SUBSCRIPTION

Kuwait Times

ESTABLISHED 1961

THE FIRST DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF

ANNIVERSARY 55 Years Kuwait Times

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 7, 2017 | RAMADAN 12, 1438 AH | www.kuwaittimes.net

150 FILS | NO: 17250 | 40 PAGES

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Min 28°
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High Tide 10:31 & 23:48
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Kuwait mediates Gulf crisis; land, sea, air routes cut off

Trump backs Saudi-led efforts to isolate Qatar

JEDDAH: A handout picture shows Saudi's King Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud and Kuwait's Amir HH Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah arriving for a meeting in the Red Sea city of Jeddah. Kuwait,s Amir travelled to Saudi Arabia for talks aimed at resolving the crisis between Qatar and its Gulf neighbors. — AFP

DUBAI: Kuwait yesterday began mediating between Qatar and the Arab nations that cut ties to the energy-rich aviation hub, though US President Donald Trump appeared to backing those isolating Qatar over allegations it supports terror groups and its relations with Iran. Qatar long has denied funding extremists and its foreign minister struck a defiant tone in interviews yesterday, even after worried residents had picked through grocery stores in its capital, Doha.

Trump threw his weight behind efforts to isolate Qatar yesterday, backing Saudi Arabia and its allies after they cut ties with Doha. In a surprise move against a key US ally, Trump suggested Qatar-home to the largest American airbase in the Middle East-was funding extremism as he tacitly backed the diplomatic blockade of the emirate.

"So good to see the Saudi Arabia visit with the King and 50 countries already paying off," Trump said in a morning tweet, in reference to his trip to Riyadh last month. "They said they would take a hard line on funding... extremism, and all reference was pointing to Qatar. Perhaps this will be the beginning of the end to the horror of terrorism!" Trump's broadside came as Kuwait's ruler flew to Saudi Arabia in a bid to resolve the worst diplomatic crisis to hit the Arab world in years.

Qatar relies heavily on food imports, especially those coming over its border with Saudi Arabia, and those Arab nations opposing it have cut off their land, sea and air routes into the country. "On this scale, it's unprecedented," said Hatoon Al-Fassi, a Saudi historian of Gulf Affairs and Women's Studies at Qatar University. The biggest diplomatic crisis in the Gulf since the 1991 US-led war against Iraq pits several nations against Qatar, which is home to some 10,000 American troops and a major US military base.

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Family ties

By Hassan Twaha Bwambale

Maintaining ties with one's family members is obligatory, regardless of how your family treats you. One must maintain these ties and treat his family with kindness, even if that family does not treat him well. Al-Qaadhilyaadh (a celebrated Muslim scholar) maintained that there is no disagreement among Muslim scholars regarding the fact that it is compulsory to honor family ties and strengthen the ties of kinship. Failure to do so is a grave sin.

Allah (to Whom belongs all mighty and majesty) says what can be translated as: "Then should it be regarded that you (hypocrites and wrong-doers) will turn away from Allah to spread corruption in the land, and let your divisiveness tear apart the bonds of your kinship? Those who do that are the faithless ones whom Allah has cursed, and thus, has He made them deaf to guidance and blinded their eyes to it." (Muhammad 47: 22 - 23)

In the verse above Allah Almighty strongly criticizes and threatens those who spread corruption in the land and those who sever the ties of kinship; both of them are grave sins in Islam. If you want blessings and mercy from Allah, then be dutiful to your family members. Aisha (Prophet Muhammad's wife) narrated that the Prophet (PBUH) said, "Kinship hangs by the Throne of Allah saying, "Whoever unites me (by being dutiful and considerate to his kith and kin), Allah will keep him connected to His mercy and kindness. But whoever separates himself from me (family relations), Allah will cut him off from His mercy and kindness." (Refer to Al-Bukhari in Al-Fat'h 10/5,989 and Saheeh Muslim # 2,555.)

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Philippines bars workers from traveling to Qatar

MANILA: The Philippine government temporarily suspended the deployment of Filipino workers to Qatar yesterday, fearing food riots and other potential problems amid the diplomatic crisis gripping the tiny Gulf nation, the labor secretary said. Silvestre Bello said there was no plan yet to repatriate the more than 200,000 Filipino workers in Qatar. "If anything happens and they run out of food and food riots take place, definitely our OFWs will be the first victims," Bello said, using the acronym for overseas Filipino workers. "We need to adopt preparatory measures to meet the possible exigency." Filipino officials and recruitment agencies have been asked to ensure that Filipino workers in Qatar are safe and have adequate food stocks.

The Philippines is a major labor supplier, with about a tenth of more than 100 million Filipinos working abroad because of inadequate jobs and other opportunities at home. Saudi Arabia and three other Arab powers severed diplomatic ties with Qatar on Monday and moved to isolate it, accusing it of supporting terrorist groups and backing Iran. Qatar has long denied supporting militant groups. Saudi Arabia closed its land border with Qatar, through which the international travel hub imports most of its food, sparking a run on supermarkets. — AP

DOHA: Parked Qatari planes are pictured at the Hamad International Airport (HIA) in Doha, Qatar. — AP

'Eerie' calm settles over Qatar's deserted airport

Qatar Airways licences revoked

DOHA: Qatar's state-of-the-art Hamad International bills itself as one of the most luxurious airports in the world but yesterday, it was also one of the quietest. As a travel ban announced by Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) came into force, terminals and drop-off areas at Doha's "gateway to the world" were deserted. "This is the emptiest airport I've ever been in," said Katie, transiting Qatar en route to Thailand. "It's exceptionally quiet, almost eerie."

Hamad's cavernous three-year-old terminals, constructed at an estimated cost of $16 billion (14 billion euros), can seem relatively empty on normal days because of their massive size. But the diplomatic crisis between Doha and Riyadh backed by its Arab allies that has isolated Qatar left Hamad International a shadow of its normal activity yesterday. With more than 30 Qatar Airways flights cancelled to and from Doha, there were neither traffic jams at departures where travelers are dropped off nor lines for taxis to pick up arriving passengers.

Inside, a calm air of weary resignation too hold. Passengers gazed at information screens inside the terminals with amusement and pointed at cancelled flights to and from destinations across the Gulf, including Jeddah, Dammam and Dubai. For most passengers, the experience was one of bemusement. "I have never seen it like this," said the civil engineer, who was travelling home to New Delhi. "It's crazy. I hope the crisis will finish soon." Downstairs in the arrivals hall, Jaffa, a taxi driver from the Philippines who picks up passengers every day, chuckled at the emptiness. "I've never seen so few people here," he said.

'It's appalling'

Scenes were more frantic elsewhere in the Gulf as desperate Qatar Airways' passengers scrambled to find alternative travel arrangements. Scenes of long queues on social media showed travelers at Qatar

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Workers caught up in Gulf crisis

CAIRO: Egyptian officials say the diplomatic crisis between Qatar and its Gulf neighbors has yet to affect the 300,000 Egyptian workers in the tiny, energy-rich country, amid fears they could be expelled or stranded. Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates severed diplomatic ties with Qatar on Monday and have moved to cut off all air, land and sea routes to the country, which they accuse of supporting terrorism, charges Qatar denies. The Gulf countries have ordered Qatari diplomats and nationals out, raising fears Qatar could reciprocate by expelling migrant workers and expatriates.

Hundreds of thousands of Egyptians live and work in the oil-rich Gulf, sending money back to their families that is more crucial now than ever, as Egypt is mired in an economic crisis following years of unrest. Mohammed El-Iraqi, the spokesman for the Egyptian community in Qatar, has told Egyptian media that Egyptians in Qatar panicked when the crisis erupted but that so far it has had no impact on their businesses. But all direct flights between the two countries have been suspended.

Egyptian Charge d'Affaires Ihab Abdel-Hamid said he is returning to Egypt today after being recalled. The Greek Foreign Ministry has agreed to handle Egyptian affairs in Qatar. "I myself have to find a third country, a transit point tomorrow," he said. Many people are flying back through Kuwait, which has stepped in to mediate the dispute. EgyptAir, the national carrier, has suspended all flights from and to Qatar.

Egypt and Qatar have had rocky relations since the military overthrew Islamist President Mohammed Morsi in 2013. Qatar had strongly supported Morsi's Muslim Brotherhood group and his elected but divisive government, while Saudi Arabia

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Assembly raises annual leave in private sector

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: The National Assembly yesterday approved amendments to the labor law in the private sector in which it practically increased the annual leave for employees in the private and the oil sector. The amendments stipulate that workers in the private sector are entitled to an annual leave of at least 30 days but that weekends (Fridays), public holidays and sick leaves will not be counted as part of the leave.

This means that the actual annual leave will be 30 days plus the number of Fridays falling in those 30 days in addition to any public holidays. New employees can avail of the annual leave after at least six months of work and in agreement with the employer. This article has been one of the most controversial issues in the labor law issued in 2010 and which is seen as favorable to workers.

The amendments also stipulate that workers are entitled to receive their full end of service indemnity without deducting installments paid in favor of the Public Institution for Social Security. This amendment applies only to Kuwaitis employed in the private sector and was proposed to stop companies from deducting the amount of social security installments from the end of service indemnity.

During the debate of the proposed amendments, lawmakers said that Kuwaitis in the private sector need more protection, adding that the private sector does not provide for sufficient stability to nationals. The Assembly also approved a motion to ask the Public Funds Protection Committee to probe alleged financial and administrative violations at the Capital Market Authority. MPs said losses at CMA increased to over KD 33 million last year from KD 13 million in the previous year.

The investigation will also include the alleged failure of CMA in safeguarding the Kuwait Stock Exchange after many companies exited the bourse where over KD 26 billion are invested. Lawmakers also approved a draft law giving new financial benefits to a number of teachers at the Ministry of Islamic Affairs and at the Education Ministry, despite protests from a number of MPs.

Several MPs also voiced total support for the Amir in his bid to mediate a peaceful settlement to the dispute between Qatar with Saudi Arabia and its allies. The Amir travelled to Jeddah in Saudi Arabia for talks with King Salman after Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain, along with Egypt, severed diplomatic and economic ties with Qatar over its alleged support for extremist groups. The Assembly continues meetings today and tomorrow to approve the state budget before closing the term.

KUWAIT: Photo shows Kuwait lawmakers at the National Assembly. MPs yesterday approved amendments to the labor law in the private sector. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

KUWAIT: Kuwaiti Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah meets with South Africa's Ambassador to Kuwait Mzolisa Bona. — KUNA

Kuwaiti Deputy FM meets South Africa's Ambassador

KUWAIT: Kuwaiti Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah met with South Africa's Ambassador to Kuwait Mzolisa Bona yesterday. During the meeting, they discussed relations between Kuwait and South Africa and the latest regional and international developments. Assistant Foreign Minister for the Deputy Minister's Office Ambassador Ayham Al-Omar was present at the meeting. — KUNA

Tanzanian President lauds Kuwait's support

KUWAIT: President of the United Republic of Tanzania, John Magufuli praised Kuwait's role in supporting his country's vital humanitarian and infrastructural projects. President Magufuli made the remarks during his reception last night of Kuwait Ambassador to Tanzania Jassem Al-Najem, the embassy said in a press statement. The Tanzanian President added that Kuwait's efforts were deeply recognized through providing urgent humanitarian aid and digging 27 wells in the capital Dodoma in face of the drought season that swept through the African continent. Acknowledging the significant role played by Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED), Magufuli invited the Fund to visit Tanzania and consider supporting and financing a number of infrastructural projects, especially the new highway project in Dodoma. He pledged to name the highway after His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Last March, Tanzania signed a $51 million loan agreement with KFAED. The loan agreement aims to finance the project of 'Nyahua-Chaya Road,' which links Tanzania to Rwanda and Burundi, to increase commercial movement along 85 kilometers. — KUNA

Hakeem appreciates Kuwait's role in supporting Iraqis

'Tensions should be solved by peaceful, positive discussions'

KUWAIT: Ammar Al-Hakeem, President of the Iraqi National Alliance and President of the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq (left) speaks during a press conference with Adnan Al-Rashed, KJA Secretary General. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Kuwait Times Editor-in-Chief Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan (right) greets Ammar Al-Hakeem.

By Nawara Fattahova

KUWAIT: Iraq always appreciates the role of Kuwait in supporting Iraqi people in all fields, including political, social and humanitarian, President of the Iraqi National Alliance and President of the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq Ammar Al-Hakeem.

Hakeem is visiting Kuwait, where he met His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and other officials to discuss the challenges facing the region and bilateral relations between Kuwait and Iraq. Hakeem has been annually visiting Kuwait for the past 14 years.

"I am glad to be in Kuwait again for the 14th year, as this visit during the holy month of Ramadan has become a habit," he said during a press conference by Kuwait Journalists Association (KJA) at Crowne Plaza Hotel Monday evening. "This is the first stop on my GCC tour."

Hakeem is optimistic about the situation in Iraq. "Iraqi security forces have achieved victories in Mosul. We focused on protecting civilians first before defeating IS. We also cleaned up the Iraqi-Syrian borders and the desert area around it, which was full of terrorist training camps. We also discussed the unity of Iraq and democracy," he added. "We presented a document of consolidation to HH the Amir, which includes political, economic, developmental and other aspects for study. We also spoke about bilateral exchanges between Kuwait and Iraq, which are still below expectations. There are great chances to develop these, which includes information exchange, especially about IS and fighting terrorism," he pointed out. Kuwait has established many projects in Iraq. "We appreciate the help and support of the Kuwaiti government as they built schools and a hospital in Basra, in addition to many other projects. We are still in the phase of rebuilding Iraq and returning refugees to liberated areas and cities," stressed Hakeem.

On the political issue and recent conflicts in the GCC region, he said that this problem should be solved by peaceful and positive discussions. "We should always deal in a diplomatic way, especially since this area is facing many problems and conflicts, in addition to terrorism that affects all countries," he explained. "Terrorism is threatening the region and Iraq particularly. But Iraq will always be united, and Iraqis will fight terrorism," concluded Hakeem.

KUWAIT: Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah meets with members of the new administrative board of Kuwait Journalists Association (KJA). — KUNA photos

Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah meets with board members of Kuwait Lawyers Association.

Diwan Minister meets journalists, lawyers associations' members

KUWAIT: Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received yesterday members of the new administrative board of Kuwait Journalists Association (KJA). KJA board members included Fatima Hussein Al-Essa, Chairperson, Adnan Al-Rashed, Secretary General, and Jassim Kamal, Treasurer, in addition to members of the administrative council, including Dhiran Aba Al-Khil, Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan, Rabaa Juma and Owaid Al-Enezy.

Later, Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad received board members of Kuwait Lawyers Association, including Naser Al-Hiafi, Chairman, Saqaf Al-Saqaf, Raed Al-Wohaib, Bader Al-Adwani and Saad Abdulkarim. — KUNA

Kuwait keen on ending crisis through direct dialogue: Foreign Ministry

KUWAIT: The State of Kuwait continues to take a 'moderate and balanced' approach to issues in the region, a Foreign Ministry official said Monday, affirming keenness to end crises through direct dialogue.

Assistant Foreign Minister for First deputy premier and foreign minister's office, Ambassador Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Mohammad Al-Sabah made the remarks on the sideline of an annual Ramadan gathering hosted by First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah for foreign ambassadors accredited to Kuwait.

The foreign ministry official noted that Kuwait has always used such approach to bring all parties involved to dialogue, particularly to current development that occur in the region. In response to a question on Kuwait's mediation among GCC countries, Sheikh Ahmad said Kuwait is keen to boost cooperation between all countries in the region and the world.

Earlier on Monday, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, accompanied by His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, received at Dasman Palace Prince Khaled bin Faisal bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud and his accompanying delegation.

During the meeting, Prince Khaled conveyed to His highness the Amir a verbal message from the Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz regarding bilateral relations and issues of common concerns, including the latest on developments in the region and international arena.

His Highness the Amir also phoned Qatari Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani and urged the Qatari Amir to exercise self-restraint and refrain from steps that would escalate the situation. His Highness the Amir affirmed on supporting GCC joint cooperation and work due to its historic and deeply rooted relations.

His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah had attended the late Ramadan dinner banquet held at the Sheraton Hotel in honor of heads of Arab and foreign diplomatic missions in Kuwait. The event was attended by senior officials from the Foreign Ministry in addition to political and media figures. — KUNA

KUWAIT: His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah participates in a late Ramadan dinner banquet held in honor of heads of diplomatic missions in Kuwait. — KUNA

His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah and other Foreign Ministry officials receive greetings from ambassadors during the event.

Education Ministry grants 200 scholarships to expat graduates

By A Saleh

Mohammad Al-Fares

KUWAIT: Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Mohammad Al-Fares said 200 scholarships will be given to expatriate students with the highest marks, including 50 at Kuwait University, 100 at the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) and 50 as domestic scholarships in local private universities. Fares added that regulations for selecting expatriate students who deserve scholarships would be made after Kuwaiti students finished applying in July. Speaking to reporters during a special ceremony held to honor 100 students from various Arab private schools, Fares said the huge number of students with very high scores emphasizes the significant role played by these schools in preparing future generations, including both Kuwaitis and expats.

Diwaniyas

Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs and Minister of State for Municipal Affairs Mohammed Al-Jabri refused licenses for setting up diwaniyas in the yards surrounding private houses as proposed by MP Musaed Al-Mutairi, explaining these blocked infrastructure projects. He also noted that licensing the process and collecting fees for it as proposed will make such an exception seem as a right citizens could not be deprived of in the future.

Housing applications

The Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) plans to scrutinize old housing applications to make sure they match all conditions and regulations. Informed sources said the authority had formed a special committee to examine those applications to make sure only deserving citizens get the service. The sources added that the committee will work on updating the applicant database, excluding all citizens living abroad.

Donations violations

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor's (MSAL) assistant undersecretary for social development affairs Hassan Kathem said four inspection teams formed by the ministry to track down and remove violations committed in collecting donations during Ramadan had filed 45 citations during the first the days of the month. Kathem explained that nine of the citations were filed against charities publishing unlicensed ads. He added that a local bank was asked to immediately remove an ad it published urging people to donate extra food.

Mullet fishing season starts July 1

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Mullet fishing season in Kuwait's territorial waters will begin on July 1 and last till Nov 30, 2017, the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) announced yesterday.

PAAAFR added that fishermen will have to respect the conditions, such as the timing from 6:00 am till 6:00 pm, obtaining a license from Sharq control center, reporting the exact catch volume on return, not using any fishing tools aside from the usual nets and respecting other government bodies' regulations.

Hospital directors

Health Minister Dr Jamal Al-Harbi said that the Ministry of Health (MoH) is currently considering setting special conditions and regulations to appoint health zone and hospital directors and their assistants. Harbi also announced forming a special committee to solve doctors' problems. Speaking during a ghabqa held by the medical association, Harbi said that doctors' insurance against medical errors is still being reviewed by the fatwa and legislation department. He also noted that the electronic medical file issue is a top priority for him and that MoH is working on using it in collaboration with South Korea.

Qatar Airways flights operations are as normal

Three flights to carry stranded passengers from KSA to Muscat

KUWAIT: Qatar Airways released the following statement yesterday concerning the situation arising from the ban on its flights to four Arab countries:

'Qatar Airways operations are running as normal with no disruptions to flights with the exception of those to the four countries Qatar Airways has been restricted to fly to. In response to these restrictions Qatar Airways has arranged for three charter flights departing Jeddah today at 16:00, 22:00, and 23:00 local time, to Muscat in order to assist all Qatar Airways passengers in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. We encourage all Qatari passengers stranded to make their way to King Abdulaziz International Airport to avail of these three flights today. Full details of these charter flights are available on Qatar Airways Travel Alert page. All effected passengers in Doha on route to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia have been assisted with alternative onward travel arrangements. At Qatar Airways, our passengers remain our utmost priority and we will continue to ensure they have a seamless journey to their final destinations.'

KUWAIT: The Interior Ministry's Environmental Police Department participated in an environmental function held recently at the Avenues Mall, where policemen distributed seedlings and other gifts to shoppers.

Limited oil output to prove beneficial: Oil Minister

KUWAIT: The decision made by OPEC and non-OPEC member nations to slash oil production will have positive ripple effects on all nations involved, Kuwaiti Minister of Oil Essam Al-Marzouq said yesterday. Qatar is holding up its end of the bargain, with a reduced output of 30,000 barrels per day (bpd), said Marzouq, who doubles as Minister of Electricity and Water.

"Qatar's level of commitment to the deal is around 93 to 102 percent," he added. In a meeting last month, OPEC officials agreed to protract the accord, pushing the deadline to March of 2018. In November, OPEC along with 10 non-OPEC members, including Russia, struck a deal to limit oil output by 1.8 million bpd in an effort to restore stability in the global oil market.

The OPEC daily basket price stood at $47.37 per barrel last Monday, compared with $47.37 pb the previous day, said the international organization yesterday. The monthly average of the basket in May of 2017 was $49.20 pb while in April of 2017 it was at $51.37 pb.

OPEC Reference Basket of Crudes (ORB) is made up of the following: Saharan Blend (Algeria), Iran Heavy (Islamic Republic of Iran), Basra Light (Iraq), Kuwait Export (Kuwait), Es Sider (Libya), Bonny Light (Nigeria), Qatar Marine (Qatar), Arab Light (Saudi Arabia), Murban (UAE), Merey (Venezuela), Girassol (Angola), and Oriente (Ecuador). The price of Kuwaiti oil was down by one cent to settle at $46.34 per barrel Monday after it was at $46.35 pb last Friday, the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) said yesterday. At the global level, the price was down due to fears generating from Saudi Arabia severing ties with Qatar.

The incident was said to have an impact on the OPEC's deal to lower production due to Saudi Arabia being one of the world major producers. The price of the Brent crude was down by 48 cents to $49.47 per barrel, the same case with the West Texas Intermediate, which went down by 26 cents to $47.40 pb. — KUNA

KUWAIT: Vehicle impounded during a police crackdown on reckless drivers in Kabd yesterday.

Six reckless drivers arrested in Kabd

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: The Interior Ministry's traffic department said it launched a sudden inspection campaign in the early hours of morning in Kabd yesterday, where crowds had gathered to watch some races and reckless driving, said security sources, noting that the campaign resulted in arresting six reckless drivers. Further, the department said other inspection campaigns held in the period of May 21-27 in various governorates resulted in filing 31,349 traffic citations, impounding 389 vehicles and arresting 55 motorists for committing extremely serious traffic violations.

Checkpoints

As part of the Interior Ministry's activities to enforce the law in various governorates, Ahmadi Security Directorate set up many checkpoints along various streets, which resulted in arresting four people wanted and sentenced to prison, eight wanted for drugs-related cases and 15 wanted for financial claims, in addition to arresting two citizens and two expats with hashish and ice.

Smuggler caught

An Iraqi man was arrested on arrival at Abdali land border outlet with possession of 5,407 illicit pills, said security sources, noting that custom inspectors suspected an ice box supposedly filled with fish and when they searched it, they found the pills. The suspect confessed of carrying the pills to deliver them to a bedoon man living in Kuwait. A case was filed and further investigations are in progress.

Ranch fire

A fire broke out in a ranch in Kabd, said security sources, noting that when they headed to the scene, firemen found out that the fire started in a warehouse used to store tents and power generators located over an area of 600 square meters. The fire was controlled without reporting any casualties.

Campaigns

As part of its ongoing cleaning campaigns, Hawally municipality inspectors announced that a three-day inspection campaign resulted in removing 96 illegal ads, filing 93 citations and destroying 898 kilograms of inedible food items. In addition, inspection teams continued following up cleaning operations outside 210 mosques and seven jogging areas on a daily basis. The teams added that 136 truckloads of construction waste, used furniture and tree branches were removed.

رمضان كريم
RAMADAN KAREEM

KUWAIT

Heritage

The 'Ardha' or war dance, considered an inherited tradition of the desert for people of the Arabian Peninsula. It was performed by combatants as a display of power before battles. Now, it is performed during national events and celebrations, in which men 'dance' to the beating of drums while waiving their raised swords and singing patriotic songs. (Source: A total of commemorative printed images by the Ministry of Information in the 1960s and 1970s. Prepared by Mahmoud Zakaria Abu Alella, heritage researcher in the Ministry of Information)

MAKE KUWAIT GREAT

Mohammad Rizwan Khan

Giving back to the community

By Ben Garcia

Each of us can contribute to making Kuwait a better place for all of us to live. In our daily deeds and actions, we can find - if we choose to look - opportunities for improving Kuwait's environment. From not littering on the streets, to choosing to be kind and helpful to others, each individual here can have a positive impact on the society as a whole. Kuwait Times wants to know what can you do?

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Mohammad Rizwan Khan is a 45-year-old Indian national who works as a Store Manager for Ali Alghanim company. He has been working in Kuwait for 19 years, and has one kid. He had the following to say when asked about what he would do to make Kuwait a better place:

"I will never throw garbage on the road or any other public places, even if no one sees me if I do it. I will keep waste items with me until I find a trash bin to throw them. I would also like to stop smoking in public. I have been in this beautiful country for the past 19 years, and love it because I also make my living in this part of the world. Many Kuwaitis are generous; this country is neat and clean; and people here are very cooperative. I thank Kuwait for hosting me here for my work, since it helps my family back in India."

VIVA celebrates annual Ramadan ghabga for staff

KUWAIT: VIVA, Kuwait's fastest-growing and most developed telecom operator, celebrated its annual Ramadan's Ghabga for its staff, at Symphony Hotel in Salmiya, in the presence of VIVA' CEO Engineer Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al-Badran and executives.

VIVA said that the continuous communication amid employees fosters the relationships between them and creates a motivating work environment to increase more efforts in order to maintain producing services, products and solutions that enriches the telecom market. The event featured different entertainment activities, presented by the Kuwaiti MC Abdullatif Al-Saleh, including Al-Mayouf band's show and competitions. At the end, participants enjoyed valuable prizes, and a cake was cut to mark the winning of Real Madrid team, VIVA's official partner, in the last UEFA Champions League Final, and suhoor food.

KUWAIT: The Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK) distributed suhoor meals to construction and cleaning workers as part of its social responsibility program activities during the holy month of Ramadan.

Kuwait serves $2.3 million iftar meals

KUWAIT: Kuwaiti Zakat House said Monday it was launching a charitable initiative aiming at serving 19,000 fast-breaking or iftar meals costing KD 700,000 (around $2.3 million) nationwide. It is the biggest philanthropic initiative carried out by Zakat House this year since it covers approximately 200 mosques and sites in all Kuwaiti governorates, the project chief Ayed Al-Mutairi said.

The plan is primarily intended to serve iftar meals that contain integrative nutritional substances as per relevant food criteria and conditions, he said. The initiative reflects Kuwaiti peopleís benevolence and eagerness to lend a hand to the needy and have-nots inside the country, particularly during the holy fasting month of Ramadan, Mutairi boasted. — KUNA

رمضان كريم
RAMADAN
KAREEM

KUWAIT: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is pictured during his visit to the Kuwait Disabled Sport Club.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah takes a 'selfie' with disabled athletes.
—KUNA photos

Crown Prince visits disabled, deaf clubs, blind association

KUWAIT: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah visited the Disabled Sport Club, the Kuwait Sports Club for the Deaf and the Kuwait Blind Association on Monday to convey greetings on the occasion of the holy month of Ramadan.

During his visit to the Kuwait Disabled Sport Club, His Highness the Crown Prince thanked the club for its great contributions in the name of Kuwait. He was accompanied by deputy head of Kuwait National Guard Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Minister of Amiri Diwan Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Sabah, Head of His Highness the Crown Prince Diwan Sheikh Mubarak Faisal Al-Sabah and head of the Diwan's Protocols Sheikh Mubarak Sabah Al-Sabah.

His Highness the Crown Prince reaffirmed the State's keenness on providing full support and care for the club's athletes. He said he was proud of the achievements of the club during international sport tournaments. His Highness the Crown Prince was received upon his arrival by Minister of Commerce and Industry and Acting Minister of State for Youth Khaled Al-Roudhan, Kuwait Disabled Sport Club honorary chairperson Sheikha Sheikha Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah, Public Authority for Sport (PAS) Deputy Director General for construction and maintenance Sheikh Humoud Al-Sabah, PAS Deputy Director General for sport Ahmad Khazal and Deputy Director General for Planning and Development Hussam Al-Saleh. His Highness the Crown Prince conveyed greetings of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on the occasion of the Holy Month of Ramadan.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince expressed his appreciation to the important role of Kuwait Sports Club for the Deaf for its contributions to sports, community, and culture, including the state keenness to continue to providing all what it takes to the club and its members. His Highness the Crown Prince also conveyed greetings by His Highness the Amir on the holy month of Ramadan.

Furthermore, His Highness the Crown Prince expressed his appreciation to Kuwait Blind Association for its contributions in social and cultural domains. His Highness the Crown Prince, who conveyed greetings of His Highness the Amir on the occasion of the holy month of Ramadan, underlined the State's keenness on providing full support and care for the association's members so they would contribute to the development of the society and the country in general.

His Highness the Crown Prince was received upon his arrival by Minister of State for Housing and Minister of State for Services, and Acting Minister of Social Affairs and Labor Yasser Abul, and honorary chairman of Kuwait Blind Association Fahad Bu Shaibah. — KUNA

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah poses for a group photo during his visit to the Kuwait Sports Club for the Deaf.

Children present flowers to His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah during his visit to the Kuwait Sports Club for the Deaf.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is honored during his visit to the Kuwait Disabled Sport Club.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah poses for a picture with children during his visit to the Kuwait Blind Association.

Crime Report

Four hurt in Sixth Ring Road crash

KUWAIT: Three Egyptians and an Indian were rushed to Jahra Hospital with various injuries they sustained when their vehicles collided along the Sixth Ring Road. A case was filed to determine the causes of the accident.

Blackmail

A citizen reported that a girl he knew and a lawyer representing her were blackmailing him and threatening to file a case accusing him of raping the girl unless he gave them KD 12,000. The man added that he realized what was happening when he insisted that he meets the girl in a cafe to smoke shisha, where the lawyer agreed to reduce the sum they demanded. A case was filed and the girl and her lawyer are being summoned.

Robbery

A GCC national doing time at the Central Jail is facing extra charges of robbery after he stole a surveillance camera from a solitary confinement cell to express his protest for being kept there for some time.

Suicide attempt

Another inmate, a citizen, was found bleeding after he slashed his wrists to commit suicide, said security sources, noting that the inmate was doing time for drug-related charges. He was rushed to Farwaniya Hospital for treatment.

Missing jewelry

An Egyptian woman reported that jewelry worth KD 3,000 were missing from her house. She said she suspected five of her neighbors who had been visiting her at various times of the day. A case was filed and further investigations are in progress.

Accident

An Egyptian construction worker fell from the first floor of an under-construction building in Rumaithiya and broke his pelvis. The man was rushed to hospital for treatment and a case was filed pending investigations to find whether a crime was involved.

Kidnap

A citizen reported that a bedoon abducted his 14-year-old son and threatened to harm him unless he repairs the damage he had caused when he collided his father's vehicle with the man's car. A case was filed.

— Translated from the Arabic press

Al-Anbaa

Al-Anbaa

'Ayam'

By Salah Al-Sayer

Like most others, I used to think, 'Ajami' or 'Al-Ajam' referred to someone who spoke awkwardly and whose words were not understood, even though he was an Arab. However, reading the 'Lesan Al-Arab' dictionary (Arabic guide), I found out that 'Al-Ajam' also meant non-Arabs. In Kuwait, the term is used to describe Persians and people coming from Iran. The word is even pronounced as 'Ayam' or 'Ajam' to term Kuwaitis of Persian origin, whether Sunnis or Shiites.

Some good intentioned persons believe that it is not right to use the term 'Ayam' because they believe that it degrades a basic national constituent of the Kuwaiti society; that is Kuwaitis of Persian origins. We have so much in common with 'Ayam' Kuwaitis as fellow-citizens. We share the same glorious history and aspirations about a brighter future for us, our kids and our grandchildren. We all belong to this land and have participated in the development of this nation. They are as Kuwaiti as any other citizen of Bahraini, Hasawi, Najdi, African, Zubairi or Bloushi origin is.

It is obvious that diversity in the nation is the result of ancient immigrations, and Kuwait has a secular society. Social sects are known to exist everywhere including the United States which have African Americans, Asian Americans, Latin Americans and Arab Americans because of the very long periods those different people have lived together as one nation. Kuwaitis have always co-existed with individuals of other nationalities and have bonded over onboard fishing, trading and pearling ships, which has helped created a sense of uniqueness in the personality of Kuwaitis that is inclusive of positive and negative ones. *— Translated by Kuwait*

Al-Jarida

The worrier, the healthier

By Hassan Al-Essa

Nitsu Abebe, in one of his articles, wrote: "We are not in the midst of real disaster, of course: No Civil War, no Great Depression, not even that grim bit of the 1970s. Nonetheless, 18 percent of people are experiencing actual anxiety disorders in any given year and Xanax has eclipsed Prozac as the emblem of the national mood. It is more like an economic anxiety in fear of the unknown. New technologies are introduced on a daily basis shaking out consumers' lives as they keep panting to keep up with them. With Donald Trump's unexpected rise, anxiety took a more political turn with his so many electoral promises that all share concerns about fears of possible bad consequences that might and might not happen."

Abebe also added, "the poor do not have financial concerns because they do not have enough money in the first place. They suffer from poverty while the middle class have concerns of descending down social classifications to join the lower ones and once they are down there, such concerns may vanish unless the worst happens or is expected."

Well, what about the Arabian Gulf? Our concerns (that is if we are still culturally healthy and have any) will not have the same reasons of those of 18 percent of the world's mightiest power. Our concern is subject to what the state decides because the good old days before 2014, which marked the fall of oil prices, have gone and our countries are currently living on previous savings; which is a huge concern in itself.

For instance, concerns might be normal as long as citizens have nothing to say about their present or future, and as long as administrations claim to know what is best for us and do not want to share such decisions with us.

Today's concerns can be summed up as 'it is high time' because the political administration's performance calls for further concerns since it is still running things as before; giving generously to certain groups and allowing individuals to misuse their official positions without fear of accountability. In addition, the repeated criticism published in papers is not much useful. Aren't those reasons enough for anxiety? *— Translated by Kuwait Times*

Ooredoo visits Kharafi Activity Kids Center

As part of its youth volunteer program

KUWAIT: Ooredoo, Kuwait's fastest network, visited Al-Kharafi Activity Kids Center with a number of participants in its youth volunteers program last week. The visit comes to reiterate Ooredoo's commitment to supporting all segments of society, especially during the holy month of Ramadan.

