30
FDB	072	Dubai	00:30
THY	773	Istanbul	01:40
KAC	363	Colombo	01:55
DLH	635	Frankfurt	02:00
KAC	677	Dubai	02:15
SYR	344	Damascus	02:30
PGT	859	Istanbul	02:35
MSR	619	Alexandria	02:35
THY	765	Istanbul	02:50
KKK	6505	Istanbul	02:55
ETH	621	Addis Ababa	03:05
AEE	943	ATH	03:15
UAE	854	Dubai	03:30
KLM	446	Amsterdam	03:30
RJA	645	Amman	03:55
THY	753	Istanbul	04:00
OMA	644	Muscat	04:05
QTR	1087	Doha	04:10
ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:10
MSR	613	Cairo	04:15
KAC	417	Manila	04:20
PGT	831	Istanbul	04:20
JZR	560	Sohag	04:45
KAC	103	London	05:00
RBG	550	lexandria	05:00
QTR	1091	Doha	05:05
QTR	1077	Doha	05:35
KAC	303	Mumbai	05:50
FEG	954	Asyut	05:55
THY	1465	Istanbul	06:00
PGT	4781	Istanbul	06:15
UAE	874	Dubai	06:15
RJA	643	Amman	06:25
THY	771	Istanbul	06:25
GFA	212	Bahrain	06:50
JZR	238	Amman	07:00
FDB	070	Dubai	07:05
KAC	171	Frankfurt	07:50
KAC	501	Beirut	07:50
KAC	613	Bahrain	07:55
WAN	983	GYD	08:15
BAW	156	London	08:20
KAC	741	Dammam	08:30
KAC	773	Riyadh	08:35
KAC	539	Sharm el-Sheikh	08:40
KAC	513	Tehran	08:45
KAC	661	Abu Dhabi	08:45
JZR	356	Mashhad	09:00
KAC	101	London	09:00
AAG	146	IQA	09:00
KAC	117	New York	09:15
KAC	787	Jeddah	09:15
KAC	671	Dubai	09:15
JZR	534	Cairo	09:30
KAC	561	Amman	09:30
KAC	691	Muscat	09:30
JZR	482	Istanbul	09:40
ABY	126	Sharjah	09:40
UAE	856	Dubai	09:50
KAC	541	Cairo	10:00
ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	10:00
IRC	6522	Lamerd	10:00
KAC	617	Doha	10:15
IRA	664	Shiraz	10:25
KAC	153	Istanbul	10:30
QTR	1071	Doha	10:35
FDB	056	Dubai	10:35
JZR	359	Mashhad	10:45
IRM	1189	Mashhad	11:10
MSC	416	Sohag	11:15
GFA	214	Bahrain	11:35
MEA	405	Beirut	11:55
JZR	776	Jeddah	12:00
VIZ	203	TQD	12:00
SYR	342	Latakia	12:00
AXB	890	Mangalore	12:05
QTR	1075	Doha	12:10
KAC	511	Mashhad	12:45
IRC	527	Mashhad	12:55
IAW	158	Al Najaf	13:00
JZR	176	Dubai	13:10
AZQ	4721	Dubai	13:30
FEG	932	Alexandria	13:55
THY	767	Istanbul	13:55
MSR	611	Cairo	14:00
UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
CLX	792	Hanoi	14:30
IRC	6512	ABD	14:50
KAC	673	Dubai	15:00
KNE	382	Taif	15:00
GFA	222	Bahrain	15:00
FDB	060	Dubai	15:05
QTR	1079	Doha	15:15
KAC	563	Amman	15:40
SVA	501	Jeddah	15:45
JZR	188	Dubai	15:50
KNE	530	Jeddah	15:55
KNE	684	Madinah	16:00
KAC	619	Doha	16:00
KAC	775	Riyadh	16:05
OMA	646	Muscat	16:10
ABY	128	Sharjah	16:15
ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20
KAC	615	Bahrain	16:30
MSR	576	Sharm el-Sheikh	16:50
RJA	641	Amman	16:55
SVA	505	Madinah	16:55
FDB	052	Dubai	17:05
JZR	266	Beirut	17:15
KAC	503	Beirut	17:15
QTR	1073	Doha	17:25
KAC	283	Dhaka	17:25
JZR	240	Amman	17:30
JZR	1442	Doha	17:30
KAC	361	Colombo	17:35
UAE	858	Dubai	17:40
KAC	357	Kochi	17:40
SAW	706	Damascus	17:50
NIA	362	Alexandria	17:50
KAC	381	Delhi	17:50
KAC	343	Chennai	18:00
SVA	511	Riyadh	18:15
GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
JZR	184	Dubai	18:25
JZR	538	Cairo	18:30
KAC	785	Jeddah	18:45
QTR	1081	Doha	19:15
JZR	124	Bahrain	19:20
MSR	621	Cairo	19:30
GFA	218	Bahrain	19:50
FDB	064	Dubai	19:50
ABY	124	Sharjah	20:00
FDB	058	Dubai	20:30
KAC	331	Trivandrum	20:35
UAE	876	Dubai	20:35
KAC	353	Bangalore	20:55
KAC	1543	Cairo	21:00
DLH	634	Doha	21:00
OMA	648	Muscat	21:05
KNE	232	Riyadh	21:10
JZR	554	Alexandria	21:15
MEA	403	Beirut	21:15
KAC	301	Mumbai	21:40
KAC	203	Lahore	21:45
DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50
QTR	1089	Doha	21:50
JZR	1542	Cairo	21:55
KAC	205	Islamabad	21:55
ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	22:00
KAC	155	Istanbul	22:15
ALK	230	Colombo	22:20
KLM	445	Bahrain	22:25
THY	1413	TZX	22:25
KAC	383	Delhi	22:35
UAE	860	Dubai	22:35
GFA	220	Bahrain	22:50
ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:00
JZR	528	Asyut	23:05
KAC	783	Jeddah	23:10
QTR	1083	Doha	23:20
RBG	552	Alexandria	23:40