Volunteers were introduced to the different departments within the center, and to the functions of each department, before volunteers organized an activity session for the children. In a statement to the press, Ooredoo highlighted its commitment to supporting all entities that look after people with disabilities, and that this is deep-rooted within its corporate social responsibility agenda.

Earlier this month, Ooredoo kicked off its Ramadan program of activities with distributing hundreds of meals to the needy workers across Kuwait City with Ooredoo's volunteer program truck.

This is in addition to a distribution center in the company's Ramadan tent, located across the head office on Soor Street. The initiatives were executed by Ooredoo's own volunteer program members, led by the company's Corporate Communications department. Additionally, Ooredoo held an iftar feast for the children of the Kuwait Down Syndrome Center and their parents and the attending staff as part of its community outreach and corporate social responsibility, sharing the festive spirits of the holy month.

Ooredoo has previously collaborated with a number of entities in Kuwait, such as Abdullah Al-Nouri institution to aid Syrian refugees in different part of the world, in addition its collaboration with the 'Kiswat Al-Khair' campaign to distribute clothes for needy families during the holy month. Also Ooredoo representatives has conducted a visit to 'Yadawi' center to give the volunteers a comprehensive idea about how to recycle waste, sort, and reuse it in manufacturing children toys to be donated to children in need. The program will include participation from similar groups.

Ooredoo reiterated its commitment to empowering youth and supporting groups that focus on volunteer work, and expressed its pride in partnering with reputable organizations throughout the month of Ramadan to encourage volunteer work. Empowering youth is among Ooredoo's top priorities through its CSR strategy.

ABK's 21st group of participants graduate from 'ABK Academy'

KUWAIT: Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) congratulated the 21st group of students who recently graduated from the 'ABK Academy,' during a ceremony that was held for the 14 participants who successfully completed the four week intensive program.

The 21st round of training consisted of two main parts. The first was classroom facilitation focused and the second was 'on the job' training, whereby the candidates had the opportunity to be fully engaged in the work culture within the Bank, and the day to day operations that presented them with a valuable hands on experience. ABK Academy has graduated a total of 482 candidates to date; preparing a substantial number of individuals to take on jobs within the Bank.

This type of involvement and contribution is of tremendous value not only to national youth, who gain a wealth of insight into banking as a profession, but also to the Bank who has the chance to train and employ local talent.

Kuwait's youth have always been of primary interest to ABK. With the launch of the ABK Academy in 2009, the Bank has been able to encourage youth to consider a career in banking. The Academy covers multiple areas in the banking profession, with particular focus on customer service, which is the backbone of any successful company.

The ABK Academy was launched as an educational platform that focuses on training students and individuals seeking a job opportunity in the banking sector. By engaging with these participants, the Bank is able to build on existing potential and talent, and better identify the areas in the bank, in which they could put this positive energy to work.

KUWAIT: Under auspices and the attendance of Lieutenant General Hashem Al-Rifae, Undersecretary of Kuwait National Guard, the Operations Commandment recently celebrated the conclusion of a basic infantry training course for batch 31 officers.

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MUSLIM ASIAN STATES CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE

KUALA LUMPUR/KARACHI: Non-Arab nations in Asia, such as Malaysia, Indonesia and Pakistan, are getting caught in the middle after Saudi Arabia led a clampdown on Qatar, accusing the tiny emirate of supporting pro-Iranian Islamist militants. Malaysia had rolled out the red carpet for Saudi Arabia's King Salman at the end of February, the first by a Saudi king to Malaysia in more than a decade. Then, the following month, Kuala Lumpur signed a defence cooperation agreement with Qatar.

A source close to the Malaysian government said that the recent efforts to strengthen ties with Qatar, including a visit by the foreign minister last month, will probably now be put on the backburner. "We have more to lose by siding with Qatar," said the source, who requested anonymity. On Monday, a half-dozen countries, including Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, and Bahrain, cut diplomatic ties with the energy-rich emirate, accusing it of backing Tehran and Islamist groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood. Qatar has said it does not support terrorism and the rupture was founded on "baseless fabricated claims."

Doha now faces an acute economic plight as it relies on Gulf neighbors for 80 percent of its food imports. The diplomatic clamp down on Qatar is seen as an indirect jab at Iran, and leaves non-Arab Muslims countries in an "uncomfortable position", according to James Dorsey, a senior fellow at Singapore's S Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS). "The Saudis view Iran as the foremost terrorist threat rather than the Islamic State and a lot of non-Arab Muslims countries ... would probably not agree with that," Dorsey told Reuters.

Pakistan's Official Silence

Indonesia, Malaysia and Pakistan are predominantly Sunni-Muslim countries like Saudi Arabia. Jakarta has sometimes tried to play a mediating role when inter-Arab tensions have flared, particularly between Saudi Arabia and predominantly Shiite Iran. Jakarta's Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi received a phone call from Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif on Monday who wanted to discuss the rift, Foreign Ministry spokesman Arrmanatha Nasir said. Indonesia has called for reconciliation and dialogue in the latest diplomatic clash.

The dilemmas are particularly acute for nuclear-armed Pakistan, which has the world's sixth-largest army and the largest military in the Muslim world. Sunni-majority Pakistan maintains deep links with the establishment in Riyadh, which provided Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif with political asylum after he was ousted in a 1999 military coup. But with a large Shiite minority and a shared western border with Iran, Pakistan has a lot to lose from rising sectarian tensions. In 2015, Pakistan declined a Saudi call to join a Riyadh-led military intervention in Yemen to fight Iranian-allied insurgents.

Pakistan has maintained official silence about the latest rift in the Arab world, loathe to be seen taking sides between Saudi Arabia and Iran. Pakistan also has close ties with Qatar itself, including a 15-year agreement signed last year to import up to 3.75 million tonnes of liquefied natural gas a year from the emirate, a major step in filling Pakistan's energy shortfall. "Pakistan has to act very carefully. In my opinion, there is only one option for Pakistan: To stay neutral," said retired army Brigadier Shaukat Qadir, now an independent risk and security analyst.

Islamic Military Alliance

Pakistan's recently retired army chief, General Raheel Sharif, traveled to Riyadh in April to lead the Saudi-led Islamic Military Alliance. The stated mission of the multinational alliance is to fight terrorism but it is increasingly seen as anti-Iran. "There are rumors flying around that Raheel Sharif is pulling out of the Saudi-led military alliance. I hope they are true and he comes back soon," said Qadir. Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in Jan 2016 visited both Riyadh and Tehran along with Sharif, who was then the army chief, in an attempt to bridge the deepening chasm.

Relations between Malaysia and Saudi Arabia have been in the spotlight over the last two years after Saudi Arabia was dragged into a multi-billion dollar corruption scandal at Malaysian state fund IMDB, founded by Najib.

Najib has denied any wrongdoing in the money-laundering case which is now being investigated by several countries including the US, Switzerland and Singapore.

During King Salman's visit to Malaysia, Saudi oil giant Aramco agreed to buy a $7 billion equity stake in Malaysian state energy firm Petronas' major refining and petrochemical project. But Qatar has also invested between $12 billion and $15 billion in Malaysia, according to media reports. RSIS' Dorsey said non-Arab Muslim countries like Malaysia would be "put on the spot" if the Saudis demand that its trade partners pick a side.

"They (Malaysia) can say either I do business with you, or say I'm not going to make that choice. Then the question would be how would the Saudis or the UAE respond to that," Dorsey said. "But we're not there yet, and there's no certainty that it will get there." — Reuters

HAZIMA, Syria: Talal Sello (center) spokesman for the US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) gives a speech as SDF commander Rojda Felat (second left) and other fighters listen on in this village on the northern outskirts of the Islamic States (IS) group's Syrian bastion of Raqqa yesterday. — AFP

US-BACKED FIGHTERS THRUST INTO RAQQA

ASSAULT OVERLAPS WITH FINAL STAGES OF MOSUL CAMPAIGN

HAZIMA, Syria: US-backed fighters broke into the city of Raqqa yesterday as they launched a final assault to drive the Islamic State group from its de facto Syrian capital. The attack on the northern city at the heart of IS' Syrian territory has been seven months in the making and is backed by air support, military advisers and weapons deliveries from the US-led coalition. Seized by the militants in early 2014, Raqqa became notorious as a hub for IS's operations in Syria, Iraq and beyond. The city has been the scene of some of IS' worst atrocities, including gruesome executions, public displays of bodies and the trafficking of women.

It was one of the twin pivots of IS' so-called "caliphate", with Mosul in neighboring Iraq - where US-backed forces are also bearing down on the militants. After months sealing off access routes to the city from the east, north and west, the US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces yesterday entered city limits for the first time. "Our forces entered the city of Raqqa from the eastern district of Al-Meshleb," SDF commander Rojda Felat told AFP, adding that clashes were also raging on the city's northern outskirts. "They are fighting street battles inside Raqqa now, and we have experience in urban warfare," she said.

'Decisive blow'

The advance was backed by heavy air strikes by the US-led coalition, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said. The coalition began its air campaign against IS in Iraq in Aug 2014, expanding its operations to Syria the following month. The coalition appears keen to expel IS from its last major urban bastions before the "caliphate" turns three years old later this month. Defeating IS in Raqqa would "deliver a decisive blow to the idea of ISIS as a physical caliphate," coalition commander Lieutenant General Steve Townsend said.

Warning the fight would be "long and difficult," Townsend framed the offensive as part of a greater struggle against IS, which has claimed attacks in many countries including last month's deadly bombing in Manchester. "We all saw the heinous attack in Manchester," he said. "ISIS threatens all our nations, not just Iraq and Syria, but in our homelands as well."

The SDF launched its operation to take Raqqa - dubbed Wrath of the Euphrates - in November. It then scored a series of victories in the wider province, including capturing the strategic town of Tabqa and its adjacent dam in May. Yesterday, SDF spokesman Talal Sello made the long-awaited announcement that the battle for Raqqa itself had begun. "We declare today the start of the great battle to liberate the city of Raqqa, the so-called capital of terrorism and terrorists," Sello told reporters in the village of Hazima, north of the city. "With the international coalition's warplanes and the state-of-the-art weapons they provided to us, we will seize Raqqa from Daesh," Sello told AFP, using an Arabic acronym for IS.

Concerns for civilians

Sello urged civilians inside the city to keep away from IS positions and from the frontlines. The United Nations said it was concerned for the safety of more than 400,000 men, women and children in Raqqa province who may be caught up in the violence.

As the SDF has drawn closer to the city, reports of civilian casualties in coalition air strikes have swelled. On Monday, the Observatory said a coalition bombing raid killed 21 civilians as they tried to escape Raqqa by dinghy on the Euphrates River. The same route leading out of the city's southern districts has been used by IS fighters, Abdel Rahman said. An estimated 300,000 civilians were believed to have been living under IS rule in Raqqa, including 80,000 displaced from other parts of the country. Thousands have fled in recent months to other parts of the province or to makeshift camps in territory newly captured by the SDF.

But there are risks for civilians who try to escape the last cities under militant rule. Yesterday, UN human rights chief Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein accused IS of murdering dozens of civilians to prevent them from fleeing Mosul last week. "Yesterday, my staff reported to me that bodies of murdered Iraqi men, women and children still lay on the streets of the Al-Shira neighborhood of western Mosul, after at least 163 people were shot and killed by Daesh to prevent them from fleeing," he said.

More than 320,000 people have been killed since civil war erupted in Syria in 2011. It began with anti-government protests but has since evolved into a complex multi-front war involving the army and rebel groups as well as the SDF and IS. — Agencies

Secret maths, dead-drops: How Raqqa resisted IS rule

BEIRUT: Secret dates, dead-drops and "bullet-free" maths lessons: These are just some of the ways residents of the Islamic State group's Syrian bastion Raqqa resisted years of militant rule. IS has been ruling Raqqa with an iron fist since 2014, imposing its draconian interpretation of Islamic law on the northern city's 300,000-strong population. But as a US-backed offensive broke into an eastern district of Raqqa yesterday, residents have been telling AFP how they spent years quietly resisting militant orders.

Sami, 24, met 22-year-old Rima six years ago, when Syria's uprising broke out with anti-government protests across the country. "We used to meet up, talk in the street, sit together in public spaces," Sami told AFP, using a pseudonym to protect himself as he was speaking from Raqqa. But when IS took over, everything changed. The group deployed its hisba (religious police) units across Raqqa to enforce dress codes and a ban on interactions between unmarried people of opposite sexes.

Sami and Rima were forced to take their relationship underground. "We started being afraid of IS' patrols, so we tried everything. We wrote notes to each other that would be delivered by young kids," he said. With satellites and private Internet connections banned, Sami used IS-run Internet cafes to send Rima electronic messages, which she could only read hours later when she visited a similar cafe. The system was a romantic take on the system of dead-drops typically used for covert communication among spies.

'I wanted to die'

Sometimes, the couple even took the risk of arranging public rendezvous to steal furtive glances of each other. "She would tell me, for example, that she was leaving the house at a certain time. We'd agree to meet at a shop," Sami recalled. Rima would enter the store in the full black face veil mandated by IS, but Sami always recognized her. "I would come in and we'd talk a little bit before a Daesh guy would come in and ruin everything," he said, using the Arabic acronym for IS.

One morning, their luck ran out. As Sami watched helplessly from a distance, hisba officers detained Rima in the street because "her clothes were not up to par". "I was so angry and I began crying, but she was signaling to me not to approach them. I wanted to die at the time." Rima's parents said they would give their blessing for her to marry Sami only if they fled Raqqa together, but financial difficulties have kept him in the northern city. Thousands of people have poured out of Raqqa as US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces edged closer to the city limits.

'Ticking time bombs'

When IS overran Raqqa, it also seized control of one of its most valuable resources: Its schools. As it has done in other cities, IS replaced the traditional curriculum, including classes on physics and chemistry, with religious courses and its own macabre twist on arithmetic. "Studying maths became about counting rifles, pistols, explosives, and car bombs," said a former public school teacher in the city on condition of anonymity.

One subject taught children how to carry out suicide attacks and boasted about the "virgins" with which the attacker could be rewarded. "These courses turn students into ticking time bombs," said the teacher, who refused to work in the IS-run institutions. Parents, too, stopped sending their kids to school, fearing they would be brainwashed. Instead, they reached out to former teachers, asking if they could hold secret tutoring sessions at home on biology, English and bullet-free arithmetic.

Teachers would arrive at a student's home at an agreed-upon time for private or small group sessions, but instructors would avoid full-sized classes to stay under the radar. "The teachers who are doing this live in constant fear. But we feel like we have a duty to society and to a child's right to a violence-free education," the former teacher told AFP. One father has reached out to a close friend and teacher, asking if he could tutor his sons, seven and nine. "It's scary for us to think that our kids could start thinking like Daesh 0 talking about takfir or slaves or virgins," the parent told AFP."This is destroying an entire generation."— AFP

Third London attacker named as anger grows over security flaws

May's lead shrivels to just over single point

LONDON: Police yesterday identified the third attacker in the weekend terror assault in London amid mounting anger, two days before an election, over how the jihadist killers had apparently escaped surveillance. With flags at half-mast, the nation fell silent at 11:00am (1000 GMT) to remember the seven killed and dozens injured on Saturday night - a mourning ritual now grimly familiar after two previous terror attacks in less than three months.

Police identified the third attacker as Youssef Zaghba, a 22-year-old Italian of Moroccan descent, a day after naming his accomplices as Khuram Shazad Butt, 27, a Pakistan-born Briton, and Rachid Redouane, 30, a self-described Moroccan-Libyan dual national.Police also said they had made an overnight raid in east London and arrested a 27-year-old man early Tuesday. Twelve people arrested earlier have since been released. Butt "was known to the police and MI5" but there was no intelligence to suggest the attack was being planned, the Metropolitan Police said. Zaghba was "not a police or MI5 subject of interest," it added, an assertion that seemed to conflict with accounts in the Italian media.

Criticism immediately flared about how Butt was able to carry out the attack. He had notably featured in a Channel 4 TV documentary entitled "The Jihadis Next Door" and, according to the British media, numerous people alarmed by his views had gone to the authorities. And according to Italian media reports, Zaghba's status as a potential militant had been notified to the British and Moroccan secret services.

The London attack follows the May 22 suicide bombing at the Manchester Arena by Salman Abedi - killing 22 people, including children - who was also known to British intelligence services. "Why didn't they stop TV jihadi?" The Sun asked on its front page, while the Daily Mirror demanded: "So how the hell did he slip through?" The conservative Daily Telegraph added: "It is astonishing that people who pose such a danger to life and limb should be able to parade their foul ideology on TV with no consequences."

Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson acknowledged the security services had to provide answers. "People are going to look at the front pages today and they are going to say, 'How on earth could we have let this guy or possibly more through the net? What happened? How can he possibly be on a Channel 4 program and then committing atrocities like this?'," Johnson said on Sky News. "That is a question that will need to be answered by MI5, by the police, as the investigation goes on," he said. Prime Minister Theresa May, her language more tenuous, told Sky News: "I absolutely recognize people's concerns." "MI5 and the police have already said they would be reviewing how they dealt with Manchester and I would expect them to do exactly the same in relation to London Bridge," she said.

LONDON: A combination of pictures released by the British Metropolitan Police Service yesterday shows (from left) Youssef Zaghba, Khuram Shazad Butt and Rachid Redouane believed by police to be the three attackers in the June 3 terror attack on London Bridge. —AFP

May under pressure

After a brief pause, election campaigning resumed on Monday, with security dominating the agenda ahead of Thursday's vote. May has vowed to crack down on extremist content online, saying: "We cannot and must not pretend that things can continue as they are." But the premier was also facing mounting criticism for her record on security in the six years she served as Britain's interior minister before becoming prime minister last year. Between 2009 and 2016, the number of police officers fell by almost 20,000, or around 14 percent, according to the independent Institute for Fiscal Studies think tank.

Opposition leader Jeremy Corbyn has pledged to hire thousands of officers for neighborhood duties, arguing that a grassroots approach would curb crime and radicalization. Analysts say the security debate favors Corbyn, who already seems to have been gaining ground ahead of Thursday's vote. May called the snap general election on April 18, little more than two years into a five-year parliament, hoping that a commanding majority would give her a stronger hand in the Brexit negotiations with the EU. According to a poll published yesterday by the group Survation, May's lead over Labour has shrivelled to just over a single point - 41.6 percent to 40.4 percent.

Rejection by imams

In Saturday's attack, three men, wearing fake suicide vests, mowed down pedestrians on London Bridge in a van before slashing and stabbing revellers in Borough Market, a bustling district of late-night bars and restaurants. Praise has been heaped upon the police for their swift response and bravery. An armed unit killed the trio with 50 shots within eight minutes of the alarm being raised. First responders were prominent in TV footage of the minute's silence, which showed police, firefighters and ambulance workers lined in mourning at stations and other public places.

Amaq, an outlet affiliated with the Islamic State group, said the attacks were carried out by "a detachment of fighters from Islamic State". But London Mayor Sadiq Khan, describing himself as "a proud and patriotic British Muslim", slapped down those who invoked Islam to justify acts of murder. In what it said was an unprecedented move, the Muslim Council of Britain said more than 130 imams and other religious leaders had refused to perform the traditional Islamic funeral prayer for the attackers. A Canadian and a Frenchman were among the dead and citizens of other nations were among the 48 injured, including Australia, Bulgaria, France, Greece and New Zealand. Eighteen are still in critical condition, according to health authorities. — AFP

UK security struggles to foil 'copycat' attackers

LONDON: Just hours before Khuram Butt and two accomplices drove a rented van into pedestrians on London Bridge and stabbed people nearby, he was asking neighbors where he could hire a vehicle. One of the neighbors, Ikenna Chigbo, said he recognized Butt from a photo issued by British police following Saturday night's attack in the capital which killed seven and injured nearly 50. Chigbo told Reuters that the man he knew as "Abz" had shown interest in a van he had rented.

"I was in the process of moving house, he was looking at the van, asking me where I hired it, how much it cost, and if the vans were available in automatic," said Chigbo, who lived in a neighboring apartment in Barking, east London. "That was Saturday, approximately 3 pm. He came across ... almost euphoric. He just seemed on a whole different level. It was quite strange." Reuters could not independently verify the identity of the man who spoke to Chigbo.

About seven hours later, shortly before 10 pm (2100 GMT), Butt - along with Rachid Redouane and Youssef Zaghba - began their rampage across London Bridge and through the bustling Borough Market area. All three were shot dead at the scene by police. Pakistani-born Butt, 27, a keen fan of Arsenal soccer club, was known to the intelligence services but not thought to be actively plotting an attack. His conversation with Chigbo also reinforces suggestions that Britain's third deadly militant incident in just three months may have involved little planning or sophistication.

Police have said they need a major rethink about how to counter such plots by people who had come onto their radar but were not considered a serious threat. "We are all needing to look very hard at our strategy at what we've been doing," said Cressida Dick, London's police chief. "In my view we will need to change again in the future." Saturday's attack follows a similar method first seen in Britain four years ago when two British Muslim converts used a car to mow down soldier Lee Rigby before stabbing him to death.

The London Bridge rampage was almost a direct copy of the crude attack in March when Khalid Masood ploughed into pedestrians on London's Westminster Bridge before stabbing a policeman to death in the grounds of parliament. Neither attack seemed to be the result of any long-term planning nor, despite the claim of responsibility by Islamic State, any serious foreign direction. "We are dealing with people who appear very volatile, very unstable many of them, people who are prepared to use low-tech methods, (who) sometimes go from thinking about the idea to carrying out the attack in a very short space of time," Dick said, adding further copycat attacks were a possibility.

'Terrorism Breeds Terrorism'

Prime Minister Theresa May has said Britain is faced with a new trend where "terrorism breeds terrorism" and inspired not just by "carefully-constructed plots after years of planning and training - and not even as lone attackers radicalized online - but by copying one another and often using the crudest of means of attack".

Britain's domestic intelligence agency MI5 has identified about 23,000 people as potentially violent Islamists with 3,000 of these considered to pose a threat. It is currently running 500 active investigations. "It is a very large number. It's very, very hard. You only have to think how would you go about keeping under very active surveillance over 20,000 people," Dick said. Most of those involved in the three recent attacks were known to the security services, but none had been considered to pose a threat that required extra surveillance.

The Westminster Bridge attacker had shown up on the periphery of previous terrorism investigations that brought Masood to MI5's notice, but not enough to warrant further action. Investigators now believe he was a "lone wolf", who radicalized himself through material on the Internet. Salman Abedi - the 22-year-old born in Britain to Libyan parents who killed 22 people in a suicide attack on a pop concert in Manchester last month - was also known to MI5 but not under active investigation. The BBC reported concerns had been raised with the authorities on at least three occasions.

Butt was known to police and MI5. He appeared in a TV documentary last year about a radical group which was seen at one stage unfurling an Islamic State flag. One of his friends told BBC Asian Network he had phoned an anti-terrorist hotline set up by British authorities because he feared Butt had been radicalized after watching clips of US preacher Ahmad Musa Jebril, whose online sermons have been a leading source of inspiration for foreign fighters in Syria.

"I did my bit, I know a lot of people did but the authorities didn't do their bit and that's what's shocking," the friend, who the BBC did not identify, said. Another neighbor also said she had reported Butt to police two years ago after she feared he was radicalizing children in a local park. "There was no intelligence to suggest that this attack was being planned and the investigation had been prioritized accordingly," police said in a statement.

A report by Britain's Intelligence and Security Committee into Rigby's murder in May 2013 concluded the security services could not have stopped the attack. However, one of the killers had been investigated five times, twice as a high priority, and it said more needed to be done in dealing with low-level suspects. With finite resources, the authorities have to weigh up who poses the greatest threat and needs intensive monitoring. At least two dozen people are needed to carry out 24-hour surveillance on just one suspect and about 50 officers can be required at times.

"It's costly and difficult and it's hard to know what's going on in people's minds," Commissioner Dick said. The authorities say they have foiled 18 plots since Rigby's killing, including five since the Westminster Bridge attack in March. Raffaello Pantucci, Director of International Security Studies at the Royal United Services Institute think-tank, said it was not clear whether intelligence agencies would be able to develop a system which could cope with such low-tech plots. "You can do all the sort of calculations you want ... but ultimately it's going to be difficult if all it takes to do a plot is to get a knife and drive your car into people," he said. "In a way it would be even worse if they didn't know who these people were, and were looking in completely the wrong place." — Reuters

Mosul displaced face arrest

KHAZIR, Iraq: After fleeing the battleground city of Mosul, Yusra Mohammed says her children were detained by Iraqi Kurdish forces and she did not hear from them for around two months. Hundreds of thousands of people have fled their homes as Iraqi forces press a massive operation to retake Mosul from the Islamic State militant group. Security forces have tried to prevent IS members from slipping out among the fleeing civilians, but their efforts to catch militants have added to the burdens of families already suffering from the war that has consumed their city.

Mohammed said members of the Asayesh, the Iraqi Kurdish region's internal security forces, detained her two teenage boys after the family left east Mosul in February. "The Asayesh came to ask about Saddam and Qusay, and said they were wanted... and took them," she told AFP in the Khazir camp for displaced people, referring to her sons, who are aged 16 and 14. "They were accused of being Dawaesh," Mohammed said, using a pejorative Arabic term for members of IS.

The boys "were working selling water in Mosul before the Dawaesh prevented them from doing so, and they became unemployed", she said. Mohammed heard nothing about the fate of her boys for weeks, until she received a letter from the Red Cross that included a message from Saddam. He asked for "a lawyer and a meeting and money," saying that he was in a juvenile prison in the city of Dohuk, one of three provincial capitals in Iraq's Kurdish region. They "are young and are being unjustly treated and we do not have money for a lawyer," Mohammed said, the fatigue and sadness clear on her face.

Her sons were arrested some two months after the family arrived at the camp in Khazir following a complaint by an informant, their mother said. She appealed to Kurdish authorities for a trial: "If my sons are found guilty or are cooperating with the Dawaesh, try them" in court. Mohammed's family is not the only one in the camp to have had members arrested after fleeing fighting and instability in the Mosul area. Two days after Mousa Mahmud Mousa, 57, arrived at the camp in March, Kurdish forces arrested his 27-year-old son Wazir.

Displaced Iraqi Yusra Mohammed holds a letter from the Central Tracing Agency of the Red Cross stating the whereabouts of her two teenage sons, as she stands at the Al-Khazir camp for the internally displaced, located between Arbil and Mosul on Monday. — AFP

'We are imprisoned here'

"He employed workers who previously worked with the Dawaesh, but they (security forces) told him: 'As long as Dawaesh worked with you, you are a Daeshi,'" Mousa said. His son was running a shop that produced water tanks, and had been a teacher before IS seized Mosul in 2014. Like Mohammed, Mousa received a letter from the Red Cross confirming his son's detention, in his case in the Kurdish regional capital of Arbil. "We want to go out to see him but they prevented that," Mousa said."My son is imprisoned in Arbil and we are imprisoned here."

People in the camp say the Kurdish forces have their identification cards and do not let them leave pending the completion of a security investigation. Human Rights Watch said Saturday: "New cases have emerged of Kurdistan Regional Government authorities detaining men and boys fleeing Mosul on suspicion of affiliation with the Islamic State" group. "Family members reported that after Kurdish authorities took their relatives into custody, the families had no contact with the detainees for as long as four months," the watchdog said.

"Authorities would not tell the families where their relatives were, and...the families had no means to challenge their relatives' detention," it said. A Kurdish regional government committee tasked with responding to international reports rejected both the families' accounts and HRW's findings.

"All defendants are provided access to lawyers and family members, and their families are informed of their arrest," the committee said in a statement. Arrests are based on "substantial evidence" and only carried out after a warrant from a judge is obtained, it said.

The committee added the region's procedures were necessary "to safeguard itself against acts of potential terrorism". But Abdullah Suleiman said his 30-year-old brother Ali was arrested based on the length of his beard and suspicion over his name. "We don't know anything about him," Suleiman said. — AFP

Palestinian granddad, 81, sits high school exams

HEBRON: A year into his ninth decade, Abdel-Qader Abu Ajameyah is studying hard and hoping for the best as he sits exams for his high school diploma. The 81-year-old, a retired food salesman from Hebron in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, took the national test for the first time last year but failed. So he's having another go. A father of 14 children, he has been studying five hours a day and doing his best to concentrate despite the attempts of some of his 36 grandchildren to get him to play.

"I like education," he said with pride, wearing a formal suit and tie. "There is no limit for someone to study, it does not stop at a certain age. "I want to set an example to generations - never stop learning." Abu Ajameyah is taking the exams in a room set aside for him at a local school. A recent stroke has restricted his hand movement, making it difficult to write, so he dictates the answers to a woman aide who fills in the papers. Figures from the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics show illiteracy among Palestinians aged 15 and above stands at just 3.3 percent, one of the lowest rates in the Arab world. Abu Ajameyah gets support from his family, especially his wife, who is constantly trying to keep the grandchildren distracted while he studies. "My mother takes care of all my father's needs as if he was an 18-year-old high school student," said 43-year-old Zakaria, one of Abu Ajameyah's sons. "We all encourage him and we are all very proud of him."

Zakaria said his father began school in a village near Ramla, in what is now Israel, before Israel's creation in 1948. During the 1948 Arab-Israeli war, Abu Ajameyah's family was forced to flee, becoming refugees in the West Bank. Abu Ajameyah soon gave up school to work selling food, and only started thinking about studying again once he retired decades later. — Reuters

Trump seizes London attack to push domestic crackdown

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump seized on the London terror attack to demand the US ban on travelers from some Muslim countries be reinstated Monday, sparking a diplomatic row with Britain and jeopardizing his legal defense of the measure in the process. In the wake of Saturday's deadly attack, Trump renewed calls for a travel crackdown, while attacking London's Muslim mayor, the media, Democrats, judges and opponents who accuse him of playing the politics of fear.

Trump has made combatting jihadists a central plank of his politics, using deliberately inflammatory rhetoric and attacking the "political correctness" of those advocating a nuanced approach. The "special relationship" with Britain became the latest casualty of that hardline stance Monday. With the seven victims of Saturday's attack not yet buried, Trump repeatedly criticized London Mayor Sadiq Khan, whom he accused of playing down the terror threat.

Khan had warned Londoners that an increased police presence in the wake of the attacks was nothing to worry about. Trump misconstrued that statement, and went on to accuse Khan of making up a "pathetic excuse" for his remarks. "We must stop being politically correct and get down to the business of security for our people. If we don't get smart it will only get worse," Trump said. Privately, British officials - many of whom call London home - were incandescent with rage.

'Feud and division'

Prime Minister Theresa May, who is under growing pressure to denounce Trump ahead of Thursday's election, came to Khan's defense. "I think Sadiq Khan is doing a good job and it's wrong to say anything else - he's doing a good job," she said, despite the pair being from opposite political parties. May had already faced pressure to criticize Trump or even withdraw his invitation for a state visit after he pulled out of a global climate deal and edged away from collective security arrangements under NATO.

Khan, London's first Muslim mayor told British media he had "better and more important things to focus on" than responding to Trump's tweets. "Some people thrive on feud and division. We are not going to let Donald Trump divide our communities," he later added.

'Unacceptable' attack or media 'spin'?

In the United States, many veteran diplomats and officials decried Trump's remarks. "To my friends in the UK: I apologize for this," said Ben Rhodes, a former national security aide to Barack Obama. New York Mayor Bill De Blasio said Khan was "doing an extraordinary job supporting Londoners in a time of pain. President Trump's attack on him is unacceptable." The White House later tried to play down Trump's tweets. "I don't see that the president is picking a fight with the mayor of London at all," said spokeswoman Sarah Huckabee Sanders.

She accused the media of putting "spin" on the issue. "I think the point is, is there is a reason to be alarmed. We have constant attacks going on, not just there, but across the globe, and we have to start putting national security and global security at an all-time high," she said.

In the Supreme Court's hands

Trump also found himself in hot water over his tough-talking tweets defending his ban on travelers from several Muslim countries, which is currently stalled in the federal courts. The White House has struggled to prevent the measures from being permanently struck down, insisting it is not a "ban" and does not target Muslims - which would almost certainly be unconstitutional. Trump did not mince words. "People, the lawyers and the courts can call it whatever they want, but I am calling it what we need and what it is, a TRAVEL BAN!" he tweeted. "In any event we are EXTREME VETTING people coming into the US in order to help keep our country safe. The courts are slow and political!" he said, attacking the judiciary in a way that is rare in American politics. The husband of senior Trump aide Kellyanne Conway was among those who warned those remarks may pose legal problems for the administration at the Supreme Court. "These tweets may make some ppl feel better," George Conway said on Twitter, but "certainly won't help" get five votes on the Supreme Court.

In a rare move on Friday, the Supreme Court expedited consideration of the case, ordering the American Civil Liberties Union - which represents the plaintiffs - to respond by June 12 to the Trump administration's petition for court consideration. Once it receives the response, the high court could quickly rule on whether to take up the case. Trump called Monday for a "much tougher version" of his travel ban and an "expedited" hearing for the measure before the Supreme Court.

Trump issued his initial travel ban by executive order in January, but that measure - which banned entry to nationals from seven countries for 90 days and suspended the nation's refugee program for 120 days - was quickly halted by the courts. He then issued a second version, but that too was put on ice. — AFP

Trump won't block Comey testimony

WASHINGTON: Donald Trump will not use presidential powers to prevent the ex-FBI director James Comey from testifying to Congress tomorrow, the White House said, setting the stage for potentially explosive testimony later this week. The ousted FBI director will appear tomorrow before the Senate intelligence committee for a hearing sure to be replete with political drama and intrigue. Most major US television networks plan to carry the event live. Some bars in the US capital are even planning to open early for viewing parties.

Comey's testimony will be the first public remarks since he was summarily fired by Trump in early May, and represent a moment of great peril for this already embattled president. Comey's sacking came as the Federal Bureau of Investigation probes possible collusion between the president's election campaign team and Russia - which US intelligence believes hoped to tilt the election in the Republican's favor.