GOSSIP

Niall Horan to extend Flicker Sessions tour into 2018

Niall Horan has promised fans he will be extending his 'Flicker Sessions' tour into 2018. The 'Slow Hands' hitmaker has vowed to give those who don't live near to the places he has chosen for his shows that he will book in more next year and that he is just getting used to touring again, hence there only being 21 gigs planned for 2017. In a note to his 30.9 million followers on Twitter, he wrote: "Hi guys, It's been incredible to see such an amazing reaction to the 'Flicker Sessions'. "Thank you so much per usual for your love and support. "For those of you wondering why I'm not stopping nearer you this time please bear with me a little longer while I plan 2018. "This is just the beginning and an opportunity for me to re-learn the craft of doing shows and touring in general. "Please stay patient and there will be more exciting news soon. Love you all Nialler xx (sic)" The 23-year-old Irish hunk is set to perform in his hometown of Dublin, Ireland on August 29 and will wrap the run at The Masonic in San Francisco in the US on November 22. Announcing the news on Twitter, he wrote: "Hello lovely people, I'm delighted to announce the Flicker Sessions 2017. Go to http://niallhoran.com for all the info ! (sic)" The One Direction star is expected to release his new record at some point later this year. Niall received rave reviews for his first single 'This Town' and 'Slow Hands' and, although he can't wait to give fans more content, he said he's not yet thought of a name for it. He said last month: "I listen to a lot of 80s funk rock, and I started playing on the piano and that came up ... and hopefully the album will be later this year. I'm still trying to come up with the name, we've only recently just finished recording it."

Hilary Duff hints at new music in 2018

Hilary Duff has hinted she'll release new music in 2018. The 29-year-old star has not launched an album since 2015's 'Breathe In. Breathe Out.' and while she doesn't intend to release anything this year, Hilary has suggested she may be working on something for 2018. The blonde beauty explained to BuzzFeed: "I don't have any plans for new music this year. But there's always next year." Hilary first achieved international stardom as an actress, playing the lead role in the teen sitcom 'Lizzie McGuire', which ran from 2001 until 2004. But she combined her acting career with music, launching her debut album, 'Santa Claus Lane', in 2002 and then releasing subsequent albums in each of the next two years. Despite this, Hilary recently admitted that her five-year-old son Luca, who she has with her former husband Mike Comrie, has no idea why she's famous. Hilary explained: "Luca has seen me on the cover of a magazine before in the grocery store, but I think he thinks that, like, the next day, it's the next mummy's turn to be on it. Like, he has no clue." The singer-turned-actress also claimed she's "not ready" for her son to know everything about her celebrity status. She shared: "Luca came home from school - I picked him up from school - and when we got home, he's like: 'I know. I know your name.' "I was like: 'I know.' And he's like: 'No, no. Your name's Hilary Duff.' And I was like: 'Caught!' Like, I didn't know how to respond. I'm like: 'Yeah, that is my name.' "But he said it with, like, a little glint in his eye, like somebody told him something that I haven't, and I was like: 'No, I'm not ready for this yet!' You know?"

Hammett spends fortune on comic books

Metallica's Kirk Hammett spends his fortune on comic books and horror films. The 54-year-old guitarist has confessed that he is a compulsive spender and loves splashing the cash on new instruments and movie merchandise and spoiling his friends and family. Speaking about being a millionaire on Atlanta's Rock 100.5 radio station, he spilled: "You know, it just comes with a whole bunch of different problems, bro. And you know what? I'm not very good with saving money. [I spend it on] comic books and movie posters and horror stuff and guitars. I live my life. I just fucking live my life. And I'm generous. The people who are around me experience what I'm experiencing while I'm experiencing it." Kirk is not the only member of the legendary metal group - who are currently on their 'Hardwired... To Self Destruct' world tour - to have a stand-offish relationship with money. Drummer Lars Ulrich, 53, says his bank balance doesn't matter to him, but he is grateful they have the "freedom" to invest in the quality of their live shows. He previously said: "Like, when I didn't have any money, it was not anything that mattered to me. And now that we're fortunate to have some money, it doesn't really play a role in anything we do, it doesn't really play a role in anything I do. I don't sit there and look at my bank balances or count the money or sit there and micro-manage METALLICA ... 'If we do this, if we do this, or if we do this... It'll be 17 dollars...' None of that stuff happens at all. "I mean, the great thing about being successful is, obviously, in the wake of that comes ... It gives you freedom, it gives you freedom to not think about it, actually; that's the best thing. And it gives you freedom to, kind of, put as much money back into the shows and into the travelling and into making it all work."