He will face a barrage of questions from Republican and Democratic lawmakers about the circumstances of his firing, as well as allegations that Trump tried to get Comey to shelve the investigation of his aides. Comey is said to have written detailed notes about three conversations he had with Trump while still FBI director. The memorandums reportedly document the president's efforts to get the FBI to ease the investigation's focus on former national security advisor Michael Flynn. Any confirmation that Trump tried to press Comey would open the president to damaging allegations that he attempted to obstruct an ongoing FBI investigation.

'Swift and thorough'

The White House on Monday said Trump would not use presidential powers to block Comey from testifying to Congress. The White House had floated the idea that Trump could invoke executive privilege, to protect the confidentiality of presidential discussions, but some aides were wary that it could look too much like a White House cover-up. Trump's office put an end to that speculation on Monday, saying: "President Trump will not assert executive privilege regarding James Comey's scheduled testimony."

"The president's power to assert executive privilege is well-established," the White House said in a statement, adding that Comey's testimony would "facilitate a swift and thorough examination of the facts." Comey's hotly awaited appearance on Capitol Hill comes as probes by the Justice Department and several congressional committees heat up. Trump's decision to fire Comey led the Justice Department to appoint special counsel - former FBI director Robert Mueller - to look into allegations of collusion.

Mueller, respected for his independence and thoroughness, has so far been silent about taking over the investigations. He reportedly has met with Comey to discuss the probe, and Comey reportedly sought his approval to testify before lawmakers.

On Wednesday, the House Intelligence Committee issued subpoenas for Trump's personal lawyer Michael Cohen and Flynn-who was also allegedly part of discussions between the president's son-in-law Jared Kushner and Russian ambassador Sergei Kislyak.

Besides Kushner, Cohen and Flynn, the Justice and Congressional investigations are also looking into the Russia ties of former Trump campaign chief Paul Manafort, political consultant Roger Stone, and foreign affairs advisor Carter Page. A top secret National Security Agency document meanwhile shows that hackers from Russian military intelligence repeatedly tried to break into US voting systems before last year's presidential election, The Intercept reported Monday. — AFP

LORTON, Virginia: Diplomats and staff from various embassies plant seagrass in the Potomac River, a tributary of the Chesapeake Bay, at Mason Neck State Park on Monday. — AFP

Envoys wade in to help US waters despite Trump snub

LORTON: US President Donald Trump may have torpedoed the Paris climate accord as US diplomats brace for huge cuts to their environmental programs. But on Monday, American officials joined world diplomats wading out into the Potomac estuary to replant seagrass in a telling gesture paired with an unlikely photo opportunity. Embassy staff from 13 countries - from great power China to tiny island nation Malta - joined helpers from the State Department to restore a small corner of the waterway.

Their grass had germinated six months ago under a previous administration that had made environmental protection a foreign policy priority. The shoots were nurtured in foreign embassies in Washington, then wrapped in damp newspaper for the hour-long road trip to Mason Neck State Park in Virginia. Soggy headlines in several languages recalled the political and diplomatic chaos in Washington as the Trump administration beds in.

The heading on one editorial - covering part of the grass that Costa Rica was to contribute to Belmont Bay's underwater ecosystem - stood out: "Climate change hypocrites." It was an unfortunate note at an otherwise quietly positive event to help a mighty waterway. Once badly polluted, America's biggest estuary network is slowly recovering. Water snakes swam by and ospreys dove for fish as the volunteers waded in.

But even as the diplomats worked, a new batch of headlines was being written elsewhere. In New York, UN chief Antonio Guterres urged countries to put aside national interests to focus on saving the oceans and prevent "global catastrophe". In Beijing, the senior diplomat at the US embassy - which is still waiting for its new ambassador to arrive - resigned abruptly, reportedly over opposition to Trump's climate stance.

And a new poll, conducted for ABC News and The Washington Post, found that US voters oppose Trump's decision on the Paris pact by a margin of two to one. Although China and Europe have vowed to increase their support for the 2015 Paris accord's plan to cut greenhouse emissions, the US boycott leaves a gap in leadership. Several US climate-related programs would disappear under a proposed budget presented by Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, the former CEO of oil giant ExxonMobil. The Bureau of Oceans and International and Scientific Affairs, which had several staff on hand for Monday's event, will not suffer that fate. Its budget is slated to be cut by only $1.7 million to around $13.3 million. Another program dear to the previous secretary of state, John Kerry, will also continue: the annual Our Oceans summit promoting maritime conservation. Kerry hosted the 2016 summit in Washington, and the European Union will host this year's conference in Malta, which holds the rotating presidency.

Malta's ambassador Clive Agius, who joined the volunteers to plant a batch of seagrass, confirmed Europe's concern at Trump's Paris decision. "We cannot not feel a bit disappointed that we're not all pulling the same rope," he said on the muddy foreshore. After Malta, Indonesia takes up the Our Oceans banner, and their team was also at the park. US officials point out that Trump's "America First" policy, while opposed to a global pact on climate change, nevertheless insists on the value of clean water and air. Indonesia's second secretary for economic affairs, Anggarini Sesotyoningtyas, said her country shares that goal and is working hard to collect ocean debris.

Entryway to the Americas

But climate change is also "a big issue," she said, adding that Indonesia remains committed to an ambitious 26 percent cut in greenhouse emissions. The fortuitously named Cliff Seagroves, acting director of the US State Department's Office on Foreign Missions, remained upbeat. "I think we're all committed to doing what we can for the environment in whatever way we can," he said of his colleagues. He cited seagrass planting as "an example of a simple project that can be done anywhere in the world."

The plants should reduce erosion, boost oxygen levels in once-polluted rivers and bays, help clean the water and store carbon that could fuel climate change. But if the State Department and its foreign partners are happy to help, the US federal government as a whole may be about to back away. The president's budget plan abolishes the $73 million Chesapeake Bay program, noted Rebecca LePrell, executive director of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation for Virginia. — AFP

NYT, Washington Post loom large in age of Trump

NEW YORK: Through a drumbeat of almost daily scoops and leaks, The Washington Post and The New York Times have emerged as the titans of news in the age of President Donald Trump. Michael Flynn, the general who served as national security adviser to the president, was forced to step down after the Washington Post revealed he had misled Vice President Mike Pence about his communications with the Russian embassy. The New York Times revealed that Trump had asked former FBI director James Comey to halt his investigation into Flynn.

The president boasting to Russian diplomats about firing Comey? The talks between those same diplomats and Trump's son-in-law or his attorney general? These, and almost all the stories feeding the extraordinary news cycle of the Trump administration, have been broken by the two dailies. Other media outlets, such as television news CNN, have had their scoops, but none on the scale of the Post or the Times. "I think the perception is the reality. They are the dominant news organizations," said Joel Kaplan, journalism professor at Syracuse University.

From the ground-breaking scoops of Watergate and the Pentagon Papers, the Post and the Times have accumulated decades of experience in investigative journalism. The self-proclaimed watchdogs of the Trump White House have become the go-to address for anyone within the administration wanting to leak information anonymously. To cope with the deluge of news, the papers now have unprecedented resources at their disposal. The Times has six journalists exclusively covering the White House, backed by a five-person investigations unit, more than at any point in its history.

Even as it was putting the finishing touches to voluntary redundancy packages in January, the paper was earmarking five million dollars for coverage of the Trump White House. The Post has an eight-strong White House team, and many more covering government news in general. "This is war," said Gabriel Kahn, journalism professor at the USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism. "We are in a information battleground ... they cannot get one fact wrong." "They really are the only news organizations going which have the resources to do these types of stories," said Kaplan.

A news renaissance

At stake is more than just the professional pride of the journalists involved: between September 2016 and March 2017, the Times gained 644,000 subscriptions. The Post is owned by Amazon founder Jeff Bezos and does not release its sales data, but publisher Fred Ryan said online subscriptions were up 75 percent in 2016. "This is a sort of a happy instance where following the news and chasing down every lead and breaking story after story is good news practice but it's also good business practice," said Rick Edmonds, media economist at the Poynter Institute. "They're trying to leverage that to even further boost their audience and their paid audience."

Such editorial quality is being used by both papers to set themselves apart from the pack. "There is a deepening recognition outside the building that The Times is vital to the future of the country, one of the few institutions with the drive and ambition to cover a changing Washington," wrote New York Times Executive Editor Dean Baquet and Managing Editor Joe Kahn this week. The papers are also trying to expand their traditional readership.

"Young people are out there now, they don't read newspapers but they do look at their phones and their tablets and they say: this information is important to me and it's now worth paying for," said Kaplan. The Internet revolution, with the proliferation of social media networks and news sites that had no expensive print publications, have muddied the media waters in recent years and hurt daily papers.

But since Trump's election last year, the hierarchy of news has once again been clearly established. "This is a renaissance of news," said Kaplan. "The value of news and the importance of information, not fake news, but real news and facts and what's happening has undergone a dramatic change in the last six months, something that we've never seen before. "People now want to go to the direct source where the news came from, that's not going through other people's filter," he said. — AFP

FORT MEADE, Maryland: In this June 6, 2013 file photo, the National Security Agency (NSA) campus is seen. —AP

Report suggests Russia hackers breached voting software firm

US intel contractor arrested over leak

WASHINGTON: Russian hackers attacked at least one US voting software supplier days before last year's presidential election, according to a government intelligence report leaked Monday that suggests election-related hacking penetrated further into US voting systems than previously known. A Kremlin spokesman denied the report. The classified National Security Agency report, which was published online by The Intercept, does not say whether the hacking had any effect on election results. But it says Russian military intelligence attacked a US voting software company and sent spear-phishing emails to more than 100 local election officials at the end of October or beginning of November. US intelligence agencies declined to comment.

However, the Justice Department announced Monday it had charged a government contractor in Georgia with leaking a classified report containing "Top Secret level" information to an online news organization. The report the contractor allegedly leaked is dated May 5, the same date as the document The Intercept posted online. The document said Russian military intelligence "executed cyber espionage operations against a named US company in August 2016 evidently to obtain information on elections-related software and hardware solutions, according to information that became available in April 2017." Dmitry Peskov, spokesman for President Vladimir Putin, denied the allegations Tuesday, saying that the Kremlin did not see "any evidence to prove this information is true." He said Moscow categorically denies "the possibility" of the Russian government being behind it. The hackers are believed to have then used data from that operation to create a new email account to launch a spear-phishing campaign targeting US local government organizations, the document said. "Lastly, the actors send test emails to two non-existent accounts ostensibly associated with absentee balloting, presumably with the purpose of creating those accounts to mimic legitimate services."

The document did not name any state. The information in the leaked document seems to go further than the US intelligence agencies' January assessment of the hacking that occurred. "Russian intelligence obtained and maintained access to elements of multiple US state or local electoral boards," the assessment said. The Department of Homeland Security "assesses that the types of systems Russian actors targeted or compromised were not involved in vote tallying".

The Intercept contacted NSA and the national intelligence director's office about the document and both agencies asked that it not be published. US intelligence officials then asked The Intercept to redact certain sections. The Intercept said some material was withheld at US intelligence agencies' request because it wasn't "clearly in the public interest". The AP could not confirm the authenticity of the May 5 NSA document, which The Intercept said it obtained anonymously.

Also on Monday, Reality Leigh Winner, 25, of Augusta, Georgia, was charged in US District Court with copying classified documents and mailing them to a reporter with an unnamed news organization. Prosecutors did not say which federal agency Winner worked for, but FBI agent Justin Garrick said in an affidavit filed with the court that she had previously served in the Air Force and held a top-secret security clearance.

Winner's attorney, Titus Thomas Nichols, declined to confirm whether she is accused of leaking the NSA report received by The Intercept. He also declined to name the federal agency for which Winner worked. "My client has no (criminal) history, so it's not as if she has a pattern of having done anything like this before," Nichols said in a phone interview Monday. "She is a very good person. All this craziness has happened all of a sudden." — AP

US tells UNHRC to remove 'chronic anti-Israel bias'

GENEVA: The Trump administration gave formal notice yesterday that it is reviewing its participation in the U.N. Human Rights Council and called for reforming the body to eliminate what it called its "chronic anti-Israel bias". "The United States is looking carefully at this Council and our participation in it. We see some areas for significant strengthening," Nikki Haley, US ambassador to the United Nations, told the Geneva forum, opening a three-week session. The Council's critical stance of Israel has long been a contentious issue for the United States, Israel's main ally. It has taken a strong position against Israel's continued occupation of territory seized in the 1967 Middle East war, its treatment of Palestinians, and its building of Jewish settlements. Most countries and international bodies consider the settlements, in areas the Palestinians envisage as part of an eventual independent state, illegal.

Washington says the Council is stacked with opponents of Israel and boycotted it for three years under President George W Bush before rejoining under Barack Obama in 2009. Haley said the United States was dedicated to protecting human rights, which are closely linked to peace and security. The 47-member forum adopted five "biased" resolutions on Israel and the Palestinian territory at its March session, but never even considered a resolution on Venezuela, she said.

She called for the Council to address serious human rights violations in Venezuela and for the government of President Nicolas Maduro to address them. "If Venezuela cannot, it should voluntarily step down from its seat on the Human Rights Council until it can get its own house in order. Being a member of this council is a privilege, and no country who is a human rights violator should be allowed a seat at the table," she said.

Haley will host an event on the sidelines of the Council later in the day on what she called the "rapidly deteriorating human rights situation" in Venezuela. At least 65 people have died in the unrest since early April, with hundreds more injured. Venezuela's delegation, speaking at the Council yesterday, said that the forum "needs to be free of politicisation and double standards". Haley called for the council to adopt strong resolutions on abuses in Syria, Eritrea, Belarus, Ukraine and the Democratic Republic of Congo at its session.

Some activists urged Washington to focus on abuses at home. "It's hard to take Ambassador Haley seriously on US support for human rights in light of Trump administration actions like the Muslim ban and immigration crackdowns," Jamil Dakwar, director of the human rights program at the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), told Reuters. "The United States must get its own house in order and make human rights at home a priority - then, it can begin to credibly demand the same of other countries abroad." — Reuters

GENEVA: US Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley addresses a session of United Nations Human Rights Council yesterday. — AFP

14 Venezuelan army officers jailed

CARACAS: Venezuela's security forces arrested at least 14 army officers on suspicion of "rebellion" and "treason" in the first week of protests against President Nicolas Maduro's government in early April, according to military documents obtained by Reuters. The soldiers, who include colonels and captains, are being held in Ramo Verde prison in the hills outside Caracas, according to lists being circulated within the military. The documents said their cases were being "processed", and it was not clear if they had been formally charged.

The lists emerged after allegations by Venezuelan opposition leaders that a purge is underway within the military to quash dissent over the handling of massive demonstrations against the socialist government since early April. The documents seen by Reuters only went up to April 8, after which opposition leaders and rights activists say many more soldiers have been rounded up. The military's National Guard unit has been at the forefront of policing the protests, using tear gas, water cannons, and rubber bullets against masked youths who hurl stones, Molotov cocktails and excrement against security lines.

At least 65 people have died, with victims including government and opposition supporters, bystanders and members of the security forces. Hundreds more have been injured. Opposition leaders say there is increasing disquiet within the military over the use of force against protesters who are demanding general elections, foreign humanitarian aid and freedom for jailed activists. In public, top military officers have backed Maduro's accusation that an "armed insurrection" is being mounted by violent conspirators seeking a coup with US backing. But privately some National Guard members have complained of exhaustion and disillusionment.

Asylum Requests

A few soldiers have gone public with their discontent. Three lieutenants fled to Colombia and requested asylum last month, prompting the Venezuelan government to demand their extradition to face charges of coup plotting. Opposition media last week published a video purporting to be a Venezuelan naval sergeant expressing his dissent and urging colleagues to disobey "abusive" and "corrupt" superiors. "I reject Mr Nicolas Maduro Moros as an illegitimate president and refuse to recognize his regime and dictatorial government," Giomar Flores said in a seven-minute video, wearing a white naval uniform and black beret next to a Venezuelan flag. Reuters could not confirm his case or whereabouts. — Reuters

CARACAS: A member of the national police assists a fellow policeman whose leg caught on fire during clashes with opposition activists demonstrating against the government of President Nicolas Maduro on Monday. — AFP

ICE agents still freeing thousands of migrants

MCALLEN, Texas: Standing on the bluffs of Roma, Texas on a May afternoon two border patrol agents look out over the meandering Rio Grande River that separates Mexico from the United States and recall a time when the scene was far less tranquil. Last fall, during the waning months of the Obama administration, hundreds of immigrants crossed the river on rafts at this point each day, many willingly handing themselves over to immigration authorities in hopes of being released into the United States to await court proceedings that would decide their fate. Now, the agents look out on an empty landscape. Foot paths up from the water have started to disappear under growing brush, with only the stray baby shoe or toothbrush serving as reminders of that migrant flood.

The reason for the change, the agents say, is a perception in Mexico and Central America that President Donald Trump has ended the practice known as "catch-and-release," in which immigrants caught in the United States without proper documents were released to live free, often for years, as their cases ran through the court system. Now, would-be border violators know "they'll be detained and then turned right back around," said one of the two agents, Marlene Castro. "It's not worth it anymore," she said. Castro was simply echoing her boss, Homeland Security Secretary John Kelly, who said on a visit to El Paso, Texas in April, "We have ended dangerous catch-and-release enforcement policies." But immigration attorneys, government statistics and even some officials from US Immigration and Customs Enforcement, which falls under Kelly, suggest that despite the DHS chief's statement, there has been no clear change to the catch-and-release policy.

That's in large part because there are legal constraints on who can be detained and for how long, due to a shortage of beds and a court ruling limiting the stay of women and children in custody to 21 days. A separate court ruling limits detention time for immigrants whose countries refuse to repatriate them. And Kelly noted in a February memorandum that asylum seekers that have proven they have a "credible fear" of returning home could be candidates for release if they present "neither a security risk nor a risk of absconding."

Daniel Bible, ICE field office director for Southern Texas, told Reuters he and his colleagues have not been issued new directions, and so continue to release illegal immigrants deemed to be low security risks, usually with notices to appear in court. "We look at each case the same way we always have," Bible said. DHS spokeswoman Jenny Burke confirmed to Reuters that the agency has not issued new guidance for releasing migrants caught at the border. Asked to explain why there had been no new guidance, given Kelly's statement in April, Burke said, "ICE officers make custody determinations on a case-by-case basis, prioritizing detention resources."

In a memo made public in February, Kelly defined catch and release as any policy that allows immigrants to be released from detention while they await their court hearings, making it easy to abscond. Ending catch and release was one of Trump's central promises during the 2016 presidential campaign. Some advocates who work with migrants say they have seen little change since Trump came into office. "Sure, people are still being released," said Kevin Appleby, senior director of international migration policy at the Center for Migration Studies. "Not because they believe in releasing them, but because there are not enough beds at the moment." — Reuters

KABUL: Afghan President Ashraf Ghani (center) stands as the national anthem plays during an international peace conference at the Presidential Palace yesterday. —AFP

Afghan leader issues ultimatum to Taleban

KABUL: Afghan President Ashraf Ghani issued an ultimatum to the Taleban yesterday, warning them to embrace peace or "face consequences" after announcing that the death toll from last week's devastating truck bombing had passed 150. Ghani has come under mounting criticism over the bombing, the deadliest in Kabul since 2001, with protests and deadly street clashes roiling the Afghan capital as people incensed by spiralling insecurity call for his government's resignation.

The president made a strong plea for peace at an international conference on Afghanistan attended by around two dozen countries, which was held under tight security as armored vehicles patrolled the streets and fighter jets roared over the capital. "We are offering a chance for peace but this is not an open-ended offer," Ghani said. "Time is running out... this is the last chance: take it or face consequences."

The conference, labelled the "Kabul Process", aims to build international support for ways to restore security in Afghanistan. Kabul has been on edge since the massive truck bomb last Wednesday ripped through the city's highly fortified diplomatic quarter, home to the presidential palace and a host of foreign embassies. The death toll has jumped to more than 150 people, while over 300 wounded were brought to hospitals, many with burns and amputations, Ghani told the conference. "We are a nation of survivors. Terrorists can shed our blood but they cannot break our will," he said.

Officials had previously placed the death toll the attack at 90. Ghani did not explain the dramatic jump but Afghan authorities have played down casualty figures in the past. Ghani offered the Taleban the opportunity to open a representative office, adding that he was flexible about the location of future talks. The insurgents responded to the conference by firing a rocket at what they claimed was NATO's headquarters. It landed inside the Indian ambassador's residence and no one was hurt. Underscoring the growing insecurity, a motorcycle bomb exploded near the Grand Mosque in the western city of Herat, killing seven people and wounding 16 according to the interior ministry. — AFP

Philippine troops find $1.6M as fighters flee

MARAWI CITY, Philippines: Philippines troops found bundles of banknotes and cheques worth about $1.6 million abandoned by Islamist militants holed up in Marawi City, a discovery the military said yesterday was evidence that the fighters were increasingly penned in. Fighters linked to Islamic State have been cornered in a built-up sliver of the southern lakeside town after two weeks of intense combat. The military said that over the past 24 hours it had taken several buildings that had been defended by snipers.

In one house they found a vault loaded with neat stacks of money worth 52.2 million pesos ($1.06 million) and cheques made out for cash worth 27 million pesos ($550,000). "The recovery of those millions of cash indicates that they are running because the government troops are pressing in and focusing on destroying them," Marines Operations Officer Rowan Rimas told a news conference in the town as helicopters on machinegun runs buzzed overhead.

Black smoke poured from an area near one of the town's mosques and the lake after bombings by OV-10 attack aircraft and artillery fire from the ground. The battle for Marawi has raised concerns that the ultra-radical Islamic State, on a back foot in Syria and Iraq, is building a regional base on the Philippine island of Mindanao. Officials said that, among the several hundred militants who seized the town on May 23, there were about 40 foreigners from neighboring Indonesia and Malaysia but also from India, Saudi Arabia, Morocco and Chechnya.

The fighters prepared for a long siege, stockpiling arms and food in tunnels, basements, mosques and madrasas, or Islamic religious schools, military officials say. The Philippines is largely Christian, but Marawi City is overwhelmingly Muslim. Progress in the military campaign has been slow because hundreds of civilians are still trapped or being held hostage in the urban heart of the town, officials have said. "In a few days, we will be able to get everything, we will be able to clear the entire Marawi City," armed forces Chief of Staff General Eduaro Ano said in a radio interview.

MARAWI, Philippines: Confiscated cash and cheques amounting to $1.6 million are shown by Philippine military personnel during a press conference yesterday. — AFP

'Maybe They Watch War Movies'

Fighting erupted in Marawi after a bungled raid aimed at capturing Isnilon Hapilon, whom Islamic State proclaimed as its "emir" of Southeast Asia last year after he pledged allegiance to the group. The US State Department has offered a bounty of up to $5 million for his arrest. On Monday, President Rodrigo Duterte offered a bounty of 10 million pesos ($200,000) to anyone who "neutralized" Hapilon, and 5 million pesos for each of the two brothers who founded the Maute group, one of four factions that banded together to take the town. Police yesterday arrested a man who identified himself as the father of the Maute brothers. He was in a vehicle along with other members of his family that was stopped at a checkpoint in Davao City, 260 km to the southeast. — Reuters

News in brief

Top career US diplomat in China embassy quits

BEIJING: The top career diplomat at the US embassy in China has stepped down, an American official in Beijing confirmed yesterday, amid suggestions that he opposes President Donald Trump's climate policy. Embassy charge d'affaires David Rank was a 27-year veteran State Department officer appointed to serve in Beijing in January last year. "Mr Rank made a personal decision. We appreciate his years of dedicated service to the State Department," US embassy spokeswoman Mary Beth Polley told AFP. Polley said the embassy informed China's foreign affairs ministry on Monday that Jonathan Fritz would be serving as charge d'affaires. Trump's choice as the new ambassador to China, former Iowa governor Terry Branstad, has yet to arrive in the country. News of Rank's resignation was broken on Twitter by veteran China reporter John Pomfret, an editor at the SupChina news site, formerly of the Washington Post. According to Pomfret, Rank stepped down because he "could not back Trump on climate" and had been dismayed by the president's decision to pull out of the Paris climate accord.

Three Indian farmers shot dead as protests escalate

MUMBAI: Three Indian farmers were shot dead yesterday at a protest in the central state of Madhya Pradesh, according to news reports, marking an escalation of violence as a rural strike demanding debt relief spread. The farmers died after being shot during a protest in Mandsaur, according to reports that quoted witnesses as saying they had been shot by police. A state police spokesman reached by Reuters said: "The situation is very tense. We can't confirm anything." The strike began on Thursday in the big western state of Maharashtra, with farmers dumping produce and milk on the street to demand billions of dollars in debt forgiveness and better prices for their produce. They also blocked highways, preventing delivery trucks from reaching city markets.

Mahathir, 91, says would step in as PM if needed

TOKYO: Former Malaysian prime minister, the 91-year-old Mahathir Mohamad, said yesterday he would consider taking up the post again but only if there was no acceptable candidate after an opposition election victory. Mahathir served as prime minister for 22 years until he stepped down in 2003. But he remained influential and has over the past couple of years emerged as a leader of opposition to Prime Minister Najib Razak. Najib has been embroiled in a corruption scandal involving state fund 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB). Mahathir told a business forum he did not want to be prime minister though he was often asked about the possibility, adding he would consider leading the opposition into an election due by the middle of next year, if all opposition parties agreed. "If there is really no candidate to become prime minister should the opposition win, then maybe for a short while I might try to take the job. But only on condition that everybody agrees," he said. Mahathir, Malaysia's longest-serving prime minister, earned a reputation as a no-nonsense authoritarian with little time for dissenters promoting liberal values.

Police treat 'cowardly' Aussie siege as terror

MELBOURNE: A fatal shootout claimed by the Islamic State group was being treated as a terrorist attack by Australian police Tuesday, as the prime minister condemned it as "shocking and cowardly". A man of Somali background was killed in a gun battle with police when he opened fire following an hour-long standoff after taking a female escort hostage at a serviced apartment block in Melbourne on Monday evening. It is alleged 29-year-old Yacqub Khayre, linked to a 2009 terror plot targeting an Australian army barracks, had first murdered a Chinese-born Australian man working as a receptionist in the foyer. Police said he made statements "around Al-Qaeda" and called a local television station making similar comments, reportedly: "This is for IS, this is for Al-Qaeda." Authorities labelled the attack as a terrorism incident but added that investigations were still ongoing into whether it was planned or random. He said it was possible that Khayre may have been attempting to lure police by taking the escort - reportedly a sex worker - hostage.

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IMAR Trading & Contracting
Qatar

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Project Controls System Manager
Hassanesco Trading and Contracting - Qatar

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Workers caught up in Gulf crisis

Continued from Page 1

welcomed the military overthrow and lavished aid on Egypt in the months afterward. Still, a 40-year-old Egyptian manager of an audit firm told The Associated Press by phone from Doha that "the situation of Egyptians in Qatar has never been affected by political relations before."

"Egyptians are now forced to think of alternative plans to be able to visit their country," he said. Others fear going back home, worried that they will come under heightened scrutiny by security services who suspect they are linked to the Brotherhood, which Egypt now outlaws as a terror organization. "Egyptians working in Qatar, especially in the media sector, are subject to harassment by the authorities," said a middle-aged Egyptian journalist. The two Egyptians spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of reprisals. — AFP

Kuwait mediates Gulf crisis; land, sea, air...

Continued from Page 1

While the US military has said it wouldn't change its posture at Qatar's Al-Udeid Air Base, Trump wrote a series of tweets calling into question his commitment to the peninsular nation. "During my recent trip to the Middle East I stated that there can no longer be funding of Radical Ideology," he tweeted. "Leaders pointed to Qatar - look!" He later tweeted: "Perhaps this will be the beginning of the end to the horror of terrorism!"

Trump, who traveled to Saudi Arabia for a recent conference of Arab nations, had told Qatar's ruler at the time that "we've been friends now for a long time." Qatari officials declined to immediately comment. In an earlier interview with Doha-based satellite news network Al-Jazeera, Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed Bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani said Kuwait's ruler had asked Qatar's Emir to hold off on giving a speech about the crisis late Monday night.

Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani "received a call from the Amir of Kuwait asking him to postpone it in order to give time to solve the crisis," Sheikh Mohammed said. Still, the minister struck a defiant tone, rejecting those "trying to impose their will on Qatar or intervene in its internal affairs." The state-run Kuwait News Agency reported Kuwaiti ruler HH Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah spoke with Qatar's Emir Monday evening and urged him to give a chance to efforts that could ease tensions.

The call came after a senior Saudi royal arrived in Kuwait with a message from the Saudi king. An Omani diplomat traveled to Qatar on Monday. Sheikh Sabah left yesterday night for Saudi Arabia.

Bahrain, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates announced Monday they would cut diplomatic ties with Qatar. Yemen's internationally backed government, which has lost the capital and large portions of the war-torn country, also cut relations with Qatar, as did the Maldives and one of conflict-ridden Libya's competing governments. Soccer's governing body FIFA has said it remains in regular contact with Qatar, which will host the 2022 World Cup. Qatar just finished one of the stadiums that will host the tournament, though others have yet to be built.

Saudi Arabia, the powerhouse among those cutting ties to Qatar, said it did so due to the country's "embrace of various terrorist and sectarian groups aimed at destabilizing the region," including the Muslim Brotherhood, Al-Qaeda, the Islamic State group and militants supported by Iran in the kingdom's restive Eastern Province.

Qatar long has denied funding extremists, though Western officials have accused it of allowing or even encouraging funding of Sunni extremists like al-Qaida's branch in Syria, once known as the Nusra Front. The Gulf countries ordered their citizens out of Qatar and gave Qataris abroad 14 days to return home to their peninsular nation, whose only land border is with Saudi Arabia. The countries also said they would eject Qatar's diplomats. The nations also cut air and sea traffic between them and Qatar. Trucks carrying food have begun lining up on the Saudi side of the border, apparently stranded.

Qatar Airways, one of the region's major long-haul carriers, has suspended all flights to Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt and Bahrain until further notice. On its website, the carrier said the suspension of its flights took effect yesterday and customers are being offered a refund. Saudi Arabia meanwhile said yesterday it revoked Qatar Airways' operating licenses and closed the airline's offices in the kingdom. The Saudi ports authority said Qatari-flagged shipping vessels are barred from docking. It said it ordered shipping agents not to receive any vessels owned by Qatari companies or Qatari nationals and not to unload any goods from Qatar.

The air route between Doha and Dubai is popular among business travelers and both are major transit hubs for travelers between Asia and Europe. FlightRadar24, a popular airplane tracking website, said Qatar Airways flights already had started to be affected, with flights to Europe being rerouted through Iran and Turkey. The number of flights in Iran's airspace has jumped from 950 a day to 1,100, Iran airports company head Rahmatollah Mahabadi told the state-run IRNA news agency. He said that was a direct result of Qatar Airways flights. —AP

'Eerie' calm settles over Qatar's deserted...

Continued from Page 1

Airways offices across the Gulf, as Saudi Arabia announced it had revoked the carrier's license and would close all its offices in the country within 48 hours. Marsudi, an Indonesian trying to travel to Doha from Riyadh said he was holding a ticket, paid for by his employer, for a flight home to central Java via Saudi Arabia next Saturday.

"They have to do something," he said. In the United Arab Emirates, the situation was just as bad for both those travelling on business and expats trying to fly home. "It's appalling, basically," said Farrukh Hafez, trying to find a flight home to Manchester. "I won't be able to use my ticket, I can't travel," he said outside a Qatar Airways office in Abu Dhabi. "It has just absolutely disturbed all my summer plans and I don't know if I'll find any alternative flight to Manchester."

Licences revoked

Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain yesterday revoked the licenses of Qatar Airways and ordered its offices to close within 48 hours, state media reported, as a diplomatic crisis deepened. "The General Authority of Civil Aviation has decided to cancel all licenses granted to Qatar Airways and to close all of its offices in the kingdom within 48 hours," a statement carried by the official SPA news agency said.

Bahrain's BNA news agency carried a similar statement, suggesting "all passengers who purchased tickets to or from Qatar make arrangements with the airline's offices for a refund within the next 48 hours or via the website" after that. Qatari share prices closed down 7.58 percent on Monday after five Arab countries-Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Egypt, Bahrain and Yemen-announced they were cutting diplomatic ties with the gas-rich emirate over its alleged support for extremism.

Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain and Egypt announced the suspension of all flights to and from Qatar as of Tuesday morning. Hours later, Qatar Airways, which flies to nine cities in Saudi Arabia alone, announced it had suspended all flights to Saudi, the UAE, Bahrain and Egypt. The Gulf states have also ordered Qataris to leave within 14 days and banned their own citizens from travelling to the emirate. Saudi Arabia has closed its border with Qatar, the emirate's only land frontier, effectively blocking food imports and a segment of the country's exports.— Agencies

Family ties

Continued from Page 1

Being dutiful and considerate to your family members, trying to strengthen your ties with them, doing the best you can, will accrue to you a lot of mundane and spiritual benefits as well as bring untold rewards from Allah Almighty.

Abu Huraira narrated that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said, "There is nothing in whose performance Allah is sincerely obeyed and thus expedites its rewards more than maintaining and strengthening family ties. On the other hand, there is nothing whose commission will hasten punishment more than tyranny, oppression, aggression, injustice, severing family ties, and perjury or false oaths."

(Al-Albani rated it as authentic in Saheeh Al-Ja'mei, Hadeeth # 5,391). In this prophetic narration we are warned not to sever family ties to avoid fateful calamities from God. In another prophetic narration, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said, "There is no sin more deserving of having punishment meted out by Allah to its perpetrator in advance in this world along with what He stores up for him in the next world, than oppression and severing family ties." (At-Tirmidhi)

Family ties in Ramadan: These blessed days and nights of Ramadan serve to open up our hearts and minds as we humble ourselves before our Creator in sincere worship. Take the first step in reconnecting with your family members for the sake of God Almighty.

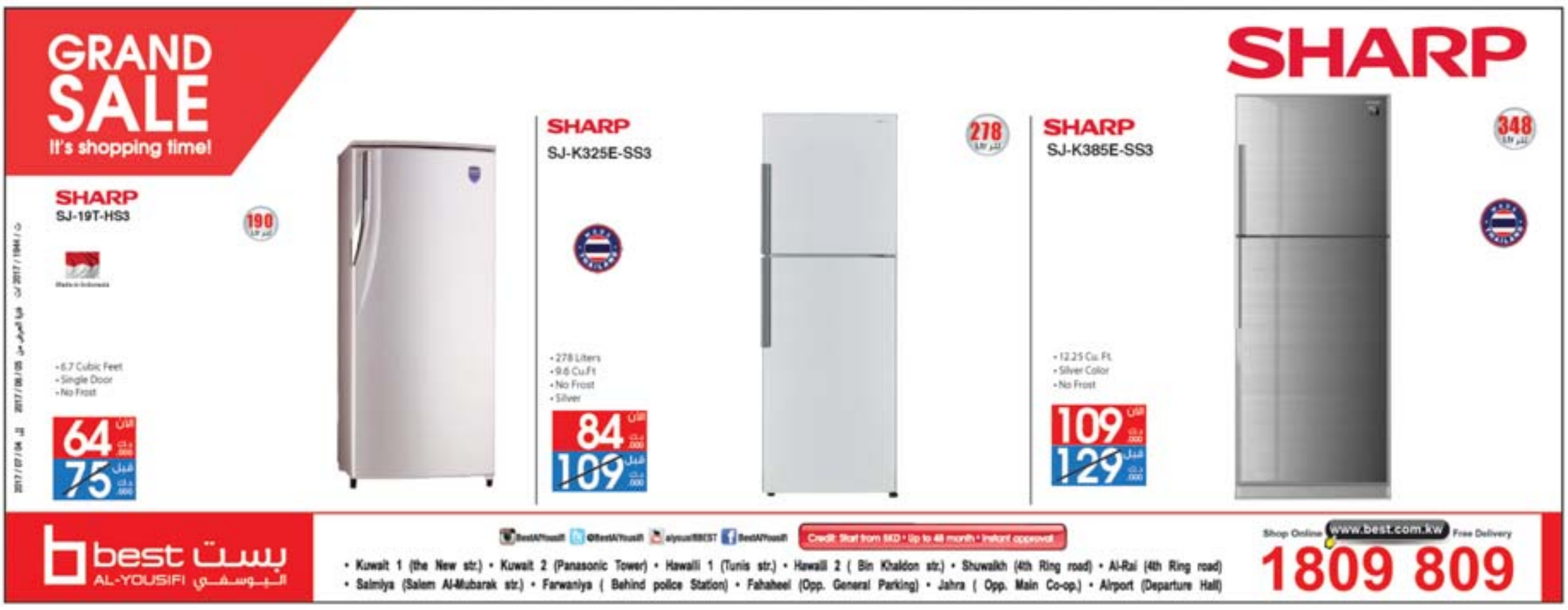
Take the first step: Regardless of how much time has passed since you have seen a family member or whatever transgression has made you keep your distance, use this time to reach out to a relative that you have been estranged from. Abu Huraira (Prophet Muhammad's Companion) narrated that a man approached the Prophet (PBUH) and said, "O Messenger of Allah! I have relatives to whom I reach out, yet they cut me off. I am loving and loyal, yet they mistreat me. And I am kind and forbearing, yet they are cruel." The Prophet (PBUH) replied, "If what you say is true, it is like feeding them with hot ashes.

And you will have from Allah Almighty an angel supporter and defender against them as long as you continue treating them that way." (Saheeh Muslim 2,558)

But the best that can happen is that your desires for renewing the relationship will be reciprocated. If not, continue anyway, being dutiful to them for the sake of Allah. Abdullah bin Amr bin Al-A'as (Prophet Muhammad's companion) narrated that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said, "To honor family ties is not to expect reciprocity or mutual benefit. Rather, it is to diligently maintain and develop relations even when your family members cut you off." (Al-Bukhari 5,991)

Forgiveness is the key: There is no need to rehash the past once your estranged family member is in your presence. Forgiveness is the key to reestablishing your bond. So let bygones be bygones, even if in the innermost part of your heart you still feel that your kinsman wronged you. In as much as you earnestly invoke Allah to forgive you, you are duty-bound to forgive and forget.

Courtesy of the TIES Center: The TIES Center is a social and educational hub for expats in Kuwait whose motto is: Tolerance, Information, Empowerment, Solidarity. For more information, please call 252301015/6 or log onto: www.tiescenter.net



Kuwait Times
THE LEADING INDEPENDENT
DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF
ESTABLISHED 1961

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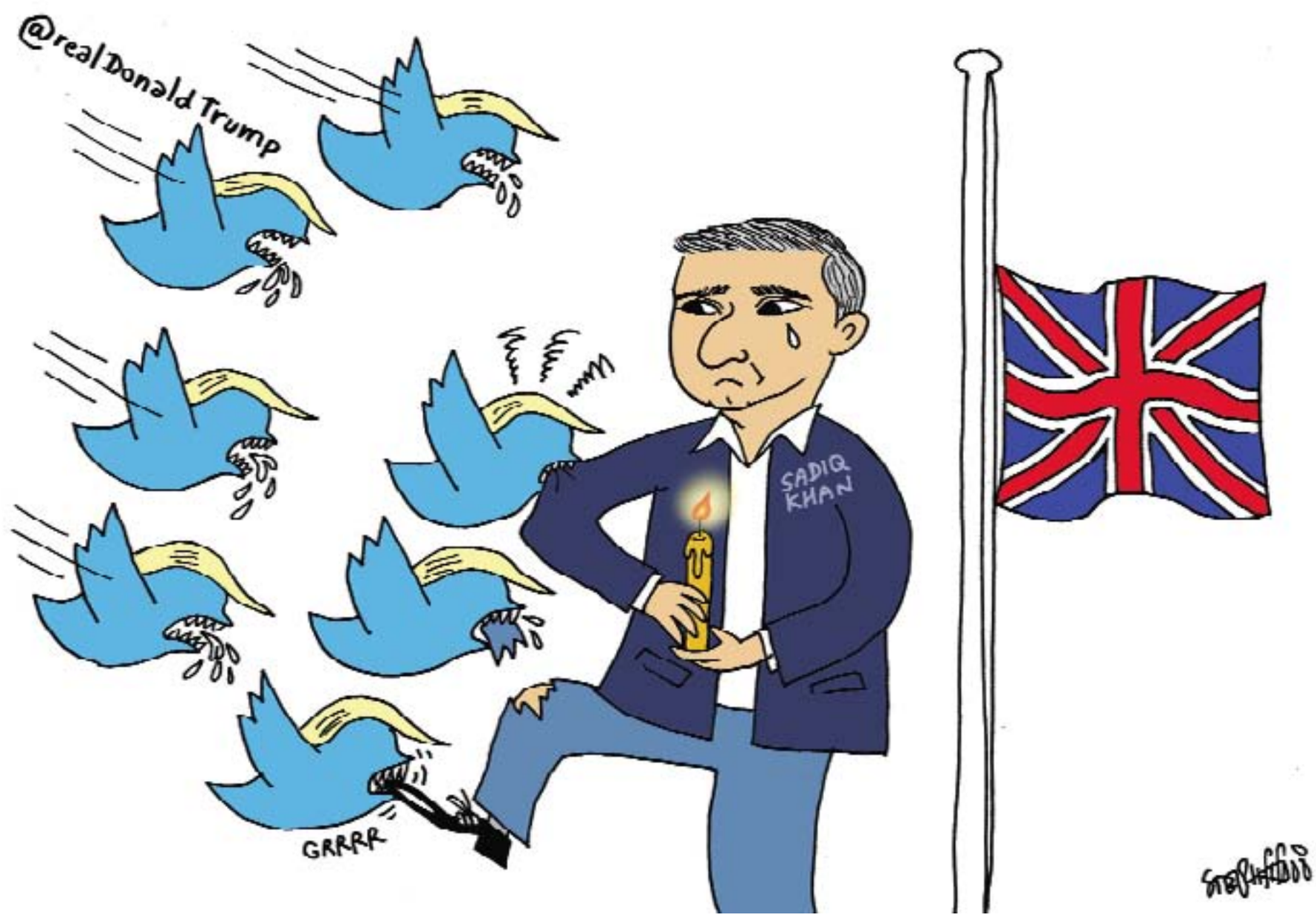

Focus

Home a graveyard: Indian transgender rejects 'normal' life

By Matthew Ponsford

Mona Ahmed's neighbors - some sex workers, gravediggers, and beggars - still hang their laundry out to dry on the tombstones that surround her home in Mehndiyan, a graveyard compound in central Delhi where she's lived for the past three decades. Mehndiyan was first built to home a mysterious 19th century religious sect, according to local lore in the Indian capital. But today it forms a warren of improvised homes, graves, and patches of shade where entrepreneurs and holy men sell car parking space, herbal cures and spiritual trinkets.

For Ahmed, an 80-year-old transgender woman, the once-desired opportunity to leave this peculiar community for a home among Delhi's apartment blocks now holds little appeal, said Urvashi Butalia, a feminist author and friend of Ahmed. Since she fled her family home in 1955, advances in gender reassignment surgery and LGBT rights have given 'hijras' like Ahmed - male-to-female transsexuals recognized since 2014 as part of India's 'third gender' - new opportunities to integrate.

But, to Ahmed, Delhi's boxy flats now resemble prison cells, after a life lived in public, plying hijras' traditional trade of dancing at celebrations, while offering an open door to young transgender people in search of advice, said Butalia. "The once desirable 'normal' life, is not so desirable any more," Butalia told the Thomson Reuters Foundation in an interview before giving a lecture in London on her two decade friendship with Ahmed. "Ostensibly, she could be living a normal life, but it no longer appeals to her because she can see the loneliness of it."

Hijra underworld

In the last decade, activists such as Laxmi Narayan Tripathi, founder of the Asia Pacific Transgender Network, have raised the public visibility of India's transgender women, who have traditionally been treated with suspicion. Hijras, who feature in Hindu mythology, have long been considered auspicious in India, where their blessings are sought at weddings and births. But unlike Tripathi, from a wealthy family at the apex of India's caste ladder, many of the country's estimated 2 million transgender people live in poverty. In her youth, Ahmed, like most performing hijras, became an "apostle" of one of a handful of male gurus who run Delhi's hijra underworld, said Butalia, a well-known publisher and academic in India.

These patriarchs are the absolute authority in hijra groups, a unique form of "family" that strictly prohibits contact with certain outsiders, including police, she added. "The city is divided up between groups of Hijras who claim certain territories for their own, and they build an extensive network of the underclass - the gardeners, the housekeepers, the shopkeepers and more - who keep them informed of births and marriages, new jobs, new homes and all kinds of auspicious and happy occasions." In India's mushrooming capital, blessings represent something of a growth industry, she said.

Newly married couples will hand over 20,000 Indian rupees (around $300) to avoid the public shaming that hijras can bring by exposing their bodies while superstitious industrialists can pay five times that to bless a new factory. But those who conduct blessings represent the upper echelons of hijra society, while many continue to scrape a living as sex workers or beggars, blocked from renting homes, and often entirely cut off from mainstream society, said Butalia. While young transgender people are no longer forced to go through the painful and dangerous backroom castration that Ahmed endured, public acceptance is still far off, she said.

Mona's house

Mehndiyan's residents are legally deemed "squatters" and lack titles to recognize their properties, despite many homes having stood for decades. The graveyard has resisted Delhi's fast-paced urban development as authorities fear protest from religious communities if they were to allow construction on the site, which is also home to two schools of Islamic study.

Ahmed first staked out a plot in the compound in the mid-1980s by making an unverifiable claim that a handful of aged headstones, whose names had been washed clean over time, belonged to her ancestors. From a square barely big enough to sleep on, she now has a house that includes rooms for her nephew and a domestic helper - expanding by taking advantage of others' wariness of hijras. But all this time her door has never been locked and, even after robberies, she welcomes strangers, many young people on the road to becoming hijras, who come in search of advice.

"The door is never locked. You just push it open and walk in, and she might be sleeping on her bed but you can go in and watch television while she's sleeping, it makes no difference to her," said Butalia. —Reuters

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British bookies wary of history but favor May

By Pirate Irwin

While polls suggest a tightening in Britain's general election race, bookmakers believe Prime Minister Theresa May will win an increased majority while admitting to forecasting failures in the past. Ladbrokes favors May to see her present majority rise on Thursday from 17 to 70 seats while William Hill suggests a more modest increase to between 40 and 50, despite opinion polls that forecast a closer result or even a loss of majority for May's Conservatives.

William Hill spokesman Rupert Adams did though admit to AFP he was "slightly concerned by the betting patterns" and wary of the bookies having "cocked-up" the past three big political betting events-the 2015 general election, the EU referendum and Donald Trump's victory in the US. Matthew Shaddick, Ladbrokes head of political odds, said his colleagues were confident they have it right.

"We are factoring in two things that have been apparent in previous elections," he said. "Labor have fallen away in the final throes of campaigning and secondly polls have overstated Labor support." Adams, whose employer expects to have taken around £5 million (5.7 million euros, $6.5 million) in election bets by Thursday, said it may have something to do with "shy" Conservative supporters not figuring in polls."Polls suggesting a hung parliament, we believe, should be taken with a pinch of salt," he said. "The Tory voters are less likely to speak up" and prefer to say they are undecided or voting for the Liberal Democrats, a minor opposition party.

'He's pretty stubborn'

Both Adams and Shaddick said there was a consistent pattern in the big individual wagers being on the Tories, while lots of smaller bets are laid on Labor. Adams said there was a similar pattern before the Scottish referendum in 2014 and Shaddick said it was a trend in betting ahead of the EU referendum.The big individual bets went on remaining in the European Union, with many smaller punters betting on exiting the EU-although in that case, it was the small-time gamblers who were right.

"The big money is on the Conservatives. All the 4-5 figure bets are on a Tory majority," said Shaddick. "The smaller amounts, but lots of them, are on Labour. It would cost us a lot if they won!" Adams said the recent terror attacks in Manchester and London have had an impact on betting, with no bets laid on Sunday, the day after three attackers mowed down pedestrians in a van before launching a stabbing spree, killing seven and injuring dozens.

He said the scene in Scotland had changed too since May announced the snap election in April. "Initially the odds favored the SNP (Scottish National Party) taking all the seats but that has changed with the Tories likely to win six," said Adams. For the centre-left Lib Dems, there are differing messages.

Ladbrokes have had some takers at 7/1 for them being wiped out completely although their favored position is winning 10 or 11 seats. William Hill believes they could finish with 14 or 15. As for the long term futures of the party leaders, Adams said May's could be uncertain whilst Corbyn's is assured. "Corbyn is 2/9 to remain as leader afterwards whatever happens. As we know he's pretty stubborn," said Adams.— AFP

Trouble in paradise: Rio's garden becomes battleground

By Sebastian Smith

It's their urban Garden of Eden, but residents of Rio de Janeiro's most unusual neighborhood face the same fate as the inhabitants of the Biblical version: expulsion. Unknown even to many who call Brazil's second biggest city home, the community of Horto is tucked away in a corner of Rio's lush Botanical Gardens. Trees are festooned in yellow, pink and white blossoms, seemingly a world away from the nearby noisy, traffic-clogged streets.

Jungle-like vines snake up telegraph poles and green parrots dart overhead. A large monkey leaps from branch to branch and in the humid air the loudest sound is birdsong. "This is paradise," says Nelia Vasconcelos, 61, one of Horto's 3,000 inhabitants.

But the authorities, backed by the courts, don't see it that way. For them, Horto is one of Rio's many squats, only more serious than other illegal land occupations because it sits in UNESCO-listed gardens, a piece of the city's most magical real estate and a research center of international importance. "What cannot be allowed is people living inside the perimeters," the garden's director, Sergio Besserman said.

"Sorry, but is there a botanical garden in the world where you have people living inside? Can you imagine someone living inside (London's) Kew Gardens or someone in the Paris botanical garden or in New York?" With eviction looming, the community's days of innocence appear numbered. Leading the way down leafy lanes, Vasconcelos points to a jarring sight: piles of hefty logs and dozens of car tires. Similar heaps-materials to build instant barricades against police-are stationed at other strategic points. "We're a peaceful community," Vasconcelos, a retired university administrator, says. "Or we're peaceful until they try and take our rights."

Democracy 'still distant'

In terms of urban planning, however, Rio de Janeiro is a mess. Nearly a quarter of the population lives in favelas - unplanned, largely unregulated neighborhoods that vary from dangerous slums to proud working class communities. Horto, though, is not exactly a favela and at the same time not quite a legal neighborhood.

The 620 houses are connected to city services, the residents pay utility bills, and, locals say, there is none of the narco-trafficker presence that blights many favelas. If anything, the solidly built, often pretty houses could be in a well maintained village. "It's beautiful, a haven from the city," said Moacyr Alves da Fonseca, 76, who was born in Horto. There are records of people living in the botanical garden throughout its 200 year history, while the current houses are an outgrowth of on-site lodging once reserved for garden workers.

That history, however, doesn't give today's inhabitants the right to stay and expand, Besserman says, arguing that their presence makes it impossible to

run the garden as a serious institute and destination for 700,000 visitors a year. "It's not compatible with a research center that has so much responsibility," he said. The standoff has been roiling for decades and while 220 houses are now under court order for repossession, only two families and an area used as a community soccer pitch have been successfully repossessed since 2013.

"Resistance is very strong," Vasconcelos says. However, the last operation in November 2016 ended in bruising clashes with riot police. Now, locals fear the real showdown is only a matter of time. Besserman calls for a deal where the botanical garden would get a different slice of Rio woodland in exchange for relinquishing control of half of Horto's territory. That way "everyone loses a little," but avoids a traumatic conflict. However, compromises like that depend on levels of democracy that "are still distant" in Brazil, he said.

Burning barricades

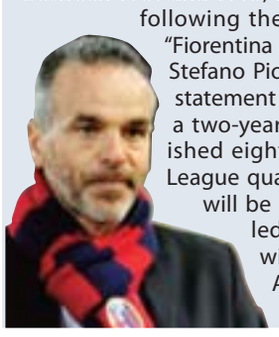
Besserman says the unresolved issue "threatens the very existence of the botanical garden." But Vasconcelos and her neighbors won't relinquish their slice of paradise without a fight. Every day, starting at 5:00 am, volunteers take positions at the main entrance to Horto, noting everyone who comes in and out, ready to sound the alert. "If the police come, people will close their windows and let off fireworks," Vasconcelos said. "I'll have the megaphone to call people." It would take only a few minutes to block the roads with the prepositioned logs and to set the tires ablaze, sending plumes of dark smoke into the sky. "Not one house less. Horto will stay!" reads graffiti seen on many walls.

How many would risk confronting Rio's notoriously violent riot police is unclear. But the last incident left bad blood. "I was born and raised here," said Marlene Miranda, a lively 78-year-old woman, becoming agitated as she recalled the raid. "I saw the police grabbing my son and I fainted. I fell, right in this street." Contemplating the walls of wild flowers flanking a bright stream, Vasconcelos sighed. She can sound a little like a guerrilla leader when she discusses the dispute, but said she just wants her quiet life back. "Imagine the logs and burning tires right in front of such beautiful nature," she said. "It's such a paradox."— AFP

RIO DE JANEIRO: View of an aqueduct along a path at the Horto community in Rio de Janeiro. Unknown even to many who call Brazil's second biggest city home, the community of Horto is tucked away in a corner of Rio's lush Botanical Gardens. The residents of Rio de Janeiro's most unusual neighborhood feel it's their urban Garden of Eden but face the same fate as the inhabitants of the Biblical version: Expulsion. —AFP

Pioli takes over at Fiorentina

MILAN: Former Inter Milan and Lazio coach Stefano Pioli has agreed terms to take over at Fiorentina on a two-year deal, the Serie A club announced yesterday. Pioli was sacked three games before the end of a rollercoaster Serie A campaign with Inter that saw a quality-packed Nerazzurri side go from Champions League qualification contenders to missing out on European football altogether. But Fiorentina, where Pioli played 156 times between 1989 and 1995, were quick to make the 51-year-old coach an offer following the departure of Portuguese coach Paulo Sousa. "Fiorentina announces the club has reached agreement with Stefano Pioli, who will take over as first team coach," said a statement by Fiorentina yesterday. "The new coach will sign a two-year deal, with the option of a third." Fiorentina finished eighth in Serie A, three points adrift of the Europa League qualification places. Pioli's appointment means fans will be hoping for a return to qualifying for Europe. He led Lazio to a third-place finish in his first season with the club in 2014-2015, only to be sacked in April 2016 after a 4-1 derby defeat to Roma.—AFP

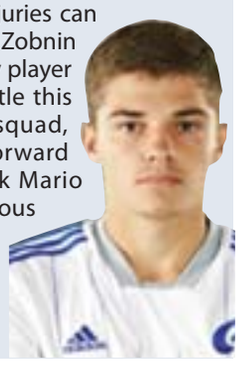


Czech FA chief submits resignation from prison

PRAGUE: Miroslav Pelta has stepped down as the head of the Czech Football Federation (FACR), sending his letter of resignation from custody where he is being held on embezzlement charges. "The FACR confirms that Miroslav Pelta's resignation reached its office on Monday," the federation said in a statement yesterday. Two deputy chairmen will now oversee activities until a general meeting later this year to appoint a successor. Pelta, 52, was arrested and charged in connection with the embezzlement of public money in early May, along with two civil servants including a deputy education minister. The scandal hit Czech football hard as the online insurance server ePojisteni.cz quit as the top flight's main sponsor while other sponsors have also threatened to withdraw their support too. Education Minister Katerina Valachova has tendered her resignation over her ministry's role in the affair, and she also temporarily halted sport subsidies. Around 372 million euros ($408m) is attributed annually by the Czech government for sport with 19.6 million euros given to football. —AFP

Zobnin latest Russian ruled out of Confed Cup

MOSCOW: Midfielder Roman Zobnin became the fifth Russian player to be ruled out of the Confederations Cup because of injury yesterday. The Russian Football Union said Zobnin damaged cruciate and lateral ligaments in his right knee during Monday's 3-0 friendly win over Hungary. The RFU said he was heading to Rome for treatment and "will not take part in the Confederations Cup." Knee ligament injuries can take more than six months to heal. The 23-year-old Zobnin has started Russia's last seven games and was a key player in Spartak Moscow's run to the Russian league title this season. Out of its original 30-man provisional squad, Russia has also lost midfielder Alan Dzagoev, forward Artyom Dzyuba, naturalized Brazilian right back Mario Fernandes and goalkeeper Andrei Lunyov to various injuries. Russia starts its Confederations Cup campaign in St. Petersburg against New Zealand on June 17, followed by group games against Portugal and Mexico. — AP



LE MANS: Japan's pilot Kamui Kobayashi on his Toyota TS050 Hybrid N∞7 (R) drives next to New Zeland's pilot Earl Bamber on his Porsche 919 Hybrid N∞2 during a free practice session of the Le Mans 24 hours endurance race, on June 4 in Le Mans, northwestern France. Toyota TS050 Hybrid N∞7 driven by England's pilot Mike Conway was the fastest, with the best time in 3'18.132 of teammates Japan's pilot Kamui Kobayashi. Sixty cars with 180 drivers will participate on June 17 and 18 at the 85th "Le Mans 24-hours" endurance race. — AFP

Racing needs all the personalities

CHARLOTTE: Kyle Larson lost a race he probably should have won because of a late caution. Larson didn't pout Sunday about the outcome at Dover International Speedway. He had a win in sight, a caution bunched the field and Jimmie Johnson beat Larson on the restart. As disappointing as it was to Larson, he was professional in defeat.

"Jimmie is the best of our time, probably the best of all time," Larson said. "He just has obviously a lot more experience than I do out on the front row late in races, and executed a lot better than I did. I've got to get better at that and maybe get some more wins."

For those keeping score at home, Johnson won at Dover for the 11th time and his 86th career victory tied him with Hall of Famer Cale Yarborough on NASCAR's all-time win list. Larson is in the midst of a breakout season, but has just two Cup career wins.

The entire post-race scene was a stark contrast to just one week ago, when a cranky Kyle Busch faced defeat at Charlotte Motor Speedway. He thought he had the Coca-Cola 600 won, only to learn Austin Dillon had stretched his fuel mileage to the victory. It was Dillon's first career Cup victory, and denied Busch his first victory in a Cup car in a points race at Charlotte. He'd won a week earlier in the $1 million All-Star race for his first Cup win at Charlotte in a race that doesn't allow him to check Charlotte off his Cup resume.

So as Busch met his required post-race media obligation, the exchange went like this: Question: "Were you surprised that Austin could stretch it on fuel? What does it mean for Austin to get his first win?"

Busch: "I'm not surprised about anything. Congratulations." Moderator: "Kyle, thanks for your time." Busch dropped the microphone and walked out of the room. Fans blasted him for behind boorish. Dale Earnhardt Jr. publicly encouraged Busch to never change. Brad Keselowski, who does not get along with Busch, waxed poetic about sportsmanship and class.

Busch was not unprofessional during his visit to the media center. He simply lacked graciousness in defeat. He was asked a question, he answered it curtly and summed up his frustration over a winless season with Joe Gibbs Racing and an inability to knock Charlotte off his wish list. No one asked Busch a single follow-up question, either; he was excused after his mic drop because no one dared poke the bear.

There were many times in Tony Stewart's career where he was angrily took things out on reporters or even fans. "Smoke's in a bad mood," the thinking went, and everyone turned a blind eye.

Why the difference in reaction between Stewart and Busch? Probably because Stewart has a charming side that he uses to disarm his critics. He would eventually come around (sometimes it took a while) and have an entire room laughing at his wicked humor and self-deprecating wit.

Busch is not Stewart. That doesn't mean he's a bad person. It takes all kinds to make NASCAR go round. Sports, at its heart, is entertainment. Johnson wasn't popular during his record run of titles because fans found him too boring. Busch and, to a larger degree, his brother, Kurt, are often criticized because they are far more like Greg Popovich than, say, Steve Kerr.

Look, Kevin Harvick has never taken losing well. Chase Elliott, Erik Jones, Ryan Blaney and many of the newcomers have shown signs of prickliness following defeat. Larson, Johnson, Keselowski are part of a group that can still be candid and polite even when disappointed.—AP

Lexus wins Super GT300 class at Fuji Speedway

TOKYO: Lexus secured its first victory of the season in the Super GT300 class as the No. 51 Lexus JMS P MU L Mcorsa RC F GT3 driven by Yuichi Nakayama and ShoTsuboi sealed a thrilling win in the second round of the 2017 AUTOBACS SUPER GT series held at the Fuji Speedway. Held under a clear bright sky, the Fuji 500-km race, round 2 of the series, is the second longest race of the SUPER GT season, running for more than three hours, and also the most popular event on the calendar.

"This has been a great performance by the No. 51 RC F GT3 team and is testimony to the capability of the Lexus RC F and the racing prowess of the entire team. I congratulate the drivers and support staff for putting on such an excellent race," said Takayuki Yoshitsugu, Chief Representative, Middle East and North Africa Representative Office, Toyota Motor Corporation.

"Motorsports is an important medium for Lexus to convey the excitement of driving. It provides us with significant insights into our cars and their performance under extreme conditions on racetracks. Through these activities, we will continue to develop our human resources and leverage our 'know-how' to make 'ever-better cars.' We thank our fans for their support and look forward to providing them with more thrills as the season unfolds," Yoshitsugu added.

Trailing in fourth in the early stages of the race, the No. 51 Lexus RC F GT3 with Yuichi Nakayama behind the wheel jumped up one place into third to chase the two frontrunners at the same pace as theirs. As the cars in the first and second places pulled up for their routine pit stops, the No. 51 Lexus RC F GT3 pursued a different strategy of holding off longer and delaying the stop-off. Once in the lead after the first and second-placed cars had made their pit stop, Nakayama made a hard spurt to gain ground on the leading pack and it was not until the 41st lap that he brought his car into the pit.

MIDDLE STINT

When all of the cars had finished their first routine pit stop, the No. 51 Lexus RC F GT3 was still in third and 19 seconds off the pace. In this middle stint of the race, it was the rookie Tsuboi, having taken over from Nakayama, who showed outstanding driving and fast laps to slowly close the gap to the second-placed car.

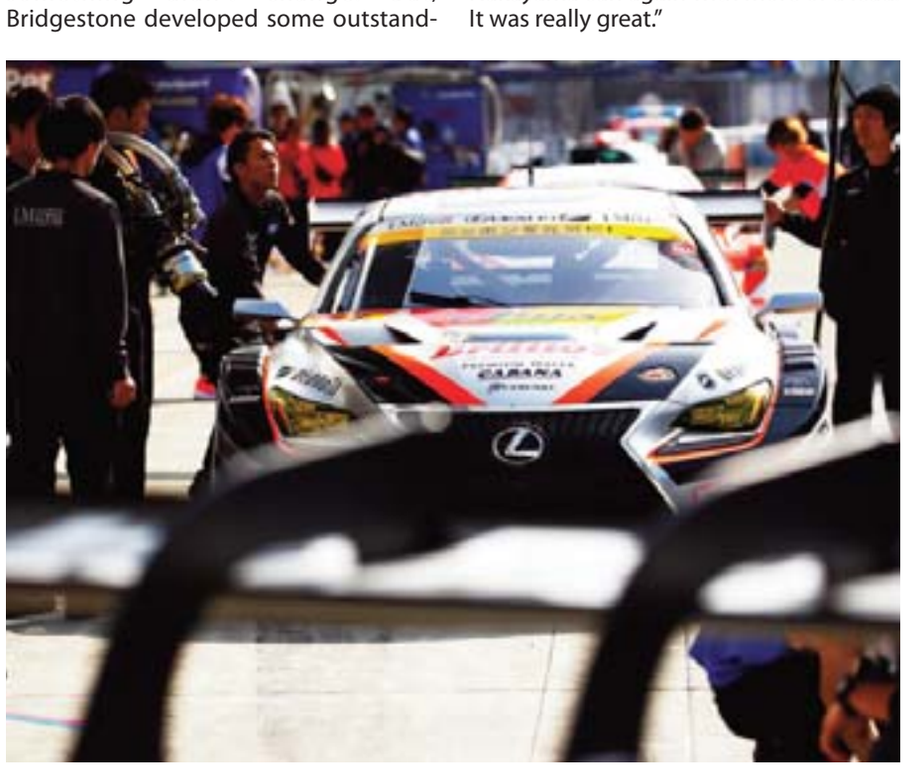
On the 60th lap, a left-front tire burst on the 300R curve forced the car leading the charge to make an earlier-than-scheduled pit stop, allowing the car placed just behind to pull into the lead, with the No. 51 Lexus RC F GT3 following about five seconds back in second place. As the new front runner pulled up for a second routine pit stop on the 70th lap, Tsuboi, with no one in front of him now, ran consecutive super-fast laps to close the gap until he brought the car in for its second pit stop on the 80th lap.

The team pulled off some fast pit work, adding just enough fuel to finish the short remaining laps, enabling the No. 51 Lexus RC F GT3 to get out of the pit and back into the race in just 39 seconds. As a result, the No. 51Lexus RC F GT3, with Nakayama back behind the wheel, was able to keep the lead, and although the chasing car pulled up to within one second of its tail, Nakayama hung strong to pull away and blitz his way to the checkered flag, giving the new Lexus RC F GT3 and the rookie Tsuboi a momentous first win.

With the Lexus LC 500 having already won the Super GT500 race held earlier in the day, the RC F GT3's maiden victory completed a double win for the Lexus team on their home track of Fuji.

"I am very happy that we were able to win here at Lexus' home track," said Yuichi Nakayama. "In the opening round we lacked speed, so we thought that we would have a difficult time here at Fuji if something didn't change. But, Bridgestone developed some outstanding tires for us. The result in yesterday's qualifying was disappointing, but today we had the performance we needed and we were able to run a good race."

ShoTsuboi said: "I drove the second stint and my job was to get the car back in good position for (Yuichi) Nakayama-san for the last stint. That was all I was thinking about. So, I pushed hard from the beginning of my stint and the tires and the machine kept performing well without fail. That enabled me to run at a good pace and turn the car over to Nakayama-san again with more of a lead. It was really great."



Kuwait Shooting Sports Club holds annual meeting

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Kuwait Shooting Sports Club General Assembly held its annual meeting Monday evening at Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Olympic Shooting Complex.

The meeting was chaired by Chairman of the Board Eng. Duaij Al-Otaibi who welcomed all those present, and thanked them for the confidence put in him and the board members. He said that he takes the opportunity to thank HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al Jaber Al-Sabah, HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hmad Al-Sabah for their support. He also thanked President of Kuwait Civil Aviation, Honorary President of KSSC Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah for the continued support and encouragement that resulted in many achievements. Eng Al-Otaibi also extended thanks to Public Authority for Sports and its Director General Sheikh Ahmad Al-Mansour Al-Sabah and his deputies.

He said that Kuwait Shooting made a great achievement when it got a ruling lifting the suspension of Kuwait Shooting Federation from participating under Kuwait flag in International events by the Court of Arbitration of sport (CAS). Eng Al-Otaibi reminded that Kuwait Shooting Sport won 46 medals (20 gold, 13 silver and 13 bronze) during its participation locally, regionally and internationally. Assembly members approved the board's report for the year ending by 31st March 2017, budget, closing account, auditor's report and the proposed budget for 2017/2018. Eng Al-Otaibi then invited all those present for a Ramadan Ghabqa at the club.

CHESTER: File photo show Aidan Flynn #11 of California dishes the ball to a teammate as Harley Davidson #7 of Life University makes the tackle during the first half at Talen Energy Stadium on June 4 in Chester, Pennsylvania. — AFP

RUGBY

Lions to be tested by Blues in 2nd tour match

WELLINGTON: The British and Irish Lions will reach an important crossroads in only the second match of their New Zealand tour today when they play the Auckland Blues in their first ever meeting with a Super Rugby side.

Unless the extensively changed Lions side can dramatically improve on an inadequate performance by the tourists in their opening match against the Provincial Barbarians, expectations on coach Warren Gatland's team may plummet, with their plans around selection and preparation for the tests against the All Blacks compromised. The Lions squad needs to quickly restore the confidence of the nearly 30,000 fans that have followed them to New Zealand by scoring a win over the Blues which demonstrates they have the strength and depth to challenge New Zealand in the three-test series that begins June 24. The excuses the Lions have cited to explain a weak and disordered performance against the Barbarians - a team of amateurs and semi professionals, many of whom had to take time off work to play - won't stand now that the tour is more than a week old.