Simon Webbe announces new LP Smile

Simon Webbe has announced new solo album 'Smile'. The Blue star hasn't released a record in 10 years, since 2006's 'Grace', and has revealed the inspiration for his third outing is the fact people don't smile enough and have regular human contact because of smartphones and technology. He explained: "The album is called 'Smile' because not a lot of people are smiling these days. "Everybody's too busy using their phones to connect, nobody's really connecting anymore. For me, I just wanted to put a title out there that was self-explanatory and will hit home." The track features lead single 'Nothing Without You', which the 39-year-old hunk serenaded his now-fiance, Ayshen Kemal, with during his proposal in February. Speaking about his return to the music and how he has developed as an artist, he said: "To be honest I didn't realize that much time had passed because I've still been going out there and doing a lot of gigs abroad. Because I've had so much time out of the game, I've got so much more to say now. I needed to evolve as an artist and I needed to close a chapter, and that's what I've done with this album." 'Nothing Without You' is released today and the full record drops on August 25.

Ana De Armas joins Three Seconds

Ana De Armas has joined the cast of 'Three Seconds'. The 29-year-old actress will star in the Andrea Di Stefano directed movie, joining the previously announced cast members Joel Kinnaman, Rosamund Pike, Common and Clive Owen. The movie will follow a reformed criminal and Special Ops soldier Pete Hoffman, who has been working undercover for the FBI in order to be released from jail and see his family. He is tasked with taking on the Polish mob's drug trade in New York and will have to return to the prison he's so desperately trying to get out of to complete one more task without them finding out he is a mole. De Armas is set to play Sofia, Hoffman's wife, a businesswoman who owns her own grocery store. The movie was written by Matt Cook with Rowan JoffÈ and Andrea Di Stefano working on revisions. Thunder Road Pictures' Basil Iwanyk and Erica Lee will produce alongside Wayne Marc Godfrey, Robert Jones, Mark Lane, James Harris and Ollie Madden. The Fyzz Facility has financed the film whilst Thunder Road's Jonathan Fuhrman and Magnolia Entertainment's Shelley Browning will serve as executive producers, Deadline reports. Bloom's Alex Walton said previously: "In 'Escobar: Paradise Lost', Andrea Di Stefano delivered a taut, suspenseful film. Andrea has collaborated with our elite production group to heighten Three Seconds into a fresh, modern, New York-set thriller that can appeal to audiences worldwide."

Ora couldn't control nerves around Fisher

Rita Ora was so nervous working alongside the late Carrie Fisher she kept forgetting her lines. The 26-year-old singer-and-actress appears with the late 'Star Wars' legend in upcoming film 'Wonderwell' and she admitted she struggled to compose herself on set when she was shooting with Carrie, who passed away last December at the age of 60. The 'Your Song' hitmaker is quoted by The Sun newspaper as saying: "I was so nervous that I kept forgetting my lines - I couldn't believe I was working alongside a legend like her. But she was really there for me. She would stop the set and be like, 'Are you OK? Do you want to do it again?' " 'Wonderwell' is set against the commercially driven world of high fashion and modelling, the story focuses on a 12-year-old girl who travels through a magic portal and gets her wish to grow up. Rita isn't the only young actress to praise Carrie for her support and for being an inspiration. Daisy Ridley starred as Rey alongside Carrie as General Leia Organa - previously known as Princess Leia - in 'Star Wars: The Force Awakens' and will also be seen with her in the upcoming sci-fi sequel 'Star Wars: The Last Jedi'. The 25-year-old British actress admits the lesson she learned from Carrie was to always be yourself and never compromise yourself as a person for your work. Daisy said: "Carrie lived her life the way she wanted to, never apologizing for anything, which is something I'm still learning. "'Embarrassed' is the wrong word, but there were times through it all when I felt like I was ... shrinking. And she told me never to shrink away from it - that it should be enjoyed."

Jenkins to direct If Beale Street Could Talk

Barry Jenkins is to direct 'If Beale Street Could Talk'. The 37-year-old filmmaker - whose latest movie 'Moonlight' won the Academy Award for Best Picture earlier this year - is set to helm an adaptation of the James Baldwin novel as his next project following his Oscar success. According to Variety, Jenkins has been keen to make the movie for some time and penned the script in the same summer as he wrote 'Moonlight', for which he personally won the Best Adapted Screenplay Oscar this year. The book tells the story of 19-year-old Tish who gets engaged 22-year-old Fonny and is then tasked with trying to prove his innocence after he is falsely accused of rape. Baldwin's sister Gloria Karefa-Smart is thrilled the Baldwin Estate will be teaming up with Jenkins for the forthcoming film She said: "We are delighted to entrust Barry Jenkins with this adaptation. Barry is a sublimely conscious and gifted filmmaker, whose medicine for melancholy impressed us so greatly that we had to work with him." Jenkins added: "James Baldwin is a man of and ahead of his time; his interrogations of the American consciousness have remained relevant to this day. "To translate the power of Tish and Fonny's love to the screen in Baldwin's image is a dream I've long held dear. Working alongside the Baldwin Estate, I'm excited to finally make that dream come true."