The Lions blamed jet lag and a limited preparation for a performance which saw them forced onto the back foot before they managed to rally and turn a 7-3 halftime deficit into a 13-7 win. They were never in control of the match and were defending desperately when it ended.

Those excuses don't wash in modern professional rugby. Most of the side that took the field Saturday had been in training for some time before the team's departure and southern teams traveling to the northern hemisphere often go into test matches on a similar buildup.

The match against the Blues, for which the Lions have made a comprehensive 15 personnel changes, can be expected to reveal whether the inadequacies the tourists displayed were an aberration, as they claim, or demonstrative of their general weakness.

The Lions, who regard set pieces as their forte, achieved no superiority at scrum or lineout despite a substantial weight and height advantage and a surfeit of international experience. They allowed themselves to be bullied at breakdowns and showed no flexibility in they way they attacked the Barbarians, who hadn't time in their limited match preparation to practice defensive patterns. The Barbarians were the team that made the play, trying to create quick recycled ball, while on defense they relied on instinct and simply tackled anything that moved.

Against the Blues on Wednesday, the Lions will face a much more practiced and prepared opponent. The Blues are in the depths of the Super Rugby season and their attacking and defensive patterns are well-honed. They have eight All Blacks among their lineup and a dangerous backline which will test the Lions' defense more severely than the Barbarians.

Coach Gatland is confident the Lions can match the Blues physically and in their high-paced style. "We've just got to match fire with fire with our approach to the game," Gatland said. "I think the fact that we would have been here for a week today, understanding what's coming at us and how tough the challenge is going to be, I think that's going to put us in good stead.

"A few guys were flat and disappointed that we didn't win the (Barbarians) game more comfortably, but it was a win, an ugly win at that, but we came out of it on top and there's only one way to go and that's to improve on the performance."

The most disappointing aspect of the Lions' first-up performance was its total lack of ambition. Matches involving Barbarians sides generally have a festival atmosphere in which both teams run the ball at every opportunity. The Lions never tried to do so, which suggests they will follow the far more conservative style - dubbed Warrenball - that Gatland has adopted as coach of Wales.

Gatland bridles at the use of the term. "The modern game of rugby is about getting over the gain-line, trying to get front-foot ball and playing to space if that's possible," he said.

"We know we didn't play so well on Saturday and it gives us an opportunity to go out against the Blues and be positive. The message to the players is we want to be able to play positive rugby. We want to be able to move the ball and create chances."

The Lions must improve today because their tour only gets harder from here on. The Blues are the weakest of the New Zealand Super Rugby sides; the Crusaders, who the Lions will meet on Saturday, are the best and will prey on any team showing signs of self-doubt. — AP

GOLF

Steve Stricker plays his way into US Open

COLUMBUS: Steve Stricker always knew he would have to take the toughest road to make it into the first US Open in his native Wisconsin. That made it all the more rewarding when he earned his place at Erin Hills through a 36-hole qualifier Monday.

And the 50-year-old Stricker did it in style.

More than just earning one of the nine spots in the Tennessee qualifier, Stricker closed with a wedge to tap-in birdie range to cap off a 67-65 day and finish first among the nine qualifiers. "It means a lot," Stricker said. "It's been at the forefront of my thinking for a while now. It's kind of a relief knowing I got in on my own terms. I went through qualifying. I'd rather have it that way. I'm glad I did it this way."

The US Open starts June 15 at Erin Hills, a public course built on pristine pastureland in Wisconsin that only opened in 2006. Stricker was asked by the original owner, Bob Lang, and USGA executives to come along for a site visit to give a pro's perspective. He knew he would be 50 when the US Open came to Erin Hills. He never knew it would be such an ordeal getting there. But he made it, and it all felt right.

Andy North has two US Open titles, but no Wisconsin native has more PGA Tour victories than Stricker's 12 titles, which took him as high as No. 2 in the world. He even wrote a welcome message for the official U.S. Open program, which surely will read a lot better now that he's playing. "Isn't that something?" he said with a laugh. "I almost wanted to call them and tell them to take it out." Of the 10 sectional qualifiers across the country to fill most of the 156-man field, Stricker attracted the most attention. His brother-in-law and agent, Mario Tiziani, urged him to ask for a special exemption, though Stricker figured he wouldn't get one. He didn't, but it motivated him.

"Not that I deserved one, but it's been driving me to achieve this goal," he said. "And I'm just happy that I'm going to get to play. It's a relief to get to play in the first one in my home state." The largest qualifier was in Columbus because of so many PGA Tour players who were in town for the Memorial.

Stewart Cink was among the 14 qualifiers at Lakes and Brookside. The start was delayed just over two hours because of overnight rain, and it was likely not to finish because of darkness and a playoff for the final spots.

Cink didn't even try to qualify last year after his wife, Lisa, was diagnosed with Stage 4 breast cancer a year ago April. She now is doing well enough to travel with him, and that includes a trip to Wisconsin.

"It's been a tough thing," Cink said. "I was not in competitive form last year. We were right in the midst of Lisa's treatment, and we were focused on that, so I didn't even try to qualify. To come back this year and get through successfully, it really means a lot to me."

Former U.S. Amateur champion Bryson DeChambeau, coming off five straight missed cuts, found his form just in time with rounds of 69-66 to qualify. Keegan Bradley also got in. He played 21 straight majors dating to his PGA Championship victory as a rookie in 2011, and he missed the Masters this year when his five-year exemption from the PGA Championship ran out. PGA Tour rookie J.T. Poston led all qualifiers in Columbus and will play in his first major.

IN OTHER QUALIFIERS

Joaquin Niemann of Chile, the No. 1 amateur in the world, birdied the last hole to get into a playoff and beat Eugene Hong to earn the final spot in Florida. Also getting through was Jack Maguire and Tyson Alexander, the son of retired Florida golf coach Buddy Alexander.

Alex Smalley and Stephan Jaeger, the German who once shot 58 on the Web.com Tour, earned the two spots from Georgia. The first alternate from that sectional was Davis Love IV. His father, the former PGA champion and two-time Ryder Cup captain, failed to earn his spot in Columbus. Sam Ryder opened with a 62 at Woodmont Country Club and easily earned one of three spots in the Maryland qualifier.

Two-time PGA Tour winner Daniel Chopra led the qualifier in New Jersey, where amateur Chris Crawford made it into the US Open for the second straight year, both times by going through 18 holes of local qualifying and the 36-hole sectional qualifying.

In the other Ohio qualifier, Ryan Brehm birdied his last two holes for a 63 to earn the last of four spots without having to go to a playoff. Canadian Corey Conners was the medalist after opening with a 61 at Springfield Country Club.

The Tennessee qualifier also had several PGA Tour players ahead of this week's FedEx St. Jude Classic. Those who joined Stricker in getting through included Harris English and Andres Romero. At least five players would battle in a playoff for the last two spots.

Nick Flanagan will be in his second straight US Open, last year as a caddie and now as a player. The former US Amateur champion earned one of three spots in Texas. A year ago, Flanagan returned to Oakmont to caddie for fellow Aussie Aron Price. In California, US Mid-Amateur champion Stewart Hagestad will play a second straight major. He was low amateur at the Masters and was among six qualifiers.

Jordan Niebrugge gave Wisconsin another native to cheer at Erin Hills. Niebrugge, from Mequon, Wisconsin, was among the four qualifiers in the Washington sectional. He was low amateur in the British Open at St. Andrews two years ago.

When the Columbus and Tennessee playoffs are completed today morning, that will make 150 players in the field. The USGA has set aside six spots for anyone who cracks the top 60 in the world ranking after this week. —AP

Steve Stricker

MOTORCYCLING

MotoGP set for Thailand debut in 2018

BANGKOK: Thailand's sports authority says it has secured rights to host a MotoGP race next year, after years of lobbying to bring top motorcycle racing to the kingdom.

The Sports Authority of Thailand (SAT) said on its Facebook page that MotoGP owners Dorna Sports gave them the green light after talks on Saturday in Florence, Italy.

The motorcycling equivalent of Formula One will stage a grand prix in Buriram, a provincial Thai city in the impoverished rice farming northeast that has been transformed into a sporting hub.

"The talks took three hours and concluded with Dorna Sports being willing to give Thailand rights for three years beginning in 2018 up to 2020," said the statement which was published on Sunday.

It stated the first race weekend would be held between October 5-7, 2018, but there has been no official confirmation of the deal from MotoGP or owners Dorna Sports yet. The SAT said it expected to receive "written confirmation" shortly.

A Thai debut for MotoGP would be a personal coup for Newin Chidchob, a 58-year-old survivor of Thailand's bear-pit politics who has enticed deep-pocketed contacts into building sports facilities in his hometown of Buriram. In 2014 he unveiled the $58.9 million Formula One-certified circuit in the 30,000 population town.

The motorcycling extravaganza could pour millions of dollars into Buriram, a huge sum for a province that was once among Thailand's poorest. Thailand's junta has earmarked millions of dollars to win the hosting of MotoGP in partnership with private sponsors. Thai sports authorities also want to stage Formula One, but political instability has so far hampered efforts to secure the motor sport jewel in the crown. — AFP

Kevin Durant's menacing defense leads the way for Warriors

OAKLAND: Kevin Durant is growing a little tired of questions about his ability to play defense. "Underrated?" Durant responded when recently asked about the perception of his D. "My coaches don't feel like that."

Neither does he, and KD's menacing, 6-foot-9 presence from the paint to the perimeter is a big reason unbeaten Golden State is closing in on its second championship in three years. While best known for his sensational scoring and shot-making from every corner of the court, Durant has been tough on LeBron James so far in these NBA Finals by smothering the Cavs superstar.

The Warriors are two wins from a title going into Game 3 at Cleveland on Wednesday night. Durant is chasing his first championship and seems determined to do whatever it takes. So versatile with his length and ability to alter shots, he even played center during Sunday's Game 2 when Draymond Green dealt with foul trouble in the 132-113 victory.

"I don't think there's many teams in the league who their backup is better than their starter," Green said. "So I think that's a luxury that we have with KD here, and when I went out with foul trouble, obviously he - to say pick up the slack is kind of a ridiculous term, because he's a great player, an MVP, one of the best players in the world. So just the way he played on the defensive end, the way he played on the offensive end, he's been doing it all playoffs long, but in these Finals, he's really picked it up, and it's been huge for us."

TOUGHNESS

Durant and Green have set the tone all season on the defensive end, establishing an intensity and toughness - and the rest of the Warriors had no choice but to do more during Durant's 19-game absence this spring with a knee injury.

"If we're locked in on the defensive end, we'll score enough points," Green said. "Even on an off night, we'll score enough points." After his NBA Finals failure five years ago against James and the Heat, Durant vowed to become a legitimate, respected defender who could make nearly as much of an impact blocking shots and crashing the boards.

He insists he can do even more. "I've gotten better, and 2013 is when I feel I really turned the corner as a defender. Around 2012, that's when coaches stopped thinking they could go at me and get a basket or get me in foul trouble," Durant said. "But I don't expect anybody on the outside who really doesn't know the game to look at me as a defender because once you're labeled something that's what you're going to be. But I feel the last four or five years I've definitely continued to get better and better, and smarter. I have the physical tools, but it's also about mentally knowing what to do."

Sure, James still notched his record-tying eighth career Finals triple-double and Kevin Love and Kyrie Irving had big nights. Yet Durant, Andre Iguodala, Klay Thompson and the others kept the pressure on the Cavs.

OFFENSIVE FIREPOWER

Durant blocked five shots to go with 33 points, 13 rebounds and six assists after going off for 38 points and eight assists in Thursday's Game 1.

"His defense was amazing, and we needed it. Especially with Draymond out," coach Steve Kerr said. "It's a small game and you got shooters everywhere and you have to be able protect the rim with LeBron coming downhill, with Love posting up and Draymond's on the bench. So that's a pretty scary proposition for us. I thought that Kev's defense was unreal, and it was probably the key to the whole game."

It could be that Durant's defense will quiet the critics at last, especially if he comes out a winner after that scrutinized move from Oklahoma City last July to join the super-Warriors. "I don't feel like I get picked on or people call sets just to try to score on me. That hasn't happened in a while," he said. "I've grown leaps and bounds from where I was. I feel like I've been a solid defender in this league for a while."

With all of their offensive firepower, the Warriors often turn a stretch of timely defensive stops into scoring spurts that can swing the momentum. Or, in many cases, give them just the jolt they need to put a game out of reach for good. "I operate under the assumption that our guys know what to do and they know their system," Golden State assistant and defensive specialist Ron Adams said. "We have an eclectic system.

There's freedom offensively, and we have some freedom defensively, and we're good at it." When the Warriors added Durant, JaVale McGee, Zaza Pachulia and David West to a roster that blew a 3-1 Finals lead to James and fell short of a repeat last year, many wondered if they would have enough in the middle to defend the rim.

"It was a question mark for some people going into the season, losing (Andrew) Bogut and some other guys," general manager Bob Myers said. "Ron is interesting. He's always had good defensive teams. And we take pride in it, we care about it. I know the offense gets most of the attention but our players, they work at it, collectively, individually. They want to be a good defensive team. We try to do it all year. Sometimes it's better than other times, but this is the time of year you really need it the most. For us, we view it as important as our offense. "It's not as sexy, but it's important." — AP

KANSAS CITY: Mike Moustakas #8 of the Kansas City Royals dives head-first into second base for a double during the 8th inning of the game at Kauffman Stadium on Monday in Kansas City, Missouri. — AFP

BASEBALL

Astros beat Royals for 11th straight win

KANSAS CITY: Yuli Gurriel hit a three-run homer, Brian McCann had a two-run shot and the Houston Astros beat the Kansas City Royals 7-3 in Major League baseball on Monday night for their 11th consecutive win. It's the longest winning streak in the majors this season and one shy of the Astros' record. They won 12 straight in 1999 and 2004. Houston, with the best record in the majors at 42-16, has also won 11 road games in a row - a franchise record. Gurriel homered in the ninth inning. He has gone deep in back-to-back games and has 10 RBIs during a six-game hitting streak. Astros starter Mike Fiers (3-2) was charged with two runs in five-plus innings. He is 6-0 in his past 10 road starts dating to Aug. 20. Jorge Bonifacio homered for the Royals, but Ian Kennedy (0-6) gave up four runs and six hits over five innings. Kennedy, in the second season of a five-year, $70 million contract, is winless in 14 starts since a Sept. 11 victory. Whit Merrifield went 0 for 5 to snap his 19-game hitting streak, longest in the majors this season.

NATIONALS 4, DODGERS 2

Anthony Rendon homered and Gio Gonzalez pitched surging Washington past Los Angeles in a rematch of last year's tight playoff series. Matt Wieters had a two-run single for the Nationals in the first meeting between the teams since the Dodgers edged Washington in five games during their 2016 NL Division Series. Washington, which owns the National League's best record at 36-20, has won six of seven and increased its NL East lead to 11 1/2 games. Gonzalez (5-1) outpitched Hyun-Jin Ryu (2-6), holding Los Angeles to two runs in six innings. Oliver Perez got one out for his third career save - the other two came in 2013 with Seattle. Six different Nationals have earned a save this year.

ATHLETICS 5, BLUE JAYS 3

Ryon Healy homered twice to drive in a career-high five runs, single-handedly backing Sean Manaea's fourth straight winning start as Oakland defeated Toronto. Healy hit a three-run homer in the second inning and a two-run drive in the fourth for his second career multihomer game - both in the past three days. He has 13 home runs this season. Manaea (5-3) struck out seven over six innings, allowing two runs and four hits. He extended the longest winning streak of his career. Justin Smoak hit his 15th home run in the eighth off Liam Hendriks, but the Blue Jays couldn't do enough to support J.A. Happ (0-4). Making his second start since coming off the disabled list, the left-hander lost for the first time in eight starts against the A's. He was tagged for five runs in 5 1/3 innings. Santiago Casilla finished for his ninth save in 11 chances.

CUBS 3, MARLINS 1

Eddie Butler pitched three-hit ball into the sixth inning and Kris Bryant hit a two-run homer as Chicago topped Miami for its fourth straight victory. Albert Almora Jr. added a solo shot as Chicago remained perfect on its 10-game homestand after going winless on a six-game West Coast trip. With closer Wade Davis on paternity leave, Mike Montgomery pitched 3 1/3 innings for his second save in his first appearance since May 28. Miami had won three straight and seven of eight. Marcell Ozuna had two hits, but the Marlins' lineup struggled for the most part on an unseasonably cool, breezy night at Wrigley Field. Butler (3-1) was working on a shutout before Dee Gordon hit a sacrifice fly in the sixth, trimming Chicago's lead to 3-1. Giancarlo Stanton followed with a two-out double, chasing Butler.

REDS 4, CARDINALS 2

Eugenio Suarez and Scooter Gennett hit consecutive two-run doubles in the seventh inning as Cincinnati came from behind to beat the slumping Cardinals. St. Louis starter Carlos Martinez (4-5) was dominant through six innings before wilting in the seventh as the Cardinals dropped their fourth straight and eighth in 11 games. The Reds had lost two in a row and five of six going into the opener of this four-game series. Martinez, who was 4-1 with a 2.03 ERA in his previous six starts, faced the minimum 18 batters through six innings with the help of catcher Yadier Molina, who threw out major league stolen base leader Billy Hamilton trying to swipe third in the first inning and Adam Duvall attempting to steal second in the second.

GIANTS 7, BREWERS 2

Jeff Samardzija pitched deep into the game after a shaky beginning while Aaron Hill had a tiebreaking, pinch-hit double in the eighth inning as the Giants beat the Brewers. Hill drove in two with two outs off reliever Rob Scahill (1-2). Samardzija (2-7) surrendered two runs in the first but quickly settled down, retiring 19 consecutive batters in one stretch. Milwaukee's first-inning runs came in an unusual fashion. With runners on second and third and one out, Hernan Perez lofted a fly to left. Eric Sogard tagged and scored when left fielder Orlando Calixte's throw sailed high over catcher Buster Posey and caromed off the wall behind home plate. The ball dropped behind the padding and out of play, allowing another run to score.

PHILLIES 11, BRAVES 4

Odubel Herrera continued his power surge with a two-run homer and two doubles and Tommy Joseph homered and drove in three runs, helping the Phillies beat the Braves. Herrera became the first Philadelphia player to hit two doubles in three straight games, according to Phillies records dating back to 1913. He had three extra-base hits for the second straight game, with a homer in each one. Aaron Altherr added a two-run shot off Eric O'Flaherty in the eighth. Braves 44-year-old right-hander Bartolo Colon endured another rocky start, allowing eight runs. Nick Pivetta (1-2) permitted three runs in five innings for his first major league win. — AP

MLB results/standings

Washington 4, LA Dodgers 2; Oakland 5, Toronto 3; Houston 7, Kansas City 3; Chicago Cubs 3, Miami 1; San Francisco 7, Milwaukee 2; Philadelphia 11, Atlanta 4; Cincinnati 4, St. Louis 2.

American League

	W	L	PCT	GB
Astern Division				
NY Yankees	32	22	.593	-
Boston	31	25	.554	2
Baltimore	29	26	.527	3.5
Tampa Bay	29	30	.492	5.5
Toronto	28	30	.483	6
Central Division				
Minnesota	29	24	.547	-
Cleveland	29	26	.527	1
Detroit	28	28	.500	2.5
Chicago White Sox	24	31	.436	6
Kansas City	24	32	.429	6.5
Western Division				
Houston	42	16	.724	-
LA Angels	29	31	.483	14
Seattle	28	30	.483	14
Texas	26	31	.456	15.5
Oakland	25	32	.439	16.5

National League

Eastern Division				
Washington	36	20	.643	-
NY Mets	24	31	.436	11.5
Atlanta	24	31	.436	11.5
Miami	24	32	.429	12
Philadelphia	20	35	.364	15.5
Central Division				
Chicago Cubs	29	27	.518	-
Milwaukee	30	28	.517	-
St. Louis	26	29	.473	2.5
Cincinnati	26	30	.464	3
Pittsburgh	26	31	.456	3.5
Western Division				
Colorado	36	23	.610	-
LA Dodgers	35	24	.593	1
Arizona	34	25	.576	2
San Francisco	24	35	.407	12
San Diego	23	35	.397	12.5

CHICAGO: Miami Marlins' Ichiro Suzuki (51) runs to first base after hitting a single against the Chicago Cubs during the eighth inning of a baseball game, Monday, in Chicago. — AP

Woakes in race to be fit for first South Africa Test

LONDON: England paceman Chris Woakes says he faces a race against time to be fit for the first Test with South Africa at Lord's on July 6th.

The 28-year-old has a left side strain which he suffered in England's opening Champions Trophy match with Bangladesh last Thursday.

He told Press Association Sport with the recovery time generally four to six weeks he was 'up against it' in being fit for the first of the four Test series.

"It's a left side strain and there is a tear in the muscle," he said. "It's a grade-two injury, which is not terrible news, but it's not great news at the same time. "They say it's roughly a four to six-week injury, and it's more likely to be towards the six when I am back playing competitive cricket. "I'm on day five of recovery now, and the physios say for the first 10 to 14 days there's not a lot we can do other than rest it.

"You don't rule it out, but I'm probably up against it for the first Test. Sometimes these things heal quicker, sometimes they take longer, so we have to play it by ear." Woakes, who has played 17 Tests and 63 One Day Internationals, said he wouldn't risk returning too early just so he could play in the Test. "It's also one of those things you can't rush back-if you do, it can just ping again. You have to make sure you're right before you come back," he said. "The timing of it is frustrating, it's terrible, but it's one of those things." — AFP

CRICKET

Samuels batters Afghans in West Indies romp

BASSETERRE: Marlon Samuels was at his most imperious with an unbeaten 89 to guide the West Indies to a seven-wicket victory over Afghanistan in the final fixture of the three-match T20 International series at Warner Park in St Kitts on Monday.

Replying to the tourists' total of 146 for six, the right-hander's highest-ever T20 International innings took the home side to the target with four balls to spare and completed a 3-0 series sweep.

ST KITTS: Evin Lewis (C) of West Indies attempts to hit past Amir Hamza (R) as Shafiqullah Shafaq (L) of Afghanistan watches during the 3rd and final T20i match between West Indies and Afghanistan at Warner Park, Basseterre, St. Kitts, Monday. — AFP

Samuels' innings occupied 66 deliveries and was embellished with three sixes and nine fours. He deservedly won both the "Man of the Match" and "Man of the Series" awards in a format of the game in which he has excelled in the latter stage of his long international career.

"I know my role in this team and it was important to stay out there and ensure we got the target," he said after victory was completed in partnership with Jason Mohammed. "Partnerships are important to any run chase and it was good that a couple of us worked together effectively."

Afghanistan, who now prepare to take on the West Indies in three One-Day Internationals in St Lucia starting on Friday, were left to rue a costly miss by their most experienced player that allowed Samuels to be the match-winner.

Having topscored with 38 after his team chose to bat first, Mohammad Nabi dropped a sharp caught-and-bowled chance offered by the batsman when he was just on 40. Thereafter his batting was flawless and not even the belated introduction of the main bowling threat, leg-spinner Rashid Khan, could contain him.

Samuels featured in half-century partnerships with opening batsman Evin Lewis and Mohammed, whose unbeaten 23 ensured there was no middle-order wobble that could have opened the door to a consolation win for the visitors.

"It was important for us to complete the sweep because if we hadn't done so there would have been all sorts of things said about our team," said West Indies captain Carlos Brathwaite. "They may be minnows in international cricket but we respect them and there was no way we were going to take them for granted."

Earlier, Nabi's innings and 35 from Noor Ali Zadran led Afghanistan's batting effort against a home side that appeared to be lacking in intensity with the series already wrapped up following comfortable wins in the first two matches at the same venue.

Wicketkeeper-batsman Shafiqullah Shafaq chipped in with 25 to ensure the West Indies were left with a challenging target.

Kesrick Williams was again the most successful of the home bowlers, finishing with three for 34 to lift his wicket tally in the series to eight. There was a bit of concern though at the end of his spell as he appeared to be suffering the discomfort of a back injury when he bowled Shafiqullah with the final ball of his four-over allotment.

"This was very disappointing but it is still a step in the right direction for us to be playing teams like the West Indies," said Afghanistan captain Asghar Stanikzai. "We are hopeful that this experience will serve us well for the one-day matches to come." — AFP

SCOREBOARD

BASSETERRE, Saint Kitts and Nevis: Scoreboard of the final fixture of the three-match T20 International series between the West Indies and Afghanistan at Warner Park in St Kitts on Monday.

Afghanistan

Noor Ali b Williams	35
J. Ahmadi lbw Badree	0
A. Stanikzai c Williams b Powell	13
M. Nabi c Powell b Williams	38
K. Janat c Lewis b Taylor	8
Shafiqullah b Williams	25
Najibullah not out	10
G. Naib not out	0
Extras (lb-3, w-7)	10
Total (6 wkts, 20 overs)	146

Fall of wickets: 1-14 (Ahmadi), 2-45 (Noor Ali), 3-57 (Stanikzai), 4-96 (Nabi), 5-108 (Janat), 6-138 (Shafiqullah)

Did not bat: R. Khan, S. Zadran, A. Hamza

Bowling: J. Taylor 4-0-33-1 (1w), S. Badree 4-0-26-1 (1w), K. Williams 4-0-34-3, C. Brathwaite 1-0-3-0, R. Powell 3-0-20-1, S. Narine 4-0-27-0 (1w)

West Indies Innings

C. Walton c sub (Shenwari) b Zadran	0
E. Lewis lbw Nabi	19
M. Samuels not out	89
L. Simmons c Najibullah b Khan	15
J. Mohammed not out	23
Extras (w-1)	1
Total (3 wkts, 19.2)	147

Fall of wickets: 1-0 (Walton), 2-61 (Lewis), 3-82 (Simmons)

Did not bat: R. Powell, C. Brathwaite, S. Narine, J. Taylor, S. Badree, K. Williams

Bowling: S. Zadran 3.2-0-27-1 (1w), M. Nabi 4-0-33-1, A. Hamza 4-0-24-0, K. Janat 4-0-41-0, R. Khan 4-0-22-1

Result: West Indies won by 7 wickets.

LONDON: Australia's David Warner (L) runs during the ICC Champions Trophy match between Australia and Bangladesh at The Oval in London on Monday. — AFP

Australia will be ready for England showdown: Smith

LONDON: Steve Smith insists Australia's batsmen will be ready for their do or die Champions Trophy showdown with England despite their lack of action in the tournament. Smith's side endured the frustration of having Monday's clash with Bangladesh abandoned due to rain, just days after their opening fixture against New Zealand was also washed out.

On both occasions, it has been Australia who were batting in the early stages of their innings when bad weather ended play. Against Bangladesh, they had reached 83-1 in pursuit of 183 to win and required only four more overs to be bowled to ensure they would take maximum points via the Duckworth-Lewis rule used in rain-affected matches.

With two points from their two matches, Australia will have to beat hosts England in Birmingham on June 10 to reach the semi-finals. "I think it makes the equation pretty simple for us," Smith said.

"We have to beat England and then I think we're through. "I haven't really read into anything else that's happened. I guess we've just got to beat England."

In the circumstances, Australia could have done with their batsmen being in good form before the crunch encounter with their old rivals. But, asked if their lack of time at the crease could undermine them against England, Australia captain Smith said: "I'm sure they will be okay.

"You know, most of the guys have been playing a lot of cricket, anyway, having been at the IPL and things like that.

"I think once they get out in the middle, things will just click into place, and yeah, hopefully we can play well in Birmingham."

On the bright side for Smith, his bowlers were more effective against Bangladesh after struggling to find their rhythm in the New Zealand match. Pace bowler Mitchell Starc was the cream of the crop with four wickets in nine balls in rout the Bangladesh tail.

CONSOLATION

"I thought all our bowlers were a lot better today. We hit some good areas early on and challenged the defence of Bangladeshi batsmen," Smith said.

"Everyone that bowled I thought did a pretty good job today, and it was nice that we were able to turn things around from the way things went in the first game against New Zealand."

Starc's blistering spell was some consolation for Smith, but he was still left to rue the weather and what he felt was the umpires' quick decision to go off, thus denying Australia a chance for those vital four overs. "Of course I didn't want to go off. I was happy to keep batting through the rain," he said. But the umpires are there to make a decision and I think drinks was at the end of that over, which probably didn't help. "If the game had just carried on, perhaps they may have had a different opinion. "It's disappointing not to get a win but can't do much about the weather and we can't control that."

Beaten by England in their opening match, Bangladesh are without a win and look likely to be eliminated in their last game against New Zealand.

Bangladesh captain Mashrafe Mortaza remains hopeful of a miracle. "You never know. I think even in 2015 World Cup, we got one point from Australia and went through. It really helped us," he said.

"This time we have a chance. We have to beat New Zealand and obviously we have to wait for a few results as well.

"Australia has to win against England and we have a great chance to beat New Zealand and go through. So let's see what happens." — AFP

Chinese 'sack race' claims six coaches in a month

BEIJING: High expectations in the big-spending Chinese Super League have triggered a spate of departures, with six coaches shown the door in the space of just one month.

More than a third of teams in the 16-strong Super League have been affected, in a season which has also been rocked by claims of racism and violence. Jiangsu Suning, who have slumped to 15th in the table after finishing second last year, are the biggest club involved after Choi Yong-Soo departed last week.

Beijing Guoan, Tianjin Teda, Guizhou Zhicheng Chongqing Lifan and Changchun Yatai have also parted ways with their coaches in recent weeks. It comes as the Super League enjoys unprecedented visibility, broadcasting in Britain and other countries under a new TV deal and featuring several big stars including Oscar and Carlos Tevez.

Chinese teams smashed the Asian transfer record five times in 12 months after President Xi Jinping signalled his desire to turn China into a football power. Mark Dreyer, founder of the China Sports Insider website, said the managerial turmoil reflected the rising ambitions of Chinese clubs.

"In the English Premier League, there's always the managerial sack race-who's going to get sacked first?" Dreyer told AFP. "This is just another global football trend that has come to China.

"The fact is that when you have clubs spending a lot of money, the pressure is on for them to perform, and inevitably in football, it's the managers that get the responsibility." The sudden influx of well-paid foreign players has also created teething problems this season with two of them, Hulk and Ezequiel Lavezzi, accused of racism. Shanghai SIPG's Hulk was investigated over an alleged racially motivated assault on a rival team's coach, a claim both he and his club deny. Lavezzi also caused a storm when publicity photos emerged of him pulling back the corners of his eyelids in a 'slant-eyed' pose.

'MOST DIFFICULT PERIOD'

The managerial sackings come halfway through the season and as China approaches its summer transfer window, meaning any new coach has an opportunity to hire players and start rebuilding his team. However, they may find their spending limited after China levied a 100 percent tax on transfer fees for loss-making clubs, in a bid to reign in player purchases.

Seventh-placed Beijing Guoan showed Spanish coach Jose Gonzalez the door after they lost to Chongqing Lifan on Friday, their fifth defeat of the season.

"Right now the team is going through its most difficult period but we are confident that we can quickly get back on track," the club said, announcing the dismissal.

Jia Xiuquan of Henan Jianye, meanwhile, quit to "assume responsibility" for his team's poor ranking after 12 rounds.

Henan are 14th in the table, just above second-to-last Jiangsu Suning-whose owners, Suning Commerce Group, also bankroll Italy's Inter Milan. South Korea's Choi decided to "terminate his contract in advance", according to Jiangsu, less than a year after he took the reins.

His departure was announced came last Thursday, one day after Jiangsu's AFC Champions League exit at the hands of Shanghai SIPG.

Choi, who has gone back to his old team FC Seoul, said foreign coaches were not entirely to blame for their Chinese teams' failings.

"Chinese players' understanding (of football) is relatively weak" despite the clubs' high-quality facilities and coaching staff, he said, according to the South China Morning Post.

"If you use the same tactics, Korean players will carry it out 85 percent of the time, but Chinese players will only carry it out less than 60 percent of the time, and that makes it hard for foreign coaches to display their ability."— AFP

NANJING: This file photo taken on March 1, 2017 shows China's Jiangsu FC head coach Choi Yong Soo reacting during the AFC Champions League group stage football match against Australia's Adelaide United in Nanjing, east China's Jiangsu province. High expectations in the big-spending Chinese Super League have triggered a spate of departures, with six coaches shown the door in the space of just one month. — AFP

Pakistan pride at stake against South Africa

BIRMINGHAM: Mickey Arthur has no doubt Pakistan will be "up for the fight" when they face his native South Africa in the Champions Trophy after a humiliating defeat by arch-rivals India.

Pakistan's crushing 124-run loss to title-holders India in their tournament opener at Edgbaston on Sunday was labelled the "Mother of all mismatches" by the Indian Express newspaper.

Yet, worryingly for Pakistan coach Arthur, there is the potential for an even more lopsided match when they return to Edgbaston on Wednesday-and that's not simply because South Africa are top of the International Cricket Council (ICC) one-day international rankings while Pakistan are eighth.

Pakistan were outplayed in every department by an India side who were nowhere near their best. Having conceded 319 for three as India's top order ran riot, Pakistan were dismissed for just 164, having never once threatened a rain-adjusted target of 289 in 41 overs. It led former Pakistan captain Shahid Afridi, to slam the current team's "clueless" batting and "abysmal fielding". Now, in the space of just a few days, Pakistan must somehow raise their game to beat a South Africa side who defeated Sri Lanka by 96 runs at the Oval on Saturday in their opening Group B fixture if they are to have any chance of reaching the semi-finals.

'Issue is fear' -

Arthur suggested too many Pakistan players had suffered 'stage fright' against India in front of a capacity crowd of more than 24,000. "My issue is fear," he said. "My issue is getting out there and really looking to take the game on.

"The worrying thing for me...is we just do the basics wrong. "We drop simple catches. We don't run well enough between wickets. We don't understand when to bowl our variations."

But Arthur, a former coach of both South Africa and Australia, was adamant all was far from lost. "We'll be thinking firmly of coming back and beating South Africa," he said. "Because that's what I think our players can do.

"So, we're going to be up for the fight."

Pakistan will be without Wahab Riaz after he was ruled out of the rest of the tournament on Monday with an ankle injury sustained when falling in his delivery stride against India.