This file photo shows US pop star Madonna (left) walking out with Dr Eric Borgstein (right) after visiting the Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital (QECH) where he launched a new project with Ministry of Health to construct a pediatric surgery and intensive care unit at the hospital in Blantyre, Malawi. — AFP

Madonna in Malawi to open kids' hospital wing

US pop superstar Madonna was due yesterday to formally open a children's hospital wing that her charity has built in Malawi and which is named after one of her four adopted Malawian children. The Mercy James paediatric hospital unit in Blantyre, the country's second city, has taken two years to build and includes three operating theatres and a 50-bed ward. It is the first specialist health unit for children in the poor southern African nation, doubling the capacity for paediatric care at the Queen Elizabeth hospital. Government officials confirmed Madonna, 58, was in Blantyre for Tuesday's scheduled opening ceremony, which is also due to be attended by President Peter Mutharika.

Earlier this year Madonna adopted twin girls from an orphanage in the southern African country after hearing of their plight through her charity "Raising Malawi". Twins Estere and Stella, four years old, joined her other Malawian children Mercy James and David Banda, both 11. Madonna, who set up the charity in 2006, has been a regular visitor to Malawi, taking Mercy and David last year when she inspected ongoing work at the children's hospital wing.

'A chance of survival'

She has not always been welcomed with open arms in one of the world's poorest countries, where some activists accuse her of using her wealth to short cut the adoption process. In 2013, she was stripped of her official VIP status in Malawi by then president Joyce Banda's government, which accused her of being "uncouth" and expecting gratitude for her adoptions. President Mutharika moved to repair the relationship, saying his government had "always been grateful for the passion Madonna has for this country". The singer, who divorced film director Guy Ritchie in 2008, now has six children after adopting her twins.

Court documents detailed how the twins were taken in by an orphanage supported by Madonna's charity. Their mother died soon after childbirth, their father left to marry another woman, and their grandmother struggled to look after several children. "Malawi needs such kind-hearted people to prosper," Malita Ndau, a 20-year-old woman selling doughnuts in Blantyre, told AFP. "Malawian children will now have a chance of survival because of this hospital." But some Malawians said the hospital highlighted the country's failures. Malawi should "be ashamed for begging from her to build this facility because we have failed to tame corruption," said Mumbo Phiri, who sells second hand clothes. The new hospital wing opened to patients last week and has already performed its first surgery. — AFP

Missiles and music: For Kim Jong Un, they go together

North Korea's successful intercontinental ballistic missile launch is now music to its leader's ears - quite literally. Kim Jong Un was feted at a concert replete with pop music and thunderous applause marking last week's successful launch of his country's first intercontinental ballistic missile. Among the numbers performed were "Song of Hwasong Rocket" and "Make Others Envy Us," the North's official Korean Central News Agency reported.

Leading the bill at the concert was the Moranbong Band, an all-female ensemble that was hand-picked by Kim and serves as something of the "soft" face of his regime. Pyongyang has been the scene of a slew of special events to mark the July 4 launch of Hwasong-14, which is believed to be capable of reaching most of Alaska and possibly farther. The launch is being treated as a major national milestone in North Korea, with the government and media touting it as a technological breakthrough few other nations have achieved. The concert, which took place on Sunday before a packed crowd, many in uniform, also featured dancing.

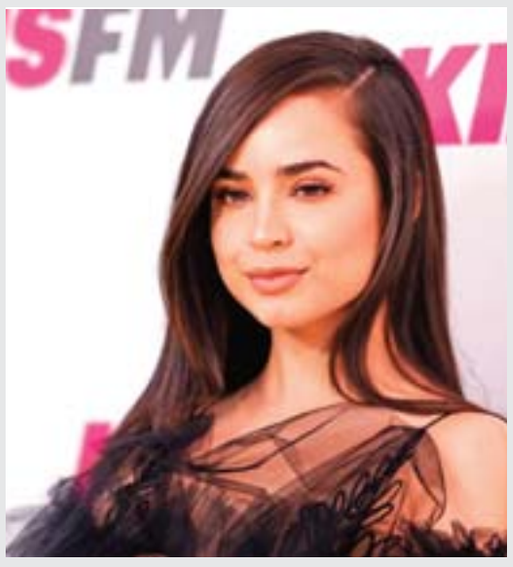
Clips of the concert shown on North Korean television on Monday showed the crowd repeatedly cheering and applauding for Kim. Along with the Moranbong Band, the concert had North Korea's other top headliners - a similar pop ensemble called the Chongbong Band, the uniformed State Merited Chorus and the Wangjaesan Art Troupe. — AP

This image made from undated video of a news bulletin aired by North Korea's KRT shows North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un waves to the audience in Pyongyang. — AP

SOFIA CARSON AND DJOKOVIC HEADLINE ARTHUR ASHE KIDS' DAY

"Descendants" star Sofia Carson and two-time US Open champ Novak Djokovic will headline this year's Arthur Ashe Kids' Day, a stadium concert that organizers are hoping will increase interest in youth tennis. The annual event, which pays tribute to the late tennis great, is set for Aug 26 at the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center. It will also be broadcast the following day from 2-3 pm EDT on ABC, which will air the "Descendents 2" starring Carson on July 21.