But given by that stage the left-arm paceman had conceded a whopping 87 runs in 8.4 wicketless overs, his absence may not be that big a blow.

Pakistan have applied to the ICC for an injury replacement, but they appear to have a stand-in already with them in Junaid Khan, who took four for 73 in a warm-up match against Bangladesh.

Mohammad Amir provided rare moments of respite amid the India run-spree with a return of none for 32 in 8.1 overs. Yet, concerningly, the left-arm fast bowler was unable to complete his full allocation of overs because of cramp, despite being repeatedly on and off the field on what was a cool day.

If Arthur has some 'inside knowledge' on South Africa, the Proteas' have a 'spy' of their own in Pakistan-born Imran Tahir.

The leg-spinner, who changed allegiance after falling in love with his South African wife, played a key role in Saturday's match.

Despite a fine hundred by South Africa's Hashim Amla, Sri Lanka were well-placed to chase down a target of 300 at 116 for two. But man-of-the-match Tahir's return of four for 27 turned the tide. "It was close to ten out of ten," said South Africa captain AB de Villiers of Tahir's performance, which also included a run-out.

"He takes wickets and he is also economical most of the time," added the skipper, who was equally delighted by Amla's "amazing innings".

The cliche of Pakistani 'unpredictability' may be wearing thin, at least in ODI cricket. South Africa, however, have a nasty habit of not playing to their potential in ICC tournaments and de Villiers promised they were not about to "get ahead of ourselves". — AFP

Gulf row hits AFC Champions League quarters

KUALA LUMPUR: Iran's Persepolis and Saudi Arabia's Al Ahli will no longer play their second leg Asian Champions League quarterfinals in Qatar, the football body said yesterday, as a diplomatic crisis sweeps the region.

Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Egypt and Yemen were among those to cut ties with Qatar on the grounds that Doha supported extremist groups "that aim to destabilise the region".

The rift has triggered the closure of air space and the expulsion of diplomats. It also means a new venue will have to be found for the matches between the two teams, scheduled for August and September.

"Iran has chosen Oman as their neutral venue. Saudi has chosen Qatar for their home match but now with the new development, Saudi Arabia has to propose a new (neutral) venue," the AFC's secretary general Windsor John told reporters.

John said the new neutral venue could be identified over the next two weeks. Neither Saudi Arabia nor Iran play matches at home.

Persepolis spokesman Pendar Khomarlou told AFP the team was unaffected by the Gulf diplomatic bust-up, the biggest to hit the region in years. "Saudi and Qatar have political problems. Saudi may choose Abu Dhabi. We have no problems with playing in Abu Dhabi since we have a lot of supporters living there," he said.

He also said the four teams that could make it to the semis were Persepolis, Guangzhou Evergrande, Al Ain and Kawasaki Frontale. — AFP

Bosz named new coach of Borussia Dortmund

BERLIN: Dutchman Peter Bosz has been named as the new coach of Borussia Dortmund, the German giants announced yesterday. "Peter Bosz is the new BVB Head Coach. Contract will last until 2019. Further info in a press conference this afternoon," Dortmund said on their English-language Twitter account.

Bosz, 53, arrives from Ajax after leading the Dutch side to the final of the Europa League, where they lost 2-0 to Manchester United last month. Briefly a player in Germany with Hansa Rostock in the 1990s, he replaces Thomas Tuchel, who was sacked despite Dortmund winning the German Cup-their first major silverware in five years-and finishing third in the Bundesliga in the season just finished.

German media reports say Dortmund agreed to pay Ajax five million euros ($5.6 million, £4.4 million) to bring in Bosz, with SID, an AFP subsidiary, saying the compensation paid is "the highest in the history of the Bundesliga" for a coach.

Switzerland's Lucien Favre, formerly in charge at Borussia Moenchengladbach, had been linked with a return to the German game with Dortmund but his current side Nice refused to let him go. Giovanni van Bronckhorst, whose Feyenoord side pipped Ajax to the Dutch title, had also been linked with the Dortmund job, as had Cologne's Peter Stoeger and David Wagner, a former member of the BVB coaching staff who has just taken Huddersfield Town into the English Premier League. But instead Bosz got the nod, ending his one-season stint at Ajax, where he arrived last year after a brief spell in Israel with Maccabi Tel Aviv. He had previously been in charge at Vitesse Arnhem, while his playing career also took in spells in France and Japan and saw him win eight caps for the Netherlands as a midfielder.

Dortmund finished second in the Bundesliga behind Bayern Munich in Tuchel's first campaign in charge but he was said to be deeply unhappy at the decision to sell Mats Hummels, Henrikh Mkhitaryan and Ilkay Gundogan last year. His side never seriously challenged for the league title in the season just finished, and while they beat Eintracht Frankfurt in the German Cup final, they went out of the Champions League in the quarter-finals at the hands of Monaco in April.

That tie was overshadowed by a bomb attack on the Dortmund team bus ahead of the first leg, which Monaco won 3-2 at the Signal Iduna Park. The decision to play that match just 24 hours after the attack, in which defender Marc Bartra was badly injured, reportedly increased tensions between Tuchel and club CEO Hans-Joachim Watzke.

Dortmund eventually lost the tie 6-3 on aggregate. — AFP

DORTMUND: Borussia Dortmund's new coach Dutch Peter Bosz poses with a jersey after a press conference yesterday in Dortmund. Briefly a player in Germany with Hansa Rostock in the 1990s, Bosz replaces Thomas Tuchel, who was sacked despite Dortmund winning the German Cup — their first major silverware in five years — and finishing third in the Bundesliga in the season just finished. — AFP

Liverpool set to break record to secure Van Dijk

LONDON: Dutch international defender Virgil van Dijk is set to become the world's most expensive defender and join English Premier League giants Liverpool from rivals Southampton, according to British media reports.

The 25-year-old-who joined Southampton in 2015 after impressing at Scottish champions Celtic-will cost around £60million (69m euros, $77m), according to reports.

He would also be Liverpool's most expensive ever signing-striker Andy Carroll having cost £35m in moving from Newcastle in 2011. Celtic would be in line for 10 percent of the fee having included a sell on clause in the £11.5m transfer to Saints.

David Luiz is presently the most expensive defender in the world having been sold to Paris Saint Germain by Chelsea for £50million in 2014.

According to 'The Sun' Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp has convinced the Liverpool owners van Dijk is deserving of earning a weekly wage of almost £200,000 (230,000 euros, $258,000) — which will make him their highest ever paid player.

Van Dijk-who also caught the eye of both Manchester City and champions Chelsea-is keen on a move to Liverpool not only for Champions League football but to join compatriot and close friend Georginio Wijnaldum.

Southampton have become a favoured hunting ground for Liverpool in the past three years having signed five players-including Adam Lallana and Senegalese star Sadio Mane-for a total of almost £100million. — AFP

Virgil van Dijk

SOCCER

BEIJING: Chinese fans of Ivory Coast international and Beijing Enterprises club football player Cheick Tiote pay their respects and mark a minute of silence after laying a bouquet of flowers on the field of the National Olympic sport centre stadium in Beijing yesterday. Tiote "suddenly fainted" at training and died later in hospital, his Chinese club said, as tributes flooded in for the player. — AFP

Flowers, tributes after Tiote's sudden death

BEIJING: Cheick Tiote's Chinese club said the cause of his death was still under investigation yesterday after the Ivory Coast international collapsed in training and died. Tributes poured in for the former Newcastle United midfielder, who moved to China's second-tier Beijing Enterprises in February after seven years in England's north-east.

Beijing Enterprises described how Tiote, 30, "suddenly fainted" during training on Monday and was rushed to hospital, where he died. The club's general manager Yang Junsheng told reporters that authorities were still trying to determine the cause of death. "We will remember the spirit that he brought us and his football ideals," Yang added.

As fellow players paid tribute to the popular, hard-tackling midfielder, a group of fans laid a bouquet of white flowers on the pitch at Beijing's National Olympic Sports Centre stadium.

Ivory Coast team-mate Gervinho, who plays for China's Hebei China Fortune, described Tiote as a "warrior" and a "champion". "May your soul rest in peace," he said on Twitter.

Brazil's Oscar, now at Shanghai SIPG after moving from Chelsea, tweeted: "Rest in peace, Cheick Tiote. My family prays for your family."

Tiote was well known in English football circles after his stint with Newcastle, including six Premier League campaigns before their relegation last year. He is perhaps best remembered for his crunching left-foot volley from 25 yards to secure a 4-4 draw with Arsenal in 2011.

Tiote was also part of the Ivory Coast squad that delivered the 2015 Africa Cup of Nations after a 23-year drought.

'FOOTBALL IN HEAVEN'

Earlier this year he became one of a number of players-including several high-profile, lavishly paid acquisitions-to move to Chinese teams. Several footballers have died in similar circumstances including Cameroon's Marc-Vivien Foe, who collapsed during a Confederations Cup match in 2003 and died from a previously undiagnosed heart condition. Newcastle said in a statement that they were "devastated" about Tiote while Alan Pardew, who managed him at Newcastle, said he "loved" the player. "From the moment I arrived at Newcastle, Cheick was a wonderful presence around the dressing room and his performances on the field often defied belief," Pardew said in a statement, quoted by independent.ie. "I loved him. He's everything that you want in a Newcastle player." Tiote was capped 52 times by Ivory Coast and was in their squads for both the 2010 and 2014 World Cups.

He began his European club career with Belgian outfit Anderlecht and had a loan spell at Roda JC Kerkrade before moving to FC Twente in 2008. Tiote signed for Newcastle in 2010 and made 156 appearances for the club, becoming a favourite with fans.

"The thoughts of everyone at Newcastle United are with Cheick's family, friends, team-mates and everyone connected with the clubs he represented," a club statement said.

Chinese fans also expressed their sorrow over Tiote, who grew up in poverty as one of 10 children and didn't own a pair of football boots until he was 15. "I hope there is football in heaven," said one user on China's Twitter-like Weibo.

Another said: "Although I'm not a fan of Beijing Enterprises club, we are both people who love football and I feel sorry for him."

Rival club Tianjin Quanjian also expressed "its deep condolences", while Shanghai SIPG said it was in "mourning" over the talented player's death. — AFP

TENNIS

Halep and Pliskova have double targets

PARIS: The women's tournament will have a first time Grand Slam champion on Saturday. Two of the favourites, Simona Halep and Karolina Pliskova, are in quarter-final action today as a maiden major and the world top ranking come into view.

CHANCE BECKONS FOR HALEP AND SVITOLINA

Simona Halep arrived in Paris billed as a leading title contender and she hasn't disappointed through four rounds. The Romanian third seed is yet to surrender a set, shaking off an ankle injury that cast serious doubt on her participation in Paris. After crashing out of the Australian Open in round one, Halep's form steadily improved and she won on clay in Madrid before finishing runner-up to Elina Svitolina in Rome. The Ukrainian leads the women's game with 35 wins this season, lifting an impressive four titles-her other triumphs coming at Taipei City, Dubai and Istanbul. Svitolina has matched her best run at a Grand Slam after making the last eight at the French Open for the second time in three years, but she needed to rally from 5-2 down in the final set to overcome world 290 Petra Martic in round four. A first-time Grand Slam champion will be crowned on Saturday and the winner could well be the one who survives this match.

HEAD-TO-HEAD: SERIES LEVEL 1-1

Halep says: "I need to play again, because I lost that final in Rome with the injury. I was not happy about that. Now I have another chance, another challenge."

Svitolina says: "I think everyone knows who remains in the draw. Yeah, everyone is trying their best to get the title, because it's a big opportunity."

FAST FACTS

Halep: Age - 25; World ranking - 4; Prize money - $17,219,302; Career titles - 15; Grand Slam titles - 0; French Open best - Runner-up (2014)

Svitolina: Age - 22; World ranking - 6; Prize money - $5,553,590; Career titles - 8; Grand Slam titles - 0; French Open best - Quarter-final (2015, 2017) Pliskova has title, world top spot in sight.

CAROLINE GARCIA AND ALIZE CORNET

French hope Caroline Garcia had never got beyond the third round of a Slam before this year's Roland Garros. The 23-year-old survived a raw test of nerves to defeat compatriot Alize Cornet in the last 16 in a tie overshadowed by a bitter feud between the two. She came back from 3-1 and 6-5 down in the final set to see off Hsieh Su-Wei in the third round. Two of her three career titles have come on clay. Second seed and 2016 US Open runner-up Karolina Pliskova, who can take the world number one spot if she gets to the final, also arrived in Paris with a woeful record-in five previous visits, she hadn't got beyond the second round. Garcia won the pair's only previous meeting on clay in Madrid two years ago. Neither player has faced a seeded opponent so far.

HEAD-TO-HEAD: SERIES LEVEL 2-2

Garcia says: "Sometimes I did panic a little bit (as a result of her poor record in Paris). I didn't really know what I was doing, but I worked hard, I kept believing in what I was doing."

Petra Kvitova

Pliskova says: "The crowd is definitely going to be tough. I'm expecting it will be huge and terrible. I played Fed Cup in France, so I don't think it's going to be worse than it was there."

FAST FACTS

Garcia: Age - 23; World ranking - 27; Prize money - $4,311,061; Career titles - 3; Grand Slam titles - 0; French Open best - Quarter-final (2017)

Pliskova: Age - 25; World ranking - 3; Prize money - $8,284,333; Career titles - 8; Grand Slam titles - 0; French Open best - Quarter-final (2017). — AFP

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Sports

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NASHVILLE: Matt Murray #30 of the Pittsburgh Penguins makes a save against the Nashville Predators during the second period in Game Four of the 2017 NHL Stanley Cup Final at the Bridgestone Arena on Monday in Nashville, Tennessee. — AFP

Predators stun Penguins to level Stanley Cup series

NASHVILLE: Frederick Gaudreau sure is doing his best to earn his own locker with the Nashville Predators with a Stanley Cup Final debut for the ages.

For now, he insists he is happy enough just to sit on the floor as long as he plays. An undrafted free agent playing in just his sixth postseason game, Gaudreau scored the go-ahead goal 3:45 into the second period and Pekka Rinne made 23 often-spectacular saves as the Predators beat the Penguins 4-1 on Monday night to even the series at 2-2.

It's now a best-of-three sprint to the Stanley Cup, and Nashville is riding a wave of momentum after outscoring the defending champions 9-2 in the Games 3 and 4 of their Final debut. Game 5 is Thursday night in Pittsburgh.

Gaudreau, a 24-year-old rookie, only has a chair in the locker room, but he now is the second player in NHL history to score his first three career goals in a Stanley Cup Final, joining Johnny Harms with the 1944 Blackhawks.

"He's been unbelievable for us the way he's come in, and he's just been so good, timely goals and composed," Nashville captain Mike Fisher said. "He definitely belongs, and he's been a huge part of our success." Calle Jarnkrok, Viktor Arvidsson and Filip Forsberg also scored for Nashville, which improved to 9-1 at home and roared back after dropping the first two games of the series on the road.

GOOD GAMES

"We were in a tough hole against a really good team, came home and took care of the home games with the help of all our great fans," Rinne said. "It's a great feeling. We played two really good games."

Pittsburgh star Sidney Crosby scored his first goal in the series after not getting a shot on goal in Game 3. The goal was his first in the Stanley Cup Final since June 4, 2009, a span of 12 games, but it wasn't enough as the Penguins lost two straight for the second time this postseason. Goalie Matt Murray lost consecutive games for the first time in his young career.

"It's hard to win when you score one goal," Pittsburgh coach Mike Sullivan said. "I thought tonight of all nights, we generated the most chances of the highest quality."

Nashville tapped country singer Dierks Bentley as the latest star to sing the national anthem, while Jason Aldean waved the towel to rev up the crowd. Former NBA star and TV commentator Charles Barkley also was on hand , accepting NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman's invitation to watch in person. Carrie Underwood admitted during the second intermission that she didn't get Fisher, her husband, a birthday present on Monday - holding out hope that a Stanley Cup championship celebration would do the trick in coming days.

"That's all I wanted for my birthday," Fisher said afterward of the big win.Craig Smith ricocheted a puck off Murray's pads that Jarnkrok tapped in at 14:51 to start the fans yelling louder. Pittsburgh lost a challenge for goalie interference. Just 66 seconds later, Crosby tied it up for Pittsburgh on a dazzling breakaway. He skated in on Rinne, holding the puck, faking a slap shot and then slipping one past the goalie for his eighth goal and 24th point of the playoffs. He also moved into 20th all-time in NHL playoff points but the Predators clamped down after that.

MISTAKES

Rinne kept it tied in the early minutes of the second first with a stop of Jake Guentzel before a big save on Chris Kunitz on a breakaway. And then came Gaudreau's goal, confirmed only after the horn sounded and officials reviewed the play. They ruled Gaudreau's wraparound attempt slid the puck just over the line before Murray stopped it, giving Nashville a 2-1 lead 3:45 into the second.

"I heard it on the bench that it was possibly in the net," Gaudreau said. "I wasn't certain. When I heard the horn, I sort of thought it was in." Crosby had another breakaway nearly midway through the period, and Rinne stopped him not once, but twice. Then the goalie slid to his right stopping Guentzel with an assist from Nashville defenseman Roman Josi. Crosby and Evgeni Malkin finished with six shots, but just the lone goal.

"It's a game of execution," Crosby said. "They capitalized on our mistakes, and we have to do the same." Arvidsson made it a 3-1 Nashville lead with his first goal since the end of the first round. James Neal started the play, getting the puck to Fisher who fed the puck up to Arvidsson while falling to the ice. Arvidsson beat Murray under his glove, putting the puck just inside the right post at 13:08.

"If I make the save there, it could be a different game," Murray said. Forsberg sealed the win with an empty-netter with 3:23 left. Notes: Fisher, scoreless until the Final, now has four points with his fourth on his 37th birthday. ... With his goal, Crosby now has 161 career playoff points and moved past Mike Bossy, Gordie Howe,

Al MacInnis and Bobby Smith for 20th all-time by himself. ... The Penguins now are 13-3 after a playoff loss under coach Mike Sullivan, and Murray is 7-1 in playoff games started after a loss. ... Rain kept the crowd outside from reaching the more than 50,000 who turned Saturday night for the first Stanley Cup Final game in Tennessee. Still, people filled three blocks of Broadway, even with Nashville opening up a downtown amphitheater for fans to watch. ... After the anthem, two catfish and one stuffed penguin hit the ice despite Nashville coach Peter Laviolette's video plea earlier Monday asking fans not to throw anything. — AP

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BUSINESS

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Alghanim Motors signs deal to offer Nano Ceracoat Ceramic
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Kuwait inflation remains steady at 2.6%
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Mazda 2017 CX-9: Powerful and elegant SUV
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KUWAIT: A trader follows the stock market at the Kuwait Stock Exchange (KSE) in Kuwait City. Kuwait stocks ended yesterday's trading on a mixed board. The benchmark dropped by 2.07 points to settle 6,801 points, while Weighted and KSX 15 indices went up by 0.68 and 2.56 points respectively. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Gulf markets fall on regional worries

Kuwait stocks edge lower, Egypt shares rise

DUBAI: Most Gulf stock markets fell yesterday as the diplomatic crisis surrounding Qatar worried investors, while Egypt's equities index climbed for an 11th straight day to a fresh record high.

Qatar's index fell 1.6 percent to 9,059 points, its lowest close since January 2016, in heavy trade. It had plunged 7.3 percent on Monday after Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain cut diplomatic and transport ties with Qatar.

The Qatari market rebounded more than 3 percent in early trade yesterday, buoyed by hopes that a Kuwaiti mediation effort might succeed. Some fund managers also said they expected Qatari state-linked funds to support the market. But the rebound was short-lived. In contrast to Monday, when selling of stocks was indiscriminate, many of the biggest losers yesterday were related to Qatar's foreign trade, which could decline or face higher costs due to the sanctions.

Logistics company Gulf Warehousing sank 8.0 percent and Qatari German Medical Devices, which has done considerable business in Saudi Arabia, tumbled 8.8 percent.

The biggest lender, Qatar National Bank, slipped 1.3 percent. Although Qatar's huge financial reserves mean it can probably avoid a crippling crisis, many parts of its economy, from tourism to banks which obtain funding from elsewhere in the Gulf, may be hit.

Most other Gulf bourses dropped moderately. Although Gulf economies have little exposure to Qatar, foreign portfolio investors may at least temporarily become more cautious towards the whole region; the Saudi riyal edged down in the one-year forwards market yesterday and regional bonds slipped.

The Saudi Arabian, UAE and Bahraini central banks have not yet clarified how they want commercial banks in their countries to handle business ties with Qatar, which involve substantial cross-border lending, deposits and syndicated loans.

If the commercial banks are advised to get rid of their Qatari assets in a short timeframe, or if authorities act against Qatari banking assets in their jurisdictions, that could provoke retaliation by Doha and turmoil in the Gulf banking and money markets.

The Saudi stock index, which has been buoyed in recent days by expectations that international index compiler MSCI will start on June 20 a process towards upgrading Riyadh to emerging market status, fell 0.5 percent in active trade yesterday.

Petrochemical stocks were particularly hard hit after oil prices dropped on concern that the Qatar crisis could disrupt an agreement among global oil producers to prop up prices. Saudi Basic Industries lost 1.4 percent. Dubai's index edged up 0.2 percent as builder Drake & Scull, which has been rebounding from year-lows for the past week, added 1.1 percent to 0.38 dirham in its heaviest trade for almost four months. But it came well off the day's high of 0.409 dirham.

In Egypt, the index rose 0.8 percent on the back of strong blue-chip property developers, although in the broad market, gainers roughly equalled losers.

Remco Tourism Villages jumped 9.9 percent after saying it intended to finish marketing all units of its Stella Heights project before year-end for about 2.5 billion Egyptian pounds ($139 million).

SAUDI ARABIA
* The index fell 0.5 percent to 6,933 points.

DUBAI
* The index edged up 0.2 percent to 3,322 points.

ABU DHABI
* The index fell 0.5 percent to 4,460 points.

QATAR
* The index dropped 1.6 percent to 9,059 points.

EGYPT
* The index rose 0.8 percent to 13,627 points.

KUWAIT
* The index edged down 0.03 percent to 6,801 points.

BAHRAIN
* The index edged down 0.1 percent to 1,325 points.

OMAN
* The index edged up 0.02 percent to 5,407 points. — Reuters

S Africa slips into recession, heaping pressure on Zuma

PRETORIA: South Africa has entered recession for the first time in eight years, data showed yesterday, piling pressure on a government facing corruption allegations and credit downgrades.

Data from Statistics South Africa showed the first quarter contraction was led by weak manufacturing and trade, suggesting high unemployment and stagnant wages were dragging down South Africa's long-resilient consumer sector, analysts said. Political instability, high unemployment and credit ratings downgrades have dented business and consumer confidence in South Africa and the rand extended its losses against the dollar, while government bonds also weakened. South Africa's economy contracted by 0.7 percent in the first three months of 2017 after shrinking by 0.3 percent in the fourth quarter of last year, lagging market expectations of a quarter-on-quarter GDP expansion of 0.9 percent. It was the first time two consecutive quarters showed contraction-a definition of recession-since the second quarter of 2009, although there have been individual quarters of so-called negative growth in more recent years.

A consumer frenzy helped the South African economy grow by an average 5 percent a year in the five years before the 2009 recession, but it has struggled to register much growth since. "The slowdown in Q1 was due to much worse results from usually stable consumer-facing sectors that had been the key drivers of growth in recent years," Capital Economics Africaeconomist John Ashbourne said. The worst performing sector was trade, catering and accommodation, which contracted by 5.9 percent, while manufacturing - one of the key sectors - fell by 3.7 percent.

Standard Chartered Bank's Chief Africa Economist Razia Khan said the "awful" data showed weakness where it was not expected.

"Economy in tatters"

The poor growth numbers will pile more pressure on the ruling African National Congress (ANC) to get the economy back on track faster as it tries to stave off further credit ratings downgrades and stem falling voter support. Pressure on President Jacob Zuma, including from within the ANC, has risen since a controversial cabinet reshuffle in March that led to downgrades to "junk" status by S&P Global Ratings and Fitch and allegations of influence peddling.

Zuma has denied any wrongdoing over the allegations. Corruption allegations escalated when local media reported this week on more than 100,000 leaked emails they say show inappropriate interference in lucrative tenders. — Reuters

JOHANNESBURG: In this March 3, 2017 file photo a woman, with her dog, begs on a street corner in Germiston, Johannesburg to make money to support her two daughters and sick husband. South Africa says its economy, one of Africa's biggest, is in recession with unemployment at 27.7 percent, according to official figures. — AP

GM shareholders reject plan to split stock in 2

DETROIT: General Motors shareholders have overwhelmingly turned down an activist shareholder's plan to split the company's stock into two classes.

Only about 9 percent of the stockholders voted for the plan from David Einhorn's Greenlight Capital hedge fund in a preliminary vote count. They also re-elected all 11 GM board members, rejecting the three candidates backed by Greenlight.

Einhorn proposed splitting the stock into capital appreciation and dividend classes. He says the plan would unlock the stock's value. Despite making $42 billion since 2010, GM shares have appreciated only about 5 percent.

CEO Mary Barra says the company will stay on its current course even though the stock markets have yet to reward those efforts. She says the company's strategy of cutting costs, shedding underperforming businesses and trying to lead in new technology will deliver long-term results.

"It gives me more resolve to make sure we work harder, work faster, and continue to put great cars, trucks and crossovers on the road," she told reporters before the vote.

Barra also says the company is prepared to handle an automotive downturn, an effort to allay investor fears that the industry has reached the peak of its business cycle in the US, GM's most lucrative market. US sales so far this year are down 2 percent and likely will decline from last year's record of 17.5 million vehicles. GM says it analyzed Greenlight's proposal and determined it risky because it would pit one class of shareholders against the other and could put the company's investment grade credit rating at risk.

Greenlight representatives did not speak at yesterday's meeting and did not return a message from The Associated Press. GM shares fell less than 1 percent after yesterday's vote to $34.29. Shareholders also voted down a proposal to separate the chairman and CEO positions that are now held by Barra. Shareholder John Love, who supported the proposal, criticized the company for shifting some production to Mexico, closing factories in Flint, Michigan, and for importing a Buick SUV from a factory in China. He also said the company is leasing too many cars and its dealer inventory is too large, circumstances reminiscent of before GM went into bankruptcy protection in 2009.

"Everybody had it under control," he said of inventory before bankruptcy. "I don't think it's under control." GM ended last month with a 101-day supply of cars and trucks when automakers consider a 60-day supply to be optimal. The company says production cuts will help reduce car inventory, and it's been building pickup truck supply as it prepares to shut down factories this year to switch to a new model. — AP

Chart 3: Inflation in housing services

Source: Central Statistical Bureau

Chart 2: Inflation in food prices

Source: Central Statistical Bureau, Commodity Research Bureau

Table: Consumer price inflation

(% change)	Year-on-year		Annual average	
	Mar-17	Apr-17	2015	2016
Food & beverages	-0.1	-0.2	3.4	1.9
Tobacco & cigarettes	0.6	0.6	6.0	0.7
Clothing & footwear	-0.6	-1.1	-0.9	-0.2
Housing services*	4.3	4.3	6.0	6.8
Furnishings & household maintenance	2.9	2.9	3.4	2.7
Healthcare	1.5	1.8	1.7	1.7
Transportation	12.1	12.1	0.5	2.5
Communication	-0.1	-0.1	0.4	0.5
Recreation & culture	0.2	0.2	-0.2	-0.1
Education	1.1	1.1	4.4	3.1
Restaurants & hotels	4.5	4.5	5.7	3.1
Other goods & services	-0.2	0.0	1.9	1.0
Core**	**3.3**	**3.3**	**3.2**	**3.5**
Durable goods	0.1	0.2	1.1	0.8
Semi-durable goods	-0.1	-0.4	0.2	0.6
Non-durable goods	3.0	3.0	2.6	2.6
Services	3.5	3.5	4.9	4.7
Services ex-housing	2.4	2.4	3.3	1.6
General index	**2.6**	**2.6**	**3.3**	**3.2**

Kuwait inflation remains steady at 2.6%

KUWAIT: Inflation in consumer prices held steady at 2.6 percent year-on-year (y/y) in April, as inflation across most components stabilized. Softer inflation in housing rent has been a key contributor to lower inflation recently, as has food inflation. Local food prices continued to fall amid an ongoing decline in global food prices. Core inflation, which excludes food prices, also came in unchanged from March at 3.3 percent y/y.

Inflation is expected to gather some pace from the second half of 2017 onward, as the government hikes electricity and water tariffs. The tariffs are set to rise to 3-5 fils per kilowatt-hour (kWh) for the various sectors from the current 2 fils. In May, the Ministry of Electricity & Water began applying new utility tariffs in the commercial sector. Tariffs rose to 5 fils/kWh from 2 fils and to KD 2 per 1,000 imperial gallon of water from KD 0.8. The increases in utility prices are expected to push inflation up slightly from current levels to an expected annual average close to 3 percent in 2017; this is slightly lower than the 3.2 percent reading in 2016.

Inflation in food prices remained soft in April. Local food prices fell by 0.2 percent y/y as global food prices declined sharply. According to the Commodity Research Bureau, international prices of commodity foods were down by 8.4 percent y/y in April. Inflation in local food prices may face some limited upward pressure during Ramadan in May and June, when demand for some food staples typically rises. Indeed, a number of local co-ops have already hiked some prices by 20 percent to 35 percent.

Housing inflation

Inflation in housing services came in unchanged from March. Inflation in the housing component, mostly comprised of housing rents and updated quarterly, slowed from 6.4 percent y/y in 4Q16 to a three-year low of 4.3 percent y/y in 1Q17, in-line with some softness in the housing market. However, we expect momentum in this segment to pick up in the second half of 2017 on the back of higher utility tariffs.

Inflation in the retail sector remained weak amid subdued consumer demand. Inflation in clothing & footwear prices fell deeper into deflationary territory in April after retreating by 1.1 percent y/y, as the ongoing weakness in consumer demand continues to lead to more frequent and extended promotions. Car prices also continued to decline for the seventh consecutive month in April, after falling by 1.3 percent y/y. Inflation in "other goods & services" was flat amid softer gold inflation, while inflation in the furnishings & household maintenance segment was stable at 2.9 percent y/y.

Inflation in services was steady at a multi-month high of 2.4 percent y/y in April. Price growth remains particularly strong in the hospitality sector. At 4.5 percent y/y, inflation in the restaurants & hotels segment remained relatively elevated. Inflation in the services ex-housing has also been buoyed by the recent increases in transport service fees. Transport services have been readjusting their fees to account for the higher fuel charges that were implemented back in September of 2016. In April, inflation in this segment stood at a multi-year high of 3.3 percent y/y.

Trump infrastructure push faces cold shoulder from Congress

WASHINGTON: Repairing the nation's crumbling roads and bridges was supposed to be an area ripe for bipartisan compromise between congressional Democrats and President Donald Trump. Instead, Democrats are panning Trump's proposed $1 trillion overhaul and even Republicans are balking at some aspects of the emerging plan.

The White House's self-proclaimed "Infrastructure Week" began with Trump appearing Monday with aviation officials and some prominent GOP lawmakers to announce plans to privatize the nation's air traffic control system and separate operations from the Federal Aviation Administration.

"We live in a modern age yet our air traffic control system is stuck, painfully, in the past," Trump said, noting the FAA had been working to upgrade the system for years.

But the proposal quickly drew bipartisan opposition, and there were few signs it would get far on Capitol Hill. "All but our largest airports nationwide stand to be hurt by this proposal," said Sen. Jerry Moran, R-Kansas.

Next up will be a series of events throughout the week, including some with the nation's mayors and governors, that will allow Trump to highlight his effort to muster public and private funding to overhaul the highway, waterway, electrical and airway systems on which the nation depends. The president plans to travel to Ohio on Wednesday to address ways of improving levees, dams and locks along inland waterways that are crucial to agricultural exports.

The details of the plans must still be fleshed out. According to Trump's budget proposal, the funding would come from $200 billion in tax breaks over nine years that would then - in theory - leverage $1 trillion worth of construction.

But although the goal of upgrading crucial infrastructure has broad support, Democrats do not like Trump's plan for paying for it, arguing that his approach would result in taxpayer-funded corporate profits at the expense of investments in rural areas where money-making opportunities are scarce.

"A private-sector-driven infrastructure plan means tolls, tolls, tolls - paid by average, working Americans," said Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer of New York. "It also means that infrastructure that can't be built with tolls, like repairing our crumbling schools, for instance, will likely get left behind."

Schumer struck a far different tone in the days immediately after Trump's election, when he told The Associated Press that infrastructure investment was an area where Trump appeared more aligned with Democrats than with Republicans. Indeed, Schumer said that he'd spoken with Trump, offering his own support for a large infrastructure package but warning that conservative Republicans were unlikely to go along. Conservative opposition remains a potential roadblock to Trump's infrastructure plans. Nonetheless, the White House appears to be making little effort to round up bipartisan support on the issue.

Trump is holding a series of meetings Tuesday with members of Congress, but they're all Republicans. And Schumer's spokesman, Matt House, said the White House never responded after Democrats presented their own infrastructure blueprint in January and shared it with the administration. Instead of involving the private sector, Democrats' preferred method is to simply add $1 trillion to the deficit to pay for a range of infrastructure projects they claimed would create 15 million jobs over 10 years.

Still, the White House legislative affairs director, Marc Short, told reporters in a briefing Monday night that the goal remained to get Democratic support for the infrastructure package. "Infrastructure, the president's said all along he believes to be a bipartisan exercise and it's one that we will be looking to partner with them on," Short said.

The White House and Republicans are already proceeding on a partisan basis with their other two big legislative projects, health care and taxes, with uncertain chances for success on both.Chances for infrastructure legislation may be dim, too, given the poisonous atmosphere in Washington as an undisciplined president courts controversy over Twitter and an angry liberal base goads Democratic lawmakers to battle him at every turn. The investigation into Russian election meddling and ties with Trump's campaign hang over everything. "This is not what he campaigned on and I think his voters are going to figure that out, sooner rather than later," said Sen. Chris Murphy, D-Conn. —AP

In this Jan 4, 2017, file photo, traffic crosses the Virginia Street bridge in downtown Reno, Nevada above the rising waters of the Truckee River, where a flash flood watch was in effect. The bridge built last year replaced a century-old one where logjams were blamed for intensifying flooding that caused hundreds of millions of dollars of damage in January 1997. —AP

IMF offers creditors Greece compromise

FRANKFURT AM MAIN: The International Monetary Fund could sign on to a deal between Greece and its creditors before debt relief measures it demands have been agreed, director Christine Lagarde said yesterday. "There can be a program in which the payment does not take place until debt measures have been clearly defined by the creditors," she told German business daily Handelsblatt.

Her proposal to agree on the outline of a program including the IMF, but withholding disbursement of funds until debt relief details are nailed down, is similar to one proposed at the Eurogroup meeting of eurozone finance ministers last month which ended without an agreement.

Talks over Greece's debt mountain-which stands at 179 percent of GDP-have been paralyzed in recent weeks by disagreements between the IMF and European creditors led by Germany.

The Europeans expect Greece's economy to grow strongly and its government to bring in large surpluses in revenue in the coming years, allowing it to pay down its debts. But the IMF is less optimistic, arguing there must be further debt relief for Athens before it can label its debt sustainable and justify loaning Greece any more cash. Lagarde does not believe the total amount of Greece's debt must be reduced, but calls for a "significant extension" of the payment period and a delay on interest payments. German leaders are reluctant to offer yet more unpopular debt relief ahead of elections in September, but have also promised lawmakers that the IMF will remain on board. They say any discussion about debt relief must take place after the end of the 86-billion-euro ($96.7 billion) third bailout program agreed in 2015, which runs until the middle of next year.

Pressure is on to reach a deal so that Greece can make a payment of around 7.5 billion euros that falls due in July. "If the creditors haven't reached a point where they can accept and respect our forecasts, if they need more time to get there, then we can admit that and give them a bit more time," Lagarde said.

May's Eurogroup gathering ended without an accord, but all sides remain keen to avoid a repeat of the 2015 impasse that almost saw Greece pushed out of the euro.

The European Central Bank last week called for creditors to create "clarity" at their next meeting on June 15 by striking a deal restoring investors' confidence in Athens-allowing the Greeks to turn to financial markets for cash in future. — AFP

Poland, Ukraine develop gas hub for independence from Russia

WARSAW: Poland and Ukraine said yesterday they are working toward developing a regional gas hub that would end Central and Eastern Europe's dependence on Russian supplies and keep prices in line with European standards.

The region still relies to some extent on Russian natural gas and has been exposed to political pressure from Moscow, which has at times in the past limited supply volumes or hiked gas prices. Governments in the region have been reducing their imports of gas from Russia and seeking other sources. They have also been trying to become more energy-efficient, a task Ukraine still needs to fully undertake. Poland is increasingly importing gas from other regions. Its new liquefied natural gas port has received deliveries by sea from Qatar and is expecting a delivery from the United States this week. Poland is also proceeding with a project to bring in North Sea gas.

Poland is sending some of resources on to Ukraine, after the country cut imports from Russia in 2015.

Government officials participating in a Poland-Ukraine Gas Conference yesterday said the planned hub should be in place by 2022 on the Polish-Ukrainian border.

"We now have enough infrastructure to move onwards with the hub," said Sergei Makogon, deputy head of Ukraine's oil and gas company, Ukrtransgaz. —AP

EXCHANGE RATES

Al-Muzaini Exchange Co.

ASIAN COUNTRIES	
Japanese Yen	2.747
Indian Rupees	4.725
Pkistani Rupees	2.900
Srilankan Rupees	1.985
Nepali Rupees	2.957
Singapore Dollar	221.090
Hongkong Dollar	39.019
Bangladesh Taka	3.766
Philippine Peso	6.156
Thai Baht	8.943
GCC COUNTRIES	
Saudi Riyal	81.121
Qatari Riyal	83.551
Omani Riyal	790.021
Bahraini Dinar	807.760
UAE Dirham	82.823
ARAB COUNTRIES	
Egyptian Pound - Cash	19.300
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	16.732
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.221
Tunisian Dinar	126.400
Jordanian Dinar	428.770
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.027
Syrian Lira	2.168
Morocco Dirham	31.667
EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES	
US Dollar Transfer	304.000
Euro	344.430
Sterling Pound	392.770
Canadian dollar	226.360
Turkish lira	87.110
Swiss Franc	317.000
Australian Dollar	228.150
US Dollar Buying	302.800
GOLD	
20 Gram	257.510
10 Gram	131.680
5 Gram	66.680

Dollarco Exchange Co. Ltd

Rate for Transfr	Selling Rate
US Dollar	303.900
Canadian Dolla	225.785
Sterling Pound	392.035
Euro	343.070
Swiss Frank	296.080
Bahrain Dinar	806.040
UAE Dirhams	83.135
Qatari Riyals	84.355
Saudi Riyals	81.935
Jordanian Dinar	428.454
Egyptian Pound	16.923
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.987
Indian Rupees	4.718
Pakistani Rupees	2.898
Bangladesh Taka	3.772
Philippines Pesso	6.109
Cyprus pound	167.712
Japanese Yen	3.735
Syrian Pound	2.420
Nepalese Rupees	3.945
Malaysian Ringgit	71.750
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	45.135
Thai Bhat	9.880
Turkish Lira	86.480

Bahrain Exchange Company WLL

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
Europe		
British Pound	0.385780	0.395780
Czech Korune	0.004987	0.016987
Danish Krone	0.041941	0.046941
Euro	0. 336797	0.345797
Norwegian Krone	0.031940	0.037140
Romanian Leu	0.074872	0.074872
Slovakia	0.009076	0.019076
Swedish Krona	0.031073	0.036073
Swiss Franc	0.308768	0.319768
Turkish Lira	0.080829	0.091129
Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.218763	0.230763
New Zealand Dollar	0.211410	0.220910
America		
Canadian Dollar	0.220453	0.229453
Georgina Lari	0.137257	0.137257
US Dollars	0.299800	0.304200
US Dollars Mint	0.300300	0.304200
Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003381	0.003965
Chinese Yuan	0.043253	0.046753
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036902	0.039652
Indian Rupee	0.004193	0.004881
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002686	0.002866
Kenyan Shilling	0.002935	0.002935
Korean Won	0.000261	0.000276
Malaysian Ringgit	0.067341	0.073341
Nepalese Rupee	0.002972	0.003142
Pakistan Rupee	0.002711	0.003001
Philippine Peso	0.006031	0.006331
Sierra Leone	0.000038	0.000044
Singapore Dollar	0.214806	0.224806
South African Rand	0.017782	0.026282
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001606	0.002186
Taiwan	0.009977	0.010157
Thai Baht	0.008597	0.009147
Arab		
Bahraini Dinar	0.798679	0.807179
Egyptian Pound	0.013974	0.019882
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000085
Iraqi Dinar	0.000190	0.000250
Jordanian Dinar	0.423270	0.432270
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000151	0.00251
Moroccan Dirhams	0.019749	0.043749
Nigerian Naira	0.000394	0.001029
Omani Riyal	0.782930	0.788610
Qatar Riyal	0.079172	0.084112
Saudi Riyal	0.079953	0.081253
Syrian Pound	0.001288	0.001508
Tunisian Dinar	0.121862	0.129862
Turkish Lira	0.080829	0.091129
UAE Dirhams	0.081316	0.083016
Yemeni Riyal	0.000988	0.001068

Eurozone bond yields plunge as geopolitics sow inflation fears

LONDON: Eurozone government bond yields hit multi-week lows yesterday as geopolitical tensions from the Middle East to the United States pointed to slower price growth.

A diplomatic rift between Qatar and several Arab states including Saudi Arabia has depressed oil prices as it could undermine efforts by OPEC to tighten the market. Combined with doubts about the US economy and about President Donald Trump's ambitious spending plans, the oil slide is clouding the outlook for price growth globally. In turn, this weak outlook is keeping demand high for bonds, despite the fact that the European Central Bank tomorrow is expected to take a more benign view of the economy and potentially close the door to further stimulus.

"There is a general risk aversion theme going on," said Mizuho's head of euro rates strategy, Peter Chatwell. "The evolution of data in the US has also justified the drop in global government bond yields, and is why investors in Europe feel comfortable at these levels." Britain's election on Thursday, which a minority of pollsters indicate could result in a hung parliament, is also spreading a cautious tone across markets in general.

Europe's benchmark German Bund yields fell to their lowest level in nearly six weeks at 0.262 percent, while French equivalents fell below 0.70 percent for the first time since early January.

The drop in French yields also follows a vote for lawmakers representing French who live abroad that was another indication that President Emmanuel Macron's party is set to win a majority in the parliamentary election this month. But the fall in yields was widespread across eurozone markets. Spanish 10-year yields dropped as much as 5 bps to 1.53 percent, just above four-month lows.

Oil prices have shed around 8 percent over the last 10 days - a slide that has further eroded long-term inflation expectations in the eurozone. The five-year, five-year forward rate has slid more than 20 bps since the start of the year to below 1.6 percent-well short of the ECB's near-2-percent inflation target. Adding to the political tension, former FBI director James Comey is due to testify before the US Congress tomorrow, and could discuss his conversations with US President Donald Trump about an investigation into former National Security Advisor Mike Flynn, who was fired for failing to disclose conversations with Russian officials. Investors see this as a distraction for Trump, who they are banking on to reflate the stuttering US economy with ambitious spending plans.— Reuters

Zain recognizes value added services partners

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, recognized the efforts of its high-performing Value Added Services partners as part of its quarterly Al-Awael program. The recognition highlighted the exceptional efforts of Zain's VAS partners during Q1 of 2017.

Zain Kuwait's Wholesale and Partner Relations Director and officials from the Value Added Services Department conducted a special visit to each partner at their own headquarters to recognize and celebrate their excellent efforts in providing the highest quality VAS services to the largest family of subscribers in Kuwait. Zain is keen on offering the most advanced and competitive services to reflect the company's leading position in the telecom sector.

Zain recognized its top-performing partners for Q1 2017, including Numbase Limited for achieving Zain's top VAS net revenue, and Media Phone Plus for achieving Zain's top Bulk SMS revenues. The company also recognized ITG for achieving top overall performance as well as MT2 for achieving the best VAS technical support team.

Zain prides the strategic partnership it has with its Value Added Services partners, and is keen on recognizing their performance on a quarterly basis to shed light on their efforts to offer the best products and services to its customers.

Zain's relationship with its partners and authorized distributers is based on a strategy that aims at providing the highest levels of customer service and the most competitive offerings in the telecom sector. Zain encourages its VAS partners to maintain their performance and continue offering the best services and products to its customers.

RIYADH: US President Trump signs cooperation agreements with King Salman Bin AbdulAziz.

Global equities buoyant, Gulf economies resilient

KFIC REPORT ON GLOBAL, GCC MARKETS

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance and Investment Company (KFIC) clarified in its financial report for May; that the global developed equity markets traded with rallied during the month of May as the MSCI World Index gained +1.8 percent. UK's FTSE 100 was the top performing market, followed by Japan's Nikkei 225. In the US, the S&P 500 strengthened by +1.2 percent as president Donald Trump embarked on a global tour which involved wrapping up key strategic and financial deals which bolstered alliances in the Middle East. President Trump also criticized NATO allies for not spending enough on military defense, saying that certain member countries owed "massive amounts of money" to the US and NATO - despite the fact that allied contributions are voluntary. In the UK, the FTSE 100 surged by +4.4 percent mainly due to the pound slipping against global currency markets, which analysts put down to political uncertainty.

The sterling fell -0.7 percent against the USD and was also -3.1 percent lower to close at 1.14 USD/EUR. In Europe, Germany's DAX index gained +1.4 percent and France's CAC 40 index increased by +0.3 percent. ECB President Mario Draghi gave the strongest suggestion that the central bank is not yet ready to relax its fiscal stimulus policy, despite better economic growth across the Eurozone, which caused the euro to turn lower against the US dollar. France is on the road to economic recovery as indicated by French consumer sentiment which hit the highest level in almost a decade and the nation's GDP QoQ percent growth exceeding expectations to come in at +0.4 percent vs analyst consensus of +0.3 percent. In Japan, the Nikkei 225 gained +2.4 percent as Japan's jobless rate stayed firm at 2.8 percent, which was the lowest reported figure in the last two decades, and retail sales jumped +3.2 percent on a yearly basis. In China, the Shanghai composite declined by -1.2 percent as Moody's rating agency lowered China's credit-rating outlook to negative from stable in March 2016, citing an accumulation of rising debt, falling currency reserves and an uncertainty over governmental authorities ability to carry out reforms. In commodities, WTI declined -2.6 percent to close at $48.3 bb/l and Brent plunged by -3.1 percent to close at $50.8 bb/l.

Agreements between OPEC and Russia took place which further extended crude oil output cuts until March 2018 in an effort to rebalance the global crude market. Under the agreement principles, OPEC and other producers including Russia pledged to cut output by approximately 1.8mn bpd during the first half of the year. US shale oil continued its upward trajectory in rig counts which have increased for 19 consecutive weeks, as indicated by Baker Hughes, with the latest figure of rig counts being reported at 908 which compares to 404 rig counts last year. Gold prices rose by +0.1 percent to close at $1,269/oz as strong US economic data strengthened the case for the Federal Reserve to raise interest rates next month.

GCC economic overview

Saudi Arabia signed billions of dollars of deals with US companies during President Donald Trump's visit to Riyadh. Estimates of the total deal value vary from $300 billion to $400 billion. Kuwait's Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Anas Al-Saleh has affirmed the importance of economic reforms made in Arab oil-exporting countries against the sharp drop in global oil prices. He referred to reforms made by oil-producing countries in the Arab world regarding strategies of diversifying economy, increasing non-tax revenue, control salaries, strengthening efficiency of general investments and others. Moody's Investors Service has upgraded its creditworthiness outlook for the UAE. Moody's is forecasting UAE economic growth of +1.7 percent in 2017 compared to +2.7 percent in 2016. It is also forecasting that the UAE government deficit will decline to +1.9 percent of GDP this year from +3.9 percent in 2016. In Qatar, Moody's downgraded its long-term debt rating from Aa2 to Aa3 but changing its outlook to stable from negative. Moody's pointed to the country's sharply rising external debt and doubts about its model to promote economic growth. In Oman, S&P lowered its long-term rating to BB+ from BBB- with a "negative" outlook, which officially places Oman in junk category. The rating agency estimated that Oman's net external asset position has fallen to 30 percent of its current account, compared to 60 percent a year ago. In Bahrain, Moody's maintains negative outlook on Bahrain's banking system over the next 12 to 18 months due to weaker economy and government debt exposure.

GCC equities review

GCC equities, as indicated by the MSCI GCC IMI Index fell by -1.7 percent, despite 85 percent of companies in the benchmark reporting Q1 earnings and beating analyst consensus by +13.7 percent. Kuwait's weighted index was the top performing regional index and Dubai's DFM index was the worst performing. Saudi Arabia's Tadawul index fell by -2.0 percent with negative contribution coming from Capital Goods -13.7 percent, REITs -10.7 percent, and Energy -8.3 percent. Positive contribution came from Retailing +3.5 percent and Food & Beverages +2.7 percent. Kuwait's Weighted Index declined by -0.9 percent with negative contribution coming from Financial Services -6.9 percent, Consumer Services -3.8 percent, and Oil & Gas -3.1 percent. Gains were reported in sectors which included Consumer Goods +7.9 percent, and Industrials +4.2 percent. UAE's DFM index fell by -2.2 percent resulting from sector declines in Financial Services -4.2 percent, Insurance -3.7 percent, and Telecom -3.4 percent. Abu Dhabi's ADSM index dropped -2.2 percent primarily from Consumer Staples by -12.8 percent and Energy -7.7 percent, which was offset by gains in Services by +5.7 percent and Real Estate +1.0 percent. Qatar's QE Index fell -1.6 percent particularly coming from Real Estate -12.9 percent, Consumer Services -3.6 percent which was offset by gains in Financial Services +2.9 percent and Insurance +0.6 percent. Oman's MSM 30 index decreased -1.7 percent mainly from negative performance in Industrials -2.4 percent, Services -2.13 percent, Banking -0.5 percent. Bahrain's BB All Share index weakened -1.2 percent mainly due to Banking -2.3 percent, offset by rise in Insurance +3.5 percent, and Industries +1.9 percent.

SINGAPORE: A general view shows office buildings in the financial district in Singapore yesterday. —AFP

ECB to hint at end to easy money: Analysts

FRANKFURT AM MAIN: Expectations are high that the European Central Bank will hint that it is heading for the exit from its easy-money policy when governors meet in Estonian capital Tallinn today.

Most analysts predict the bank's 60-billion-euro ($67.4 billion) monthly bond purchases will continue and interest rates will remain at historic lows. But they believe policymakers will begin laying the groundwork for an announcement later this year about plans to wind down bond-buying, by offering a sunnier economic outlook for the 19-nation eurozone.

"The ECB governing council needs to take no major policy decision beyond tweaking its guidance a little to keep up with the eurozone's broad-based and resilient economic recovery," said economist Holger Schmieding of Berenberg bank. Bond-buying and low interest rates were introduced at a time when the ECB feared the threat of deflation-or steadily decreasing prices the undermine economic activity.

By pumping cash through the financial system and into the real economy, the bank believes it has stimulated growth and pushed inflation back towards its target of just below 2.0 percent.

Inflation has been on a rollercoaster ride in recent months, hitting the 2.0 percent target in February before falling back again in March. The same pattern was repeated with a spike in April, to 1.9 percent, before a retreat in May.

Volatile food and energy prices are to blame for such rapid changes, policymakers say, while "core", or underlying inflation discounting those elements remains sluggish. ECB president Mario Draghi argues that wages-which he dubs the "linchpin" of price growth-are not rising fast enough to drive inflation, even as the eurozone economy enjoys healthy expansion.

"Deflationary risks might have disappeared, but the ECB is still far away from reaching its inflation objective," said economist Carsten Brzeski of ING Diba bank.

Nevertheless, "the ECB would be blind not to acknowledge the cyclical upswing in the eurozone" in its press conference today, he added.

Balanced risks

In its carefully-weighed policy statements, the central bank has long warned of risks threatening the eurozone recovery. This in turn has justified language elsewhere in its "forward guidance" suggesting that if economic activity slowed, policymakers could lower interest rates even further or boost bond-buying back to its previous level of 80 billion euros per month.

Observers now expect the ECB to highlight economic risks "balanced" between positive and negative, justifying dropping one or both commitments to signal growing confidence in the economy.

That would not herald a quick exit from bond-buying. Draghi told European Parliament lawmakers last week he is "firmly convinced" the eurozone's newfound robustness depends on ECB interventions.

The coming months will see policymakers "tiptoeing towards a winding down of asset purchases in 2018," Berenberg's Schmieding said, with an interest rate hike far over the horizon.

New economic forecasts next week from the ECB's staff are expected to show lower inflation expectations than previously, lending support to governing council members who want to stay the course.

Taper tantrum

The ECB is keen to avoid financial market upsets as it heads for the exit from its bond-buying program. Removing its demand for government bonds from the market could drive up yields, the returns investors can expect when buying government debt, for the eurozone's weaker economies.

But it is also under pressure to end the scheme, as some governing council members believe it is no longer justified without deflation risks.

Meanwhile, pressure from politicians in fiscally conservative countries like Germany is mounting over low inflation's impact on savers. German Finance Minister Wolfgang Schaeuble has also blamed the ECB for trade tensions with the United States, charging that the bank's policy makes German exports too cheap. And technical considerations could soon limit the number of government bonds available for the ECB to buy, cramping the program's effectiveness.

Even given those constraints, "the ECB does not seem to be in any rush," ING's Brzeski said. Central bankers "will do everything possible to avoid" spooking markets by announcing any changes gradually between next week and the end of the year, he predicted. —AFP

Australia rates on hold ahead of growth data

SYDNEY: Australia's central bank held interest rates at a record low 1.50 percent yesterday ahead of quarterly economic growth data analysts expect to come in weak. The Reserve Bank of Australia slashed 300 basis points from borrowing costs between November 2011 and August last year to support non-resources industries as the economy transitions out of a mining investment boom. It has remained on hold since then.

"The outlook continues to be supported by the low level of interest rates," said central bank governor Philip Lowe of the widely-anticipated decision. He said the transition to lower levels of mining investment was "almost complete" and business conditions had improved in parts of the economy not directly affected by the decline.

Growth in employment was expected to continue, he added, but wage growth remained low, which was "restraining growth in household consumption".

Inflation was expected to increase gradually as the economy strengthens. On housing, the bank said debt levels were growing faster than income but tougher regulatory measures targeting lending standards "should help address the risks associated with high and rising levels of indebtedness".

Lowe noted signs that soaring house prices in Sydney and Melbourne were starting to ease.

The surging prices are widely seen as being behind the RBA's decision to hold off on further rate cuts owing to worries it would stoke more debt-funded speculation and push the cost of housing even higher. The Australian dollar climbed after the rate announcement, hitting 74.87 US cents, having earlier fallen to a low of 74.57 on weaker-than-expected exports data.

Economists said the bank would want to digest the growth data before making any concrete rate-related decisions, with gross domestic tipped to come in as low as 0.1 percent on-quarter and 1.5 percent on-year in the first three months of 2017.

Lowe acknowledged growth likely eased. "Year-ended GDP growth is expected to have slowed in the March quarter, reflecting the quarter-to-quarter variation in the growth figures," he said.

"Looking forward, economic growth is still expected to increase gradually over the next couple of years to a little above three percent." Australia's economy rebounded strongly in the December quarter, dodging a technical recession on the back of buoyant exports, government investment and household spending. The stellar bounceback followed a shock contraction of 0.5 percent in the three months to September-largely because of bad weather hampering construction and mining. — AFP

SYDNEY: A man walks past the Reserve Bank of Australia sign in Sydney yesterday. Australia's central bank held interest rates at a record low 1.50 percent yesterday ahead of quarterly economic growth data analysts expect to come in weak. — AFP

Global stocks falter on geopolitical jitters

NEW YORK: Wall Street opened lower yesterday as geopolitical worries from Washington to the Middle East continued to curb some investor enthusiasm. About 10 minutes into the day's trading, the Dow Jones Industrial Average had given up 0.3 percent to 21,132.53, the broader S&P 500 also was down 0.3 percent at 2,429.54 and the tech-heavy Nasdaq fell 0.2 percent at 6,285.68.

"What's unfolding at the moment is a little risk aversion," said Patrick O'Hare of Briefing.com. "It is fair to call it 'little' when taking into account that the S&P 500 futures are down just six points after the cash market has increased 3.4 percent since May 17." Oil prices dipped in New York, the dollar was trading at near seven-month lows and US Treasury yields fell ahead of a week of political developments with the potential to unnerve investors. Britain's general elections tomorrow come in the wake of the weekend's deadly terrorist attack, and occur the same day as testimony in Washington by former FBI director James Comey, who was fired by President Donald Trump, on his campaign's ties to Russia.

The European Central Bank also holds its monetary policy meeting tomorrow. Shares in auto giant General Motors fell 0.6 percent ahead of a shareholder vote yesterday on a proposal to create separate stock classes for growth and dividends. Meanwhile, oil shares suffered in the wake of a diplomatic row between Saudi Arabia and its allies, and Qatar, raising fears that an agreement on oil production limits might fail. Shares in BP gave up 0.8 percent, Shell lost 0.7 percent, Chevron and ConocoPhillips each fell 0.4 percent. ExxonMobil, however, bucked the trend, adding 0.4 percent. Apple gained 0.4 percent after the company unveiled "HomePod," it's new music-centered smart home speaker in a bid to challenge giants Amazon and Google.

Global stocks mostly fell as investors digested soft economic data and looked toward the British election later in the week.

France's CAC 40 lost 0.6 percent to 5,276 and Germany's DAX fell 1 percent to 12,701. Britain's FTSE 100 was down 0.2 percent at 7,509. US shares were set to drift lower, with Dow and S&P 500 futures both shedding 0.3 percent.

Investor sentiment was dampened slightly by a weak report on retail sales in the 19-country eurozone. Retail sales rose 0.1 percent in April, below expectations. More broadly, markets are also subdued ahead of an increasingly unpredictable UK election tomorrow.The race has tightened between the Conservatives and the Labor party, with uncertain consequences for the country's Brexit negotiations.

MIDEAST TENSIONS: A diplomatic rift between Qatar and other major Middle Eastern countries also drew attention. Qatar is one of the world's largest suppliers of natural gas, and any effortto halt its exports could affect the energy market. Investors will also be aware of the potential for greater instability in the region as Qatar clashes diplomatically with regional heavyweights Saudi Arabia, a massive energy supplier, and Egypt. Qatar is also home to some 10,000 American troops and a major US military base.

Asia dips

Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 dipped nearly 1.0 percent to finish at 19,979.90.Australia's S&P/ASX 200 was down 1.5 percent at 5,667.50. South Korean markets were closed for the Memorial Day holiday. Hong Kong's Hang Seng edged up 0.5 percent to 25,997.14, while the Shanghai Composite rose 0.3 percent to 3,102.13.

Benchmark US crude fell 12 cents to $47.28 a barrel. It fell 26 cents to $47.40 a barrel in New York on Monday. Brent crude, used to price international oils, slipped 14 cents to $49.33 a barrel in London. In currency trading, the euro fell to $1.1257 from $1.1276 late Monday. The dollar weakened to 109.39 yen from 110.48 yen. —Agencies

TOKYO: Men look at an electronic stock board showing Japan's Nikkei 225 index at a securities firm yesterday in Tokyo. Asian stocks were mostly lower yesterday following a drop on Wall Street, as investors looked toward British elections later in the week.—AP

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report

Global جلوبل

Tuesday 06 June 2017

Index		Change	Closing	Last Closing
Price index	▼	-2.07	6,801.13	6,803.20
Weighted Index	▲	0.68	402.62	401.94
KSX 15	▲	2.56	909.35	906.79

Volume	30,518,221
Value (KWD)	5,404,192.944
Number of Trades	1,477

Security	High	Low	Trades Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last		Change
MARIN	76	72	1016500	73,619	20	75	▼	-1.0
IPG	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	350	—	0.0
NAPESCO	1,410	1,410	500	705	1	1,410	▼	-103.0
ENERGYH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	41.4	—	0.0
GPI	37.5	36.0	1,399,900	50,771	60	37.0	—	0.0
ABAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	87	—	0.0
Oil & Gas			**2,416,900**	**125,095**	**81**	**993.67**	▼	**-40.80**
KFOUC	295	295	5	1	1	295	▲	5.0
BPCC	582	578	35,000	20,270	5	582	▲	2.0
ALKOUT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	690	—	0.0
ALQURAIN	340	337	29,641	10,066	8	340	▲	3.0
Basic Materials			**64,646**	**30,338**	**14**	**1307.92**	▲	**9.40**
KCEM	468	400	50,050	20,180	8	468	▲	18.0
CABLE	420	415	5,005	2,077	2	420	—	0.0
SHIP	210	208	55,010	11,492	4	210	—	0.0
PCEM	945	945	44,124	41,697	3	945	▼	-5.0
PAPER	281	281	5,000	1,405	3	281	▼	-19.0
MRC	100	92	3,013	294	23	99	—	0.0
ACICO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	276	—	0.0
HCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	208	—	0.0
KBMMC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	136	—	0.0
NICBM	192	190	86,500	16,511	11	190	▼	-34.0
EQUIPMENT	49.9	49.0	222,500	10,995	10	49.9	▼	-0.1
NCCI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	125	—	0.0
GYPSUM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	95	—	0.0
SALBOOKH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	60	—	0.0
AQLTY	755	727	1,342,362	992,498	108	742	▲	17.0
EDU	367	340	349,802	126,590	26	365	▲	1.0
CLEANING	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	46.0	—	0.0
KGL	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	67	—	0.0
KCPC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	160	—	0.0
HUMANSOFT	3,900	3,899	43,283	168,799	24	3,900	—	0.0
NAFAIS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	150	—	0.0
GFC	52	44.0	3,376	152	2	52	—	0.0
MAYADEEN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	28.0	—	0.0
CGC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	595	—	0.0
MTCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	56	—	0.0
UPAC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	850	—	0.0
ALAFCO	305	300	65,240	19,843	12	300	▼	-4.0
MUBARRAD	78	78	20,000	1,560	2	78	▼	-0.1
LOGISTICS	53	51	178,490	9,175	13	51	▼	-0.1
SCEM	83	83	200	17	1	83	▲	4.5
GCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	75	—	0.0
QIC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	78	—	0.0
FCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	84	—	0.0
RKWC	85	85	26,420	2,246	6	85	▼	-18.0
SPEC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	90	—	0.0
Industrials			**2,500,375**	**1,425,530**	**258**	**1823.68**	▼	**-10.10**
PAPCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	110	—	0.0
CATTL	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	225	—	0.0
DANAH	76	73	70,010	5,128	6	76	▼	-0.4
FOOD	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	2,700	—	0.0
Consumer Goods			**70,010**	**5,128**	**6**	**1136.11**	▼	**-2.20**
MHC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	378	—	0
ATC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,100	—	0
YIACO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	240	—	0
Health Care			**0**	**0**	**0**	**0.00**	—	**0.00**
KCIN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,390	—	0
KHOT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	250	—	0
SULTAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	67	—	0
CABLETV	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	22.5	—	0
EYAS	1,200	1,195	5,565	6,670	4	1,195	▲	5
IFAHR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	192	—	0
OULAFUEL	119	119	4,558	542	5	119	—	0
MUNTAZAHAT	77	77	117,301	9,032	5	77	▼	-5
JAZEERA	478	470	70,500	33,510	16	474	—	0
SOOR	118	118	33,001	3,894	7	118	—	0
FUTUREKID	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	112	—	0
ALRAI	119	116	26,387	3,104	4	119	▼	-1
ZIMAH	52	50	40,400	2,050	7	51	▼	-2
Mezzan	950	927	444,135	413,379	55	927	▼	-5
Consumer Services			**741,847**	**472,183**	**103**	**1126.89**	▼	**-9.20**
ZAIN	423	420	273,406	115,278	32	422	▲	1
OOREDOO	1,210	1,210	712	862	2	1,210	▲	10
HITSTELEC	41.6	40.6	656,920	26,895	38	41.0	—	0
VIVA	824	822	16,275	13,393	22	823	▲	2
Telecommunications			**947,313**	**156,428**	**94**	**503.88**	▲	**1.90**
NBK	679	675	199,561	135,021	16	676	▲	1
GBK	239	239	70,000	16,730	3	239	▲	1
CBK	344	344	1,000	344	1	344	▲	14
ABK	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	310	—	0
ALMUTAHED	445	435	41,597	18,318	8	440	—	0
KIB	247	242	269,542	65,779	14	247	▲	3
BURG	324	322	288,319	92,874	8	322	—	0
KFIN	484	479	1,357,725	653,041	96	482	▲	2
BOUBYAN	410	407	52,092	21,336	16	409	▼	-2
AUB	216	214	3,396,206	729,304	98	214	▼	-2
ITHMR	44.8	43.2	423,131	18,415	26	43.9	▼	-1
WARBABANK	243	240	135,840	32,835	41	242	▼	-1
Banks			**6,235,013**	**1,783,996**	**327**	**916.54**	▼	**-0.50**
KINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	262	—	0
GINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	550	—	0.0
AINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	495	—	0.0
WINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	86	—	0.0
KUWAITRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	196	—	0.0
FTI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	60	—	0.0
WETHAQ	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	54	—	0.0
BKIKWT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	355	—	0.0
Insurance			**0**	**0**	**0**	**0.00**	—	**0.00**
SOKOUK	49.9	49.0	185,588	9,160	14	49.0	▼	-1.0
KRE	56	55	886,073	49,198	33	56	▼	-0.5
URC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	85	—	0.0
NRE	118	114	1,710,060	198,351	47	116	▲	3.0
SRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	380	—	0.0
TAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	360	—	0.0
AREEC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	168	—	0.0
MASSALEH	45.0	37.0	11,130	445	4	39.9	▼	-0.1
ARABREC	32.5	31.8	240,972	7,685	10	31.9	—	0.0
ERESCO	39.5	39.5	60,500	2,390	3	39.5	▼	-0.5
MABANEE	780	772	167,175	130,218	11	772	▼	-7.0
INJAZZAT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	92	—	0.0
INVESTORS	22.6	22.0	900,129	20,122	18	22.5	▲	0.5
IRC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	31.5	—	0.0
ALTIJARIA	75	73	236,300	17,264	8	74	▲	1.0
SANAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	50	—	0.0
AAYANRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	80	—	0.0
AQAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	82	—	0.0
ALAQARIA	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	35.0	—	0.0
MAZAYA	110	110	233,754	25,713	8	110	—	0.0
ADNC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	11.0	—	0.0
THEMAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	70	—	0.0
TIJARA	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	68	—	0.0
TAAMEER	33.6	32.0	200,400	6,483	8	33.0	▼	-0.7
ARKAN	83	83	52,994	4,399	1	83	—	0.0
ARGAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	186	—	0.0
ABYAAR	22.5	22.1	849,697	18,958	21	22.5	▲	0.4
MUNSHAAT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	55	—	0.0
FIRSTDUBAI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	50	—	0.0
KBT	49.0	47.5	121,000	5,783	9	49.0	—	0.0
REAM	402	400	59	24	2	400	▲	65.0
MENA	23.5	22.5	300,600	6,784	4	23.3	▼	-0.2
ALMUDON	36.7	36.7	160,000	5,872	10	36.7	▲	0.9
MARAKEZ	43.5	43.5	100	4	1	43.5	—	0.0
REMAL	68	66	168,500	11,256	8	68	▲	1.4
AWJ	77	76	68,762	5,227	5	77	▲	1.5
Real Estate			**6,553,793**	**525,335**	**225**	**948.85**	▲	**14.50**
KINV	94	94	5,600	524	1	94	▲	0.6
FACIL	167	166	550,000	91,810	9	167	—	0.0
IFA	38.0	38.0	10	0	1	38.0	▲	3.0
NINV	104	104	181,500	18,876	7	104	—	0.0
KPROJ	349	347	134,311	46,822	20	349	▲	5.0
COAST	41.3	39.7	115,164	4,604	11	41.0	▲	0.9
SECH	42.0	42.0	45,000	1,890	1	42.0	▲	1.0
SGC	97	97	40	4	1	97	—	0.0
ARZAN	35.0	32.0	75,150	2,415	4	35.0	▼	-1.0
MARKAZ	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	114	—	0.0
KMEFIC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	28.5	—	0.0
ALAMAN	42.9	42.0	294,000	12,553	10	42.9	▼	-0.3
ALOLA	47.0	45.0	131,100	5,915	10	46.5	▲	0.2
ALMAL	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	15.0	—	0.0
GIH	39.0	38.0	11,700	446	4	38.5	▼	-0.5
AAYAN	43.7	42.6	278,870	12,012	14	43.1	—	0.0
BAYANINV	53	52	1,511,892	79,159	62	52	▲	0.5
OSOUL	59	55	150,760	8,296	5	59	▲	4.0
KFIC	39.9	39.9	250	10	1	39.9	▼	-0.1
KAMCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	83	—	0.0
NIH	63	63	150	9	1	63	▲	2.0
UNICAP	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	45.0	—	0.0
MADAR	20.3	19.5	175,100	3,485	13	20.3	▲	0.2
ALDEERA	32.0	28.0	5,355	152	5	32.0	▼	-1.0
ALSALAM	54	52	3,551,060	189,463	90	54	▲	2.2
EKTTITAB	36.8	35.0	257,610	9,089	6	35.9	▲	0.7
ALMADINA	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	42.0	—	0.0
NOOR	53	51	61,000	3,115	5	51	—	0.0
TAMINV	310	310	2,500	775	1	310	▼	-5.0
EXCH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	158	—	0.0
KSHC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	35.8	—	0.0
ASIYA	42.0	40.0	99,848	4,063	10	41.9	▲	2.3
GNAHC	32.5	32.5	85,000	2,763	5	32.5	▼	-3.3
AMWAL	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	67	—	0.0
ALIMTIAZ	151	148	1,690,156	253,530	38	151	▼	-1.0
MANAZEL	47.9	47.0	722,000	34,233	13	47.0	▼	-0.5
NIND	108	106	776,010	83,423	29	108	▲	1.0
BIHC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	42.9	—	0.0
SENERGY	37.1	37.0	17,867	661	7	37.0	▼	-0.1
AGHC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	85	—	0.0
KPPC	49.0	48.5	11,000	534	2	49.0	▲	2.7
TAHSSILAT	31.9	31.9	10	0	1	31.9	▼	-0.5
JEERANH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	50	—	0.0
EKHOLDING	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	196	—	0.0
GFH	185	181	54,700	9,973	7	184	▼	-4.0
INOVEST	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	100	—	0.0
Financial Services			**10,994,713**	**880,606**	**394**	**695.47**	▲	**1.30**
Investment Instruments			**0**	**0**	**0**	**0.00**	—	**0.00**
ASC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	300	—	0.0
OSOS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	132	—	0.0
HAYATCOMM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	84	—	0.0
Technology			**0**	**0**	**0**	**0.00**	—	**0.00**
SANAD	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	100	—	0.0
AFAQ	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	150	—	0.0
ALSHAMEL	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	260	—	0.0
EFFECT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	35.0	—	0.0
AJWAN	92	74	101	7	2	74	▼	-18.4
MASAKEN	77	77	1	0	1	77	—	0.0
DALQAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	350	—	0.0
ALEID	90	90	1	0	1	90	▲	2.0
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	57	—	0.0
Parallel Market			**103**	**8**	**4**	**1192.93**	▼	**-27.30**