This year's lineup includes performances by the pop duo Jack & Jack, singer-songwriter Alex Aiono and boy band New Hope Club. The event is also being used to promote the United States Tennis Association's Net Generation initiative, which aims to get more children ages 5 to 18 playing the sport. —AP



Actress Sofia Carson from 'Descendants' arrives at Wango Tango in Carson, Calif. — AP

Andris Nelsons (right), pictured in August 2015, is the third high-profile departure from the New York Metropolitan Opera's upcoming production of 'Tosca'. — AFP

Star conductor follows wife from Met's ill-fated 'Tosca'

Star conductor Andris Nelsons on Monday followed his soprano wife Kristine Opolais in leaving the Metropolitan Opera's upcoming "Tosca," in the latest shakeup for a closely watched production. The New York opera house said in a statement that Nelsons had "withdrawn" from the new take on the Puccini classic that will premiere on New Year's Eve, without further explanation. He will be replaced by another major conductor-James Levine, who stepped down last year amid health problems after four decades as the music director of the Metropolitan Opera.

Nelsons, a 38-year-old Latvian, is a rising star of classical music who was named the music director of the Boston Symphony Orchestra in 2013. He will simultaneously take charge of the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra in Germany starting next season. With Nelsons already juggling a busy schedule, speculation had grown that he would leave the production after his wife pulled out last month from the title role in "Tosca." Opolais has also been a rising name but has recently faced mixed reviews, with some critics hearing a thinning of her voice.

The couple's departure was only the latest blow to the "Tosca" production. It was set to star Jonas Kaufmann, one of the most famous stars of opera, but the German tenor withdrew in March citing a desire to spend more time with family. The latest "Tosca"-one of the most popular works of opera-is a new version by Scottish director David McVicar. The Met has promised that it will restore some of the grandeur of the Met's longtime production designed by Italian legend Franco Zeffirelli. The Met in 2009 modernized "Tosca" with a new production by Swiss director Luc Bondy, who stripped back the ornate staging for a bare-bones look. The audience reaction was hostile, with booing on opening night. In a twist, Nelsons had his debut with the Boston Symphony Orchestra in 2011 when he stepped in for the ill Levine. — AFP

Kermit the Frog finding a new voice after actor switch

Kermit the Frog is getting a new voice. ABC News and The Hollywood Reporter report that Steve Whitmire has left his role as the voice behind the iconic Muppet. Whitmire has voiced the character since Muppets creator Jim Henson's death in 1990.

A Muppets Studio spokeswoman tells the outlets that longtime Muppets performer Matt Vogel will be taking over the role. Representatives for Disney, which owns Muppets Studio, didn't immediately return a request for comment yesterday about the motivation behind the move. In addition to Kermit, Whitmire had voiced grumpy critic Statler, Rizzo the Rat and other characters for the Muppets. — AP

In this file photo, Kermit the Frog, left, and puppeteer Steve Whitmire attend 'The Muppets' panel on day 3 of Comic-Con International in San Diego. — AP

Gorilla warfare: Behind the visuals of 'Planet of the Apes'

As Caesar sits astride a horse rallying his legions to battle you'd be forgiven for thinking you were watching a Roman-era war epic-except that the protagonist is a chimpanzee. "War for the Planet of the Apes," the third installment of the rebooted simian sci-fi franchise, opens on Friday to reviews lauding some of the most breathtaking visual effects ever seen in cinema. Behind the photo-real apes is Weta Digital, a pioneering Wellington-based CGI studio founded by Peter Jackson that has seen its reputation grow steadily since its groundbreaking performance-capture work on his "The Lord of the Rings" movies.

Filmed against the stark snowy vistas of Alberta and British Columbia, "War" sees director Matt Reeves unleash the rapidly evolving simians into a world boiling over with divisions and rage. A band of soldiers led by a battle-hardened loose cannon-Woody Harrelson channeling Marlon Brando's Colonel Kurtz-launches an all-out attack to destroy the apes once and for all. The movie is driven by Andy Serkis as the majestic Caesar, reprising a role for which he has drawn even more acclaim than for his other digital characters, Gollum in "Rings" and King Kong.

"Physically in this film, Caesar is much more upright and he uses his hands a lot more now, so he's more like a human being in ape skin," Serkis says in the production notes. "But as his intelligence and abilities have grown, the things he feels and remembers have become more daunting to him."

Digital fur

As in the previous films, Serkis wore a gray bodysuit and facial recognition dots that captured the tiniest nuances of movement, gesture and emotion of the apes. The 53-year-old actor, whom many believe should have won an Oscar for his pioneering work, has always maintained that there is no difference between playing a part in a motion-capture suit and performing in costume and makeup. "You're not just standing in for the role until the magic's done later on. You're not just representing the character, you are the character for real," he says in a behind-the-scenes featurette released recently by Fox.

"War" features a dozen key ape characters that interact with increasing sophistication, not just with each other, but with their environment, including falling snow. The crew included a team of 50 visual effects personnel, a 10-person camera unit and an army of data wranglers, surveyors and photographers who 3-D scanned every inch of every set and location. They crafted an array of more than 1,400 highly complex effects shots, deploying advanced software bringing new levels of complexity to how digital fur behaves and interacts with the world.

This image released by Twentieth Century Fox shows a scene from, 'War for the Planet of the Apes.' — AP

A newly-built toolset called "Manuka physLight" modeled with pinpoint accuracy how cameras pick up and respond to light so that the crew were able to light the apes similarly to how a cinematographer would light a soundstage. The crew studied how snow sticks to fur, clumps on it, falls off and reacts as the apes walk through their wintry environments. Caesar alone had almost a million strands of hair.

Towering effects

"It looks insanely realistic," said Serkis. "It's just such a brilliant technology and I've embraced it. I actively want to push the boundaries so that this movie is the most thrilling on every single level." Weta's visual effects supervisor Dan Lemmon, who joined in 2002 to work on "The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers," says the technology has improved dramatically. "All of our fur systems, how we model the way light moves through the scene and other materials, have all grown significantly more sophisticated," he added. "War" will be competing with "Spider-Man: Homecoming," "Wonder Woman" and several other effects-laden blockbusters, but industry tracking estimates the US opening at a healthy $65 million. That figure would be in the same ballpark as the two previous installments, which went on to earn a combined $1.2 billion worldwide. "War" has a 96 percent approval rating on the Rotten Tomatoes website, which collates reviews, with the most enthusiastic superlatives all reserved for the towering effects.

Even BBC critic Nicholas Barber, who didn't like the film, describes the technical wizardry as "frighteningly advanced." "The textures of leathery skin and thick hair are so convincing that you quickly forget that you're watching actors in motion-capture suits," he says. "You feel as though you're watching real live apes, even if those apes are carrying assault rifles and riding horses." — AFP

BEIRUT INTERNATIONAL AWARDS FESTIVALS (BIAF)

French singer Jean-Jacques Lafon poses for a picture during the 8th edition of the Beirut International Awards Festivals (BIAF), in the Lebanese capital, Beirut, on July 9, 2017. — AFP photos

Egyptian actress Laila Elwi.

Pakistani actress Mahira Khan.

Lebanese actress Julia Kassar.

Syrian actor Abed Fahed.

Turkish actress Asiye Nur Fettahoglu.

Lebanese actress Nicole Saba.

1,200 Fiat 500s mass for iconic car's 60th birthday

More than 1,200 Fiat 500s from across Europe revved into the Italian foothills on Saturday to mark the 60th birthday of the iconic little car. The Italian classic took its first spin on July 4, 1957. Eighteen years later, more than 4.2 million had rolled off the factory line. Production then took a 22-year break before the model was relaunched in 2007 with some modern tweaks, although it retained its traditional curves. Since then some two million more Fiat 500s have been made, according to Fiat Chrysler Automobiles (FCA).

The birthday bash saw hundreds of the original models park in Garlenda, northwest Italy-the 34th gathering of its kind, with demo events, talks and a parade for the participating cars. A cheap city vehicle that proved enormously popular in post-war Europe, the Fiat 500 had its status as a design icon sealed this week when a 1968 original entered the collection of New York's Museum of Modern Art. In Garlenda, a whole museum is devoted to the car. — AFP

People take part at the 34th International Rally of Fiat 500 Club Italia for the 60th anniversary of this car in Garlenda, near Genoa. — AFP photos

South Korean model Han Hyun-Min (right) has make-up applied as he prepares for a photo shoot at a studio in Seoul. — AFP

A make-up artist watches as South Korean model Han Hyun-Min (right) takes part in a photo shoot at a studio in Seoul.

South Korean model Han Hyun-Min (second right) poses with other models during a photo shoot.

South Korean model Han Hyun-Min poses for a photo following a photo shoot at a studio.

South Korean model Han Hyun-Min prepares for a photo to shoot.

S Korea's first black model faces widespread racism

Teenage male model Han Hyun-Min's long legs and powerful strut have made him a rising star on South Korean catwalks, but his agent knew there would be a problem in the ethnically homogenous country: he is half black. Han, 16, has a Nigerian father in a society where racial discrimination is widespread and people of mixed race are commonly referred to as "mongrels". "A dark-skinned fashion model like Han was unheard of in South Korea, so recruiting him was a big gamble," said agent Youn Bum.

Now Han is posing for top glossy magazines as the country's first black fashion model. South Korea has for years sought to foster the image of a modern, sophisticated and tech-savvy nation whose pop culture has made waves across Asia. But behind the facade of an economic and cultural powerhouse lies a deeply-rooted racism-even as its immigrant population creeps up, doubling over the last decade but still only four percent of the population. Most foreigners in the country are from China and Southeast Asia, migrant workers or women who marry rural South Korean men unable to find local spouses willing to live in countryside.

Discrimination against them is widespread. Many are openly mocked at public transport for being "dirty" or "smelly", or refused entry to fancy restaurants or public baths. A government survey in 2015 showed that 25 percent of South Koreans do not want a foreigner as a neighbor-far higher than the 5.6 percent in the US and China's 10.5 percent. Mixed-race children are bullied at school and constantly taunted as "tuigi", a derogatory term that literally means cross-bred animals. Many complain of poor opportunities in many aspects of life, including difficulties socializing, getting a job or finding a spouse. Han was no exception.

Game over

"When I was playing with other kids at school, some mothers whisked them away from me, saying things like, 'Don't play with a kid like that'," he told AFP. He was regularly stared at in public, with an elderly woman once asking him: "What are you doing in someone else's country?" "I wanted to become invisible," he said. "I hated my looks that stand out from everyone else," he said. He found his escape in fashion, taking part in modeling auditions and posting his photos on social media until Youn spotted the images.

After seeing the then 14-year-old demonstrate his "electrifying" stride on a Seoul street for five minutes, Youn signed him up immediately. "Being a fashion model helped build my confidence tremendously," said Han. "Now I enjoy being looked at by other people, instead of being ashamed or embarrassed." He hopes to become a role model for multiracial children. "I want to be more successful, not just for myself but also for people whom I represent."

'Bad luck'

The duo were initially stonewalled by designers and magazine editors, some of whom openly dismissed the dark-skinned model as "bad luck" and urged Youn to recruit whites instead. "Some of them told me, 'We don't do dark-skinned models,' or, 'For us, non-Korean models mean white models with blue eyes and blonde hair'," Youn said. But a handful of designers found Han's look unique and charismatic, and he hit the runways at more than 30 shows at the two Seoul Fashion Weeks after his debut last year-an unusually high number for a novice.

Han's slim physique "had a good combination of strengths of both Asian models and Western models" said designer Cho Young-Jae, who used him to display his men's clothing line, Chaos From Undermind. Neighboring Japan has a similarly homogenous population, Cho said, but a longer history of immigration and already has a number of biracial star fashion models. Even so, when half-black Ariana Miyamoto was picked as Miss Universe Japan in 2015 she faced open accusations of not being sufficiently Japanese to represent the country, in a stark demonstration of the limits of acceptance.

Money and power

South Koreans have until recently been taught at school to take pride in the country's "single ethnicity", with one race and language enduring for centuries. A history of repeated invasions by powerful neighbors China and Japan has amplified the sense of victimhood and rampant ethnic nationalism, many analysts say. In addition, according to Choi Hang-Sub, sociology professor at Kookmin University in Seoul, Korea's ultra-competitive culture "worships those with money and power and despises those without".

"The rule also applies to foreigners," he told AFP. "So white people from advanced nations are welcomed with open arms, and those perceived to have hailed from less developed nations are relentlessly looked down upon." The South has a growing number of foreign or multiracial figures on TV and other public sphere-but almost all of them are Caucasians, whose looks are favored by many South Koreans as "beautiful". Commentators on social media, though, have warmed to Han. "He has such good aura around him," said one. "I hope that our society will become more open to people like him." — AFP

Drew Barrymore gets organized to mark Beauty Junkie week

Drew Barrymore

Drew Barrymore is encouraging her fans to clean out their make-up drawers as part of her Beauty Junkie week. The 'Miss You Already' star has shared snaps of her own messy dressing table in the hope to encourage others to organize their beauty collection. Sharing a picture of her dressing table, which is covered with bags and boxes stuffed to the brim with make-up, she said: "#beautyjunkieweek starts again as my bathroom counter tells me I need to get organized! So much stuff! And that's the tip of the beauty iceberg ... "#beautyjunkieweek one of my drawers but not the whole story (sic)" As part of her beauty week, Drew has also been sharing her favorite products.

On one post about hair care products, she wrote: "#beautyjunkieweek my favorite hair products DEESE'S 3 step hair conditioning treatment PHILIP B gold tinted conditioner (great for blondes) and LIVING PROOF in Restore Formula. These are my go to's. Try em! (sic)" And posting about the Malibu Crystal Gel Treatment for her hair, she added: "#beautyjunkieweek these packets are so amazing. They get rid of sediments and clorine and all the things that are in our water out of you hair. When you rinse it out, it looks like green mouthwash is coming out of your hair! "Their is one you put in your hair after washing for 30 minutes and they also have a 5 minute treatment. Works extra strength if you get under a dryer or any heat with it under a plastic bag. These were shown to me by my girl @traceycunningham1 and they changed my life. Try the experiment! And watch all the impurities come out of your hair. Enjoy. You can get at a beauty supply store or on line. (sic)" — Bang Showbiz

Dion's stylist helped her through the grieving process

Celine Dion credits her stylist for helping her through the "grieving process" following her husband's death. The 'Because You Loved Me' hitmaker lost her spouse Rene Angelil to throat cancer in January 2016 but Celine has told her stylist Law Roach that focusing on fashion helped her get through such a difficult time. He revealed: "She also credits me, and what we did, and the clothes, and the shoes, and the bags, and the jewelry, and couture week, and the shows, and all that to helping her through her grieving process. "I'm sure her grieving process will never be over. She'll probably grieve her husband for the rest of her life because she was with him for so long.

But she has said that what we did last year in Paris really helped her through that process. For me that's more than anything else. That's more than accolades, that's more than being interviewed by Vanity Fair, that is something that I'll take with me forever." And Law admits he couldn't believe it when Celine contacted him and asked for them to work together. He added: "My first words were: Celine who? I don't think I had dreamt that big of a dream. That this legend, this woman who we've all grown up to her music, that's been around for 30 years, was calling me to work with me." The stylist also praised Celine for having "no fear" when it comes to fashion. He told Vanity Fair magazine: "Celine has no fear. And when you have that type of energy, you have this attitude that we can do whatever we want and we don't care who likes it or dislikes it. Fashion is supposed to be polarizing. It has to be overwhelming." — Bang Showbiz

Celine Dion

This file photo shows French fashion designer for Lanvin, Bouchra Jarrar (left) acknowledging the audience at the end of her women's Fall-Winter 2017-2018 ready-to-wear collection fashion show in Paris. — AFP photos

Fashion house Lanvin names Lapidus artistic director

French designer Olivier Lapidus has been appointed artistic director of Paris label Lanvin following his predecessor's resignation from the troubled fashion house. "I welcome the arrival of Olivier Lapidus to the artistic direction of Lanvin," the company's formidable owner, Taiwanese media magnate Shaw-Lan Wang, announced in a statement yesterday. "His great understanding of the world of this house, the world of fashion and design, and his resolutely modern approach will bring Lanvin to new horizons," she added.

Lapidus, 59, a prominent figure in high-tech fashion, replaces Bouchra Jarrar, who was appointed artistic director for Lanvin's women's collections in March 2016. Jarrar quit Lanvin only 10 months after she showed her first collection there. The 46-year-old had closed her own label so she could dedicate herself to reviving France's oldest fashion house. But it soon became clear that all was not well within the house, which has been in turmoil since the shock sacking of its previous designer Alber Elbaz in 2015.

In a short statement late Thursday announcing Jarrar's departure, Lanvin said they had "mutually decided to put an end to their collaboration". Lapidus was born into the fashion world: he is the grandson of a Russian emigre tailor, and the son of Ted Lapidus, who made his mark on fashion in the the 1960s and 1970s with his unisex and safari styles. He was artistic director of Lapidus for 11 years, where he advocated a marriage between haute couture, crafts and industrial research laboratories. But his new job presents a daunting prospect.

The popular Elbaz had brought Lanvin, founded in 1889, back from the edge of oblivion before he fell foul of Wang. Wang and Lanvin's other major shareholder, Swiss businessman Ralph Bartel, plan to recapitalise the company and relaunch the brand, according to the French business magazine Challenges. — AFP

This file photo shows French fashion designer Olivier Lapidus siting in a flower-covered armchair as he poses during a photo session at his workshop in Paris.

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Lifestyle

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S Korea's first black model faces widespread racism

An acrobat completes a flip mid-air during a media preview of Cirque Du Soleil's Kooza yesterday in Singapore. Kooza is a return to the origins of Cirque du Soleil, combining two circus traditions of acrobatic performance and the art of clowning. The name Kooza is inspired by the Sanskrit word 'koza' which means 'box,' or 'treasure,' and was chosen because of the underlying concept of the production, which is the idea of a ''Circus in a box.'— AP photos

Acrobats in costume pose during a media preview of Cirque Du Soleil's Kooza.

An acrobat does a flip mid-air during a media preview of Cirque Du Soleil's Kooza.

An acrobat does a flip mid-air during a media preview of Cirque Du Soleil's Kooza in Singapore.

Britain's Lake District named World Heritage site

Britain's Lake District, an area of wild beauty that beguiled poets and artists from William Wordsworth to Beatrix Potter, was named Sunday as a World Heritage site by UNESCO. The UN's cultural body meeting this weekend in Krakow praised the region's "picturesque aesthetic" as well as its links with Romantic art and literature. "The special significance of the Lake District lies in the interaction between social, economic, cultural and environmental influences," it said in a statement.

Considered the cradle of the British Romanticism movement pioneered by Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Robert Southey, the region becomes Britain's 31st World Heritage site. John Glen, minister for arts, heritage and tourism, said the new status would boost the Lake District's international reputation and benefit locals. "It is a unique part of the world that combines a vibrant farming community with thousands of archaeological sites and structures that give us an amazing glimpse into our past," he said in a statement.

UNESCO's heritage committee considered 33 sites for the prestigious status at its annual gathering in Poland. On Sunday it also accepted Taputapuatea, a portion of the "Polynesian Triangle" in the South Pacific thought to be the last part of the globe settled by humans, to the list. — AFP

This May 1958 file photo shows stage and screen actress Vivien Leigh. —AP Photos

Vivien Leigh's 'Gone With the Wind' script up for auction

Vivien Leigh's copy of the "Gone With the Wind" script is going up for auction alongside dozens of items from the late star's personal collection. Sotheby's said yesterday it will offer paintings, jewelry, clothes, books and more belonging to Leigh at a Sept 26 auction in London.

Leigh won an Academy Award for playing Scarlett O'Hara in the 1939 epic "Gone With the Wind." The sale includes Leigh's copy of the original novel, inscribed with a poem from author Margaret Mitchell, which carries an estimated price tag of 5,000 pounds to 7,000 pounds ($6,500 to $9,000). The script, presented to Leigh by her co-stars, has an estimate of 2,500 pounds to 3,500 pounds.

Also on offer is the wig Leigh wore to play Blanche DuBois in "A Streetcar Named Desire," estimated at 400 pounds to 600 pounds. Sotheby's UK chairman Harry Dalmeny said the collection offers a glimpse at the private Leigh, "a fine art collector, patron, even a bookworm." Leigh died in 1967, and her only child, Suzanne Farrington, died in 2015. The collection is being sold by Leigh's grandchildren. In 2013 the grandchildren sold her archive including correspondence, photos and awards, to London's Victoria & Albert Museum for an undisclosed sum. — AP

In this 1939 file photo, Clark Gable0 as Rhett Butler and Vivien Leigh as Scarlett O'Hara stars in the 1939 classic, 'Gone With the Wind'.