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	21,206.29	21,184.04	-22.25	▼	-0.10	7.19
NASDAQ	6,305.80	6,295.68	-10.12	▼	-0.16	16.95
S&P 500	2,439.07	2,436.10	-2.97	▼	-0.12	8.80
Financial Times	7,525.76	7,514.97	-10.79	▼	-0.14	5.21
DAX	12,822.94	12,728.70	-94.24	▼	-0.73	10.87
CAC 40	5,307.89	5,276.85	-31.04	▼	-0.58	8.53
Swiss	9,043.96	8,959.46	-84.50	▼	-0.93	9.00
Nikkei 225	20,170.82	19,979.90	-190.92	▼	-0.95	4.53
Topix	1,609.97	1,596.44	-13.53	▼	-0.84	5.13
Hang Seng	25,862.99	25,997.14	134.15	▲	0.52	18.17
Straits Times	3,238.31	3,235.75	-2.56	▼	-0.08	12.32

MENA Stock Indices

Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Change		Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %
Kuwait	6,803.20	6,801.13	-2.07	▼	-0.03	15.51
Saudi Arabia	6,964.83	6,940.70	-24.13	▼	-0.35	-3.41
Dubai	3,317.50	3,322.35	4.85	▲	0.15	-6.04
Abu Dhabi	4,484.46	4,460.30	-24.16	▼	-0.54	-1.36
Bahrain	1,326.96	1,325.33	-1.63	▼	-0.12	8.73
Qatar	9,202.62	9,058.89	-143.73	▼	-1.56	-11.82
Oman	5,405.73	5,406.95	1.22	▲	0.02	-6.52
Lebanon	1,159.98	1,166.34	6.36	▲	0.55	-4.35
Jordan	2,169.82	2,165.55	-4.27	▼	-0.20	-0.02
Egypt	13,520.13	13,629.89	109.76	▲	0.81	9.52
Morocco	11,625.08	11,625.78	0.70	▲	0.01	-0.16
Tunisia	5,739.53	5,772.04	32.51	▲	0.57	4.57

Global Currencies Exchange Rate

Currency	Kuwaiti Dinar	Saudi Riyal	US Dollar	Euro	Sterling Pound	Swiss Franc	Japanese Yen	Australian Dollar
Kuwait Dinar		12.2607	3.2830	2.9174	2.5430	3.1661	358.93	4.3849
Saudi Riyal	0.08156		0.2678	0.2380	0.2074	0.2582	29.27	0.3576
US Dollar	0.30460	3.7346		0.8887	0.7746	0.9644	109.33	1.3356
Euro	0.34277	4.2025	1.1253		0.8717	1.0854	123.07	1.5032
Sterling Pound	0.39324	4.8214	1.2910	1.1472		1.2453	141.20	1.7247
Swiss Franc	0.31584	3.8725	1.0369	0.9213	0.8030		113.38	1.3850
Japanese Yen	0.00279	0.0342	0.0091	0.0081	0.0071	0.0088		0.0122
Australian Dollar	0.22805	2.7961	0.7487	0.6652	0.5798	0.7220	81.86	

MENA Currencies Exchange Rate

Currency	US Dollar	Kuwaiti Dollar	Saudi Riyal	Bahraini Dinar	Qatari Riyal	Omani Riyal	Emirates Dirham	Egyptian Pound
US Dollar		0.30460	3.7346	0.3744	3.6273	0.3832	3.6574	18.0400
Kuwaiti Dinar	3.2830		12.2607	1.2292	11.9084	1.2579	12.0072	59.2252
Saudi Riyal	0.2678	0.08156		0.1003	0.9713	0.1026	0.9793	4.8305
Bahraini Dinar	2.6709	0.81357	9.9749		9.6883	1.0234	9.7687	48.1838
Qatari Riyal	0.2757	0.08397	1.0296	0.1032		0.1056	1.0083	4.9734
Omani Riyal	2.6099	0.79499	9.7471	0.9772	9.4670		9.5456	47.0834
Emirates Dirham	0.2734	0.08328	1.0211	0.1024	0.9918	0.1048		4.9325
Egyptian Pound	0.0554	0.01688	0.2070	0.0208	0.2011	0.0212	0.2027	

Global Interest Rates

Currency	1-Week	1-Month	3-Month	6-Month	1-Year
Kuwaiti Dinar	0.00	1.19	1.44	1.63	1.94
US Dollar	0.95	1.08	1.21	1.41	1.72
Euro	-0.40	-0.39	-0.37	-0.29	-0.17
Sterling Pound	0.23	0.24	0.29	0.42	0.62
Swiss Franc	-0.78	-0.78	-0.72	-0.66	-0.49
Australian Dollar	1.56	1.63	1.61	1.60	1.59
Japanese Yen	0.00	-0.02	-0.01	0.02	0.13

Global Bond Yields

Country	2-Year	5-Year	10-Year	30-Year
United States	1.28	1.70	2.14	2.80
Europe	-0.74	-0.47	0.25	1.11
United Kingdom	0.06	0.44	0.98	1.65

Commodities

Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Change		Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %
Kuwait Oil	46.25	46.05	-0.20	▼	-0.43	-15.05
Brent	47.91	48.08	0.17	▲	0.35	-14.09
West Texas	47.45	47.35	-0.10	▼	-0.21	-13.28
Gold	1279.45	1292.71	13.26	▲	1.04	9.97
Silver	17.51	17.67	0.16	▲	0.94	8.95

Source: National Bank of Kuwait

Mazda 2017 CX-9: Powerful and elegant SUV

Vehicle combines sports car performance and SUV versatility

By Nawara Fattahova

KUWAIT: The powerful engine of the elegant new 2017 Mazda CX-9 is the best feature of this luxury SUV. It is real fun driving this fashionable vehicle that combines a sports car aesthetics and SUV versatility.

One of the most important features demanded by drivers in Kuwait is a powerful and strong air conditioning system. The beautiful and eye-catching Mazda CX-9 definitely provides a very cool atmosphere inside the vehicle no matter of the heat outside.

Distinction in design

The athletic proportions of the Mazda CX-9 are highlighted by the sleek cabin, strong and stable lower body featuring large 20-inch wheels, and a confident, well-planted stance. The interior has a range of superior, genuine materials such as aluminum comes together to create an atmosphere of style that satisfies all senses.

Distinction in dynamics

CX-9 is a premium SUV, meaning it is the ideal answer to all family's motoring needs. But it is also a Mazda, meaning it is engineered to completely satisfy your desire for happy and responsive driving. Key to this stellar performance is SKYACTIV TECHNOLOGY, Mazda's groundbreaking reappraisal of every single aspect of the automobile that challenges every preconceived notion of automotive engineering, effortless linear response, superb Jinba-ittai handling, top-rated safety and unheard-of fuel economy.

SKYACTIV-G 2.51

This all-new turbo-charged engine is developed specifically for CX-9 to give you the relaxed yet powerful torque of a 4.0-litre V8 while achieving best-in-class listed and real-world fuel economy. Displacing just 2.5 liters, the SKYACTIV-G 2.5T is a showcase of advanced Mazda technology dedicated to maximizing fuel economy along with outstanding dynamic performance, particularly in the low-to mid-term range most drivers use most of the time. The world's first Dynamic Pressure Turbo with 4-3-1 exhaust manifold controls the degree of exhaust pulsation hitting the turbo according to engine speed, allowing the turbocharger to spool up virtually instantaneously at any revs to eliminate turbo-lag and deliver immediate, linear throttle response. In addition, a cooled Exhaust Gas Recirculation (EGR) system reduces combustion temperature with the result the engine maintains the ideal air-fuel ratio over a wider output range to give both improved efficiency and real-world fuel economy.

SKYACTIV-DRIVE

This six-speed automatic transmission combines the smooth operation of a conventional automatic with the fast shifting of a twin-clutch gearbox. Lockup is extended to nearly 90 percent for the solid feel of a manual transmission.

SKYACTIV-BODY

Innovations in structure, construction and materials make CX-9 lighter, safer and more rigid. Straight structural members, a continuous framework and extensive use of high-tensile steel achieve the contradictory requirements of lighter weight and greater collision resistance, particularly in the occupants' area.

SKYACTIV-CHASSIS

To deliver sporty Jinba-ittal driving, CX-9 features strut geometry at the front and a multi-link layout at the rear, specifically tuned to the requirements of an SUV of this size. Electric Power Assist Steering provides comfortable, responsive operation with positive feedback.

i-ACTIV AWD

Mazda's new-generation all-wheel-drive system i-ACTIV AWD is engineered to offer confident driving on any road surface while also contributing to environmental compatibility. The system helps prevent tire slippage and minimize energy losses - enhancing both drivability in poor Conditions and fuel economy - by instantly distributing power optimally between the front and rear wheels. In addition, i-ACTIV AWD assesses your intentions via your driving operations to precisely adjust torque distribution.

Distinction in comfort and quality

Japanese craftsmanship and premium materials come together in this sweeping statement of cosseting comfort and quality from a class above. It begins with carefully balancing the needs of both parents and children to create a relaxing, inviting space that satisfies all age groups with regard to space, comfort, and that added extra that just makes you feel special.

A sense of space

Seen from the outside, the cabin is sleek and compact. But from the inside, CX-9 is both roomy and welcoming, with the first- and second-row seats offering plenty of leg- and headroom for adults of almost any size while the third-row seats provide comfortable accommodation for children or even early teenagers.

A warm welcome to quality

In particular, focus was placed on interior lighting and ambience, and upper trim levels feature a light show to welcome the driver into the car. A total of four USB ports - two in the centre console and two in the rear armrest - provides convenient connection and charging (up to 2.1 amps of current) of phones, tablets and other small devices. What's more, passengers in the third row even enjoy the comfort of rear-door sunshades.

Distinction in safety

Mazda's Proactive Safety philosophy is firmly grounded in a belief in the driver's abilities, aiming to support safer driving while maintaining all the fun of the open road. Safer driving demands early recognition of potential hazards, good judgment and appropriate action, and Mazda works to support these essential functions so you can drive more safely and with peace of mind despite changing driving conditions.

First is an optimum driver environment with good visibility, well-positioned controls, easy-to-read instruments and minimal distractions, Next is i-ACTIVSENSE, a portfolio of active safety measures to incrementally warn you when a potentially dangerous situation is developing. Finally there is passive safety, designed to protect passengers and minimize injuries if an accident should occur.

Lane-keep Assist System (LAS)

A forward sensing camera detects lane markings and assists the steering to keep you in lane. The system also alerts you when it judges an unintended lane departure is imminent by vibrating the steering wheel or with an audible alarm.

Lane Departure Warning System (LDWS)

LDWS senses lane markings on the road surface. When the system predicts departure from the lane it issues an audible warning similar to the noise a car makes when it runs onto a rumble strip to prompt timely steering corrections.

Adaptive LED Headlights (ALH)

ALH offers the driver greater support for recognizing potential hazards when driving at night. The system improves night visibility and helps the driver avoid hazardous situations by combining the use of Glare-free High Beam (featuring an adjustable illumination range) and Wide-range Low Beam.

Smart Brake Support (SBS)

SRS uses milliwave radar to detect and measure the distance to a preceding vehicle. When the system judges CX-9 is closing too fast it first warns of danger, and if no action is taken, it then begins to apply the brakes. Works at speeds between 15 and 145km/h.

Blind Spot Monitoring (BSM) and Rear Cross Traffic Alert (RCTA)

BSM uses 24GHz quasi-milliwave radar sensors to detect vehicles in the blind spots behind and to the side, and using a turn signal while BSM detects a vehicle triggers visual and audio warnings. RCTA uses the same sensors to alert the driver when it detects vehicles approaching from either side during reversing operations.

Distinction in communication

Complete and intuitive communication between you and the car. Real-time communication with the world when you're on the road. That's what Mazda's advanced Human-Machine Interface (HMI) and MZD CONNECT internet connectivity offers the driver. And now Mazda has extended the HMI to include even your driving position to further enhance the Jinba-ittai experience.

HMI - carefree control

Mazda engineered its HMI to clearly give you the information you need for timely decision-making without confusion, with minimal eye movements and with reduced stress. Controls, instruments, steering wheel and shift lever are all ideally placed in relation to the driver's seat, with the main instrument cluster and steering wheel directly centered on the driver, while the pedals are positioned symmetrically to fall naturally under the feet. Excellent visibility is assured thanks to A-pillars located rearward to offer a broader view of the road. CX-9 is the first Mazda with a full-color head-up display projected on the windscreen.

MZD CONNECT keeps you in touch

MZD CONNECT offers an extremely wide range of infotainment options through (Aha) by HARMAN when connected to your Smartphone via Bluetooth. The system's Audio feature lets you access multiple audio sources including AM/FM radio and mobile audio players, and Aha Internet Radio. The Communication feature can read SMS messages aloud as well as other internet social network services such as Twitter and Facebook available via Aba. The Navigation feature shows you your current position on a map along with a route to your specified destination. System software is easily updated to give you ongoing access to the latest services without swapping out any hardware.

As you like it

Storage spaces, including cup holders for all three rows of seats, are thoughtfully placed throughout the cabin. With all three rows of seats upright luggage space is generous, and third-row seats offer individual one-touch folding, while second-row seats are 60/40 split with one-touch split folding. With all seats folded, the luggage compartment can accommodate a pair of mountain bikes, and offers a flat and nearly horizontal load floor.

Ladies and gentlemen, start your engines: Ford EcoBoost explained

KUWAIT: Is it possible to have a car that offers you power when you want it, and efficiency when you need it? It is with Ford's EcoBoost line of engines.

Ford's innovative EcoBoost range is capable of powering nimble sporty rides like the Focus and Focus ST, city utility vehicles like Ford Escape and Edge, muscle cars like Ford Mustang, performance vehicles like the Ford F-150 Raptor, and even Le Mans-winning racing cars, like the new Ford GT.

Ford's EcoBoost engine technology is so innovative that the company has secured 275 US patents and has 200 more pending - more than any other manufacturer when it comes to gasoline turbocharged direct-injection technology.

So, how does it work? EcoBoost engines use three key technologies controlled by unique Ford software that's designed to optimize the engine for any driving situation. The first technology is direct injection. By injecting precise amounts of fuel directly into the cylinder at high pressure, EcoBoost engines deliver optimum performance without wasting a drop.

The second is a turbocharger. Just as a shot of espresso perks up your energy level, the turbocharger gives the engine a boost of power when needed. A single turbocharger uses otherwise wasted energy from the engine's exhaust to rotate a turbine wheel, which in turn is mated to a compressor that pressurizes air coming into the engine.

That pressurised air creates "boost" and allows the engine to breathe in more air than a naturally-aspirated engine. The more air an engine breathes in, the more power it generates.

The third technology is variable cam shaft timing. Like healthy lungs and circulation, it ensures your EcoBoost engine always has the right amount of air to avoid wasting fuel and to deliver peak performance. Compared to engines of the past, the EcoBoost is contained in a light and compact structure. This means you don't waste fuel carrying around more weight than you have to. Perfect for economical cruising.

As an example, strong materials such as compacted graphite iron (CGI) are used where needed, and lightweight materials such as aluminium are employed when possible to reduce weight. The combination of materials contributes to an overall strong, compact, and lightweight design.

EcoBoost technologies allow Ford to get a great deal of horsepower and torque from an engine that weighs less than traditional engines; the less your high-performance engine weighs, the greater your power-to-weight ratio is.

And when you're cruising on the highway, Ford EcoBoost engines will give you the power you seek. The EcoBoost is designed for any kind of driving situation - mileage you need, power you want. Ford EcoBoost engines make it possible.

To explore the Ford lineup of vehicles that is equipped with EcoBoost line of engines, please visit the Alghanim Auto New Vehicle Showroom in the Shuwaikh Industrial Area, opposite from the Classical Car Museum and Sirbb Circuit. Working hours during the Holy Month of Ramadan are Saturday to Thursday from 9AM to 4PM, and from 8PM till 12AM, and 8PM till 12AM on Fridays.

BEC bonanza: Giving away 5 Chery cars and 100 gold coins

KUWAIT: Bahrain Exchange Company (BEC), specialists in worldwide money transfers and currency exchange, have launched their latest promotional campaign 'BEC Bonanza'.

Fronted by the company's Brand Ambassador Bob, the BEC Buddy, the campaign will consist of 5 prize draws taking place on the 18th June, 9th and 27th July, 16th August and 5th September 2017 where one lucky customer will win a new Chery E5 and twenty lucky customers will win 20 gold coins of 4grams on each draw.

Running from the 28th May to 5th September 2017, the campaign will be open to all customers that make any money transfer or currency exchange transaction from one of its 40+ branches, plus customers who send money online through BEC's secure online money transfer service 'BEC Online' will also be eligible to take part. Customers will be entered into the draw for the transactions made between each draw dates throughout the campaign period. Mathews Varughese, BEC General Manager commented on the campaign, "As we approach the holy month of Ramadan, we are delighted to spread goodwill amongst our customers and reward their loyalty with the chance to win incredible prizes. We would like to take this opportunity to wish our customers and their families a healthy and blessed Ramadan."

BEC currently has over 42 branches across Kuwait and specializes in sending money around the globe safely and quickly to over 46,000 locations in 30 countries through its own money transfer product - EzRemit. Its global reach is extended to over 200 countries through its partnership with MoneyGram an international remittance company.

Gulf Bank announces winners of Al-Danah daily draws

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank held its Al-Danah daily draws on 4 June 2017 announcing the names of its winners for the week of 28 May - 1 June 2017. The Al-Danah daily draws include draws every working day for two prizes of KD 1,000 per winner.

The winners are:
(Sunday 28/5): Jassim Abdullah Mohammed Ahmed, Adnan Khalifa Ibrahim
(Monday 29/5): Ali Abdullah Hussein Al-Maksid, Al-Zahra Hussain Abdullah Hussain
(Tuesday 30/5): Hassan Bayerli, Rema Ezaat Termes
(Wednesday 31/5): Husain Mokhlef Allahaide Seror, Fawaz Khafeef Jaheil Ali
(Thursday 01/6): Majed Mohammed Rasheed Abdullah Al-Rasheed, Janet Antranik Aghakhanian

Gulf Bank's Al-Danah 2017 draw lineup includes daily draws (2 winners per working day and each receive KD1,000). Al-Danah's 2nd Quarterly draw for the prize of KD250,000 will be held on 13 July and the 3rd quarterly draw for the prize of KD500,000 will be held on 28 September. The final Al-Danah draw for KD1 million will be held on 11 January, 2018 whereby the Al-Danah millionaire will be announced.

Five reasons why the Al-Danah account is the best:

1) Kuwait's single biggest yearly cash prize of KD 1 million
2) Kuwait's biggest quarterly cash prizes, up to KD500,000
3) Two winners of KD1,000 every working day
4) The most chances to win
5) Only Bank that transfers your chances to win from the previous year to the current year

Only Al-Danah makes millionaires.

Al-Danah also offers a number of unique services including: the Al-Danah Deposit Only ATM card which helps account holders deposit their money at their convenience; as well as the Al-Danah calculator to help customers calculate their chances of becoming an Al-Danah winner.

Gulf Bank's Al-Danah account is open to Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti residents of Kuwait. Customers require a minimum of KD200 to open an account and the same amount must be maintained as for customers to be eligible for the upcoming Al-Danah draws.

If the customer's account balance falls below KD200 at any given time, a KD2 charge will be made on a monthly basis to the account until the minimum balance is met. Customers who open an account and/or deposit more will enter the daily draw within two days.

Alghanim Motors signs deal to offer Nano Ceracoat Ceramic

The future in paint and interior protection

KUWAIT: Alghanim Motors has signed a deal with exclusive MENA distributors Forward Echelon W.L.L. to exclusively offer Nanotechnology Ceracoat Ceramic as the only paint protection product approved by Alghanim Motors and the only nanotechnology product offered within the Alghanim Motors Genuine Accessory Range.

Following the continued growth year on year, sales of Nanotechnology Ceracoat Ceramic now account for more than 80 percent of paint protection purchased from dealers in the Middle East. Ceracoat high performance Nanocoatings protects your vehicle surface against whether induced discolouration, fading, oxidization and loss of gloss, it also protects against damaged caused by tree sap bug splatter and bird droppings.

How? Ceracoat engineers their coatings alongside NASA engineers which work at the Ceracoat Laboratories in Switzerland.

And our active ingredient not only provides the best possible protection against damaging uv but because its reactive it helps break down surface containments

And is complimented with its hydrophobic qualities commonly referred to as self-cleaning properties. Now although this does not eliminate washing, it significantly reduces time and cost needed to maintain your vehicle. Ceracoat hasn't forgotten about the interior, our interior nano coatings provide durable and invisible protection against commonly consumed food and drinks, And UV-induced discolouration with the same limited lifetime warranty. Our vinyl, leather, fabric, alcantra and carpet protection, prevents against permanent staining from commonly consumed food and drinks. Sills are easily removed, just blot with a clean cloth and vacuum dust away from fabric and carpets on a regular basis.

What's really impressive about our fabric and carpet nano coating protection, that it contains a anti bacterial protection system, this is a remarkable product inhibiting mould and mildew and protects against harmful bacteria. Many respiratory allergies are triggered by mould and bacteria and because our formula is water based its not only safe for the family and pets its also kinder for our environment.

Amer Alamer CEO of Ceracoat(tm) MENA commented: "We are delighted to be in sole partnership with Alghanim Motors to offer paint and interior protection and restoration to the market place. It is our intention to continue to supply new and innovative aftercare solutions and technically excellent products to Alghanim Motors."

Burgan Bank announces winner of Al-Thuraya Salary Account draw

KUWAIT: Burgan Bank, the second largest in terms of assets, announced yesterday Anoushiravan Nazariyan as the lucky winner of the Al-Thuraya Salary Account monthly draw. The winner was presented with a Nissan Patrol SUV.

The draw rewards new and existing customers who transfer their salary to Burgan Bank by offering them a chance to win a Nissan Patrol SUV every month. With every KD 10 available in the account, the customer receives one chance to enter the draw. The Al-Thuraya account holders have the option to hold money in Kuwaiti Dinar and any other major currencies and can access other account-related services such as standing orders, loans and credit cards and much more.

بنك بروقان
BURGAN BANK
أنت دافعنا
driven by you
40

Established in 1977, Burgan Bank is the youngest commercial Bank and second largest by assets in Kuwait, with a significant focus on the corporate and financial institutions sectors, as well as having a growing retail, and private bank customer base. Burgan Bank has majority owned subsidiaries in the MENAT region supported by one of the largest regional branch networks.

The Bank has continuously improved its performance over the years through an expanded revenue structure, diversified funding sources, and a strong capital base. The adoption of state-of-the-art services and technology has positioned it as a trendsetter in the domestic market and within the MENA region. Burgan Bank's brand has been created on a foundation of real values - of trust, commitment, excellence and progression, to remind us of the high standards to which we aspire. 'People come first' is the foundation on which its products and services are developed.

India doubles compensation for textile loom worker deaths

MUMBAI: India has doubled the compensation for the death of power loom workers in its textile industry as part of a benefits scheme to weed out problems plaguing the labor-intensive sector.

India is one of the largest fabric producers in the world, employing 4.5 million workers for its 2.5 million power loom factories - most of which use old technology that requires workers to manually operate them. A single person, working 12 hours or more, often tends to six to nine looms inside cramped spaces, exposing them to loud noise and injuries from the shuttle that moves at a high speed across the loom.

Nearly 60 percent of the fabric and garments they produce is exported. The government's worker protection scheme, called PowerTex India, was launched in April and includes a helpline for workers and subsidies for employers to upgrade their machinery.

"We have to develop the textile value chain and upgrade the technology to be more competitive," India's textile commissioner Kavita Gupta told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

"All the schemes are aimed at addressing drudgery, to better the working conditions and modernize infrastructure. If the sector has to grow, workers have to grow." The insurance coverage - 200,000 rupees ($3,100) in the case of a natural death and 400,000 rupees for accidental death - was rolled out this month, in addition to disability compensation of 200,000 rupees.

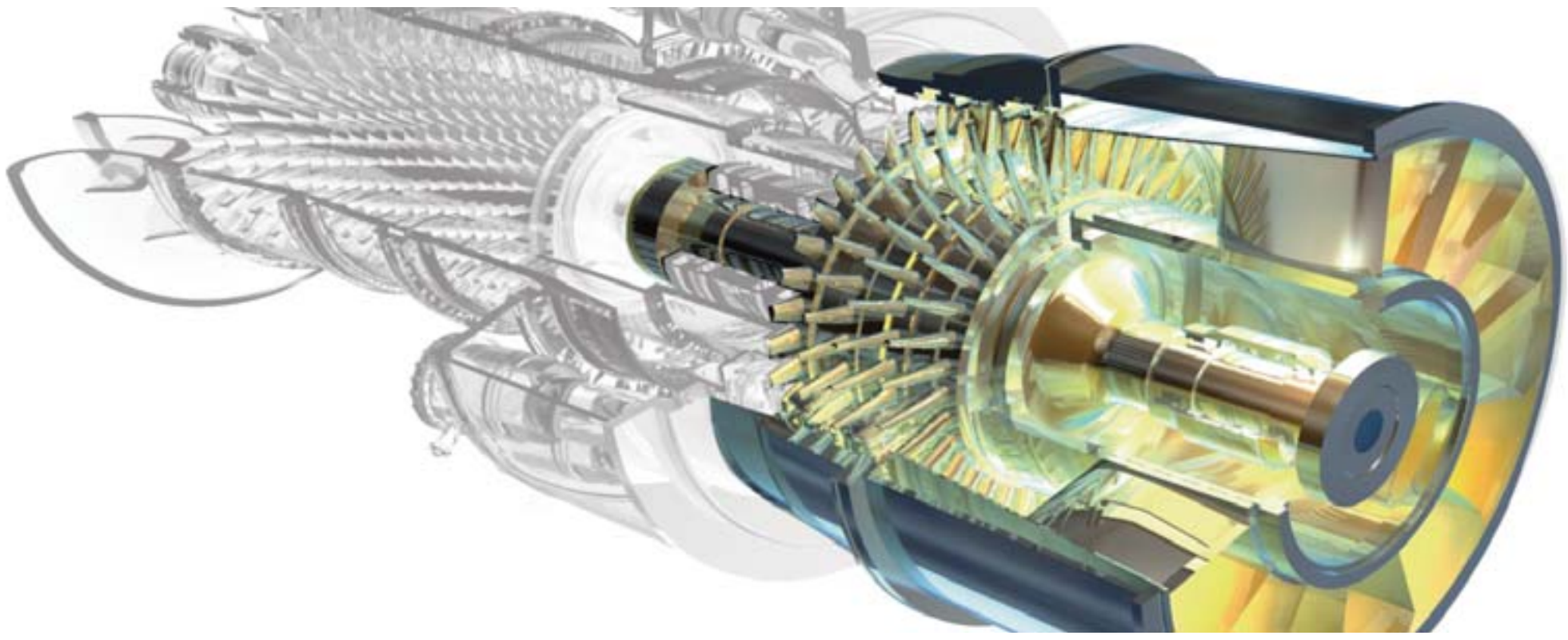
A study by India's National Institute of Occupational Health found that power loom workers are exposed to more than 100 decibels of sound - equivalent to the sound of a jackhammer or lawnmower - putting them at severe risk of hearing loss.

At India's major textile hub - the port city of Surat in western Gujarat state - the local textile office has received more than 40 death compensation claims from families of power loom workers over the last two years. Researchers say workers who are unwell avoid visiting doctors because of long queues that would mean a day's wages lost. In the case of an accident or injury, they pay for treatment themselves.

Many power loom workers are migrants from poor states and send home their earnings - often a family's only source of income, which disappears when these breadwinners die.

Most workers die after they are no longer able to work and have returned to their villages.

Gupta said workers often work long hours because of erratic power supply, an issue the government is trying to address by providing solar panels to factories. About 20,000 workers have signed up for the scheme so far. Campaigners worry enrolment could be low because employers are worried about incurring more costs per worker and therefore reluctant to disclose their staffing. "If power loom units (factories) declare them as employees, they will have to extend other social benefits as required by the law," said Jagdish Patel, labour researcher at Gujarat-based charity People's Training and Research Centre. — Reuters



GE technologies make power more sustainable

By Chidi Emmanuel

KUWAIT: As demand for power continues to grow significantly in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region - up to double the global growth levels in some countries - GE (General Electric) is pushing the frontiers of efficiency in power generation with its latest heavy-duty HA-Class turbine and 9EMax upgrade. The energy powerhouse is transforming the industry with advanced software-defined machines and solutions that are connected, responsive and predictive in order to meet the requirements of a growing population and infrastructure development.

The World Energy Council estimates that the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) will require 100 gigawatts (GW) of additional power over the next ten years, marking an investment of over $50 billion in new power generating capacity. "Across the region, demand for power is increasing at an average annual rate of 8 percent. Governments and power producers need more efficient, flexible and reliable technologies which not only boost generation capacity but also focus on the sustainable use of resources. This is where GE comes in," Abdurrahman Khalidi, the Chief Technology Officer of GE Power for the Middle East & Africa said.

"GE is organized around a global exchange of knowledge, through which each establishment shares and accesses the same technology, markets, structure and intellect. Each invention further fuels innovation and application across our industrial sectors. With people, services and technology, GE delivers better results for customers. GE, which has been present in MENA for over 80 years, is transforming the power sector by ushering in the next era in power generation technology and supporting over half of the power generation in the region," Abdurrahman explained.

Digital technologies

Led by its focus on digital industrial technologies that bring unprecedented levels of efficiency and productivity, GE is supporting its customers in reimagining the future of the power sector. In this, the energy giant also draws on the enormous potential offered by the 'GE Store' - a bustling marketplace of ideas, applications and technology solutions, shared across industries to improve customer outcomes. This is underscored by the launch of GE's H-Class 9HA gas turbine, the world's largest and most efficient heavy duty gas turbine.

9EMax upgrade

GE has also launched its game changing 9EMax gas turbine upgrade for GE 9E units, which delivers more output and efficiency while helping to reduce operating costs. The 9EMax is of special significance to GE's 9E customers in the Middle East and Africa, where extreme heat conditions can create operational challenges. Over 300 of GE's 9E turbines are in operation in the region, delivering more than 37 GW of power. Irrespective of their age, the 9EMax upgrade ensures that the gas turbines remain efficient, flexible and reliable.

"General Electric is driving the digital industrial transformation of the power sector in the region through advanced technologies that enable our partners to achieve unprecedented levels of efficiency and productivity. The H-class gas turbine and the new 9EMax upgrade are especially suited for the MENAT (Middle East and North Africa and Turkey) region, where plant operators are increasingly focused on efficiency, flexibility and asset use optimization," Joseph Anis, President & CEO of GE's Power Services business in the Middle East & Africa said.

"9EMax can operate at partial loads, making it ideal for power producers looking to add renewables to their energy mix. It also includes an array of digital solutions to boost operational reliability, improve combustion operations and manage emissions. In addition, the software solutions help offset degradation between maintenance intervals and operating challenges on hot days," Robert Colwell Senior Product Manager, Gas Turbine Technology Power Services explained.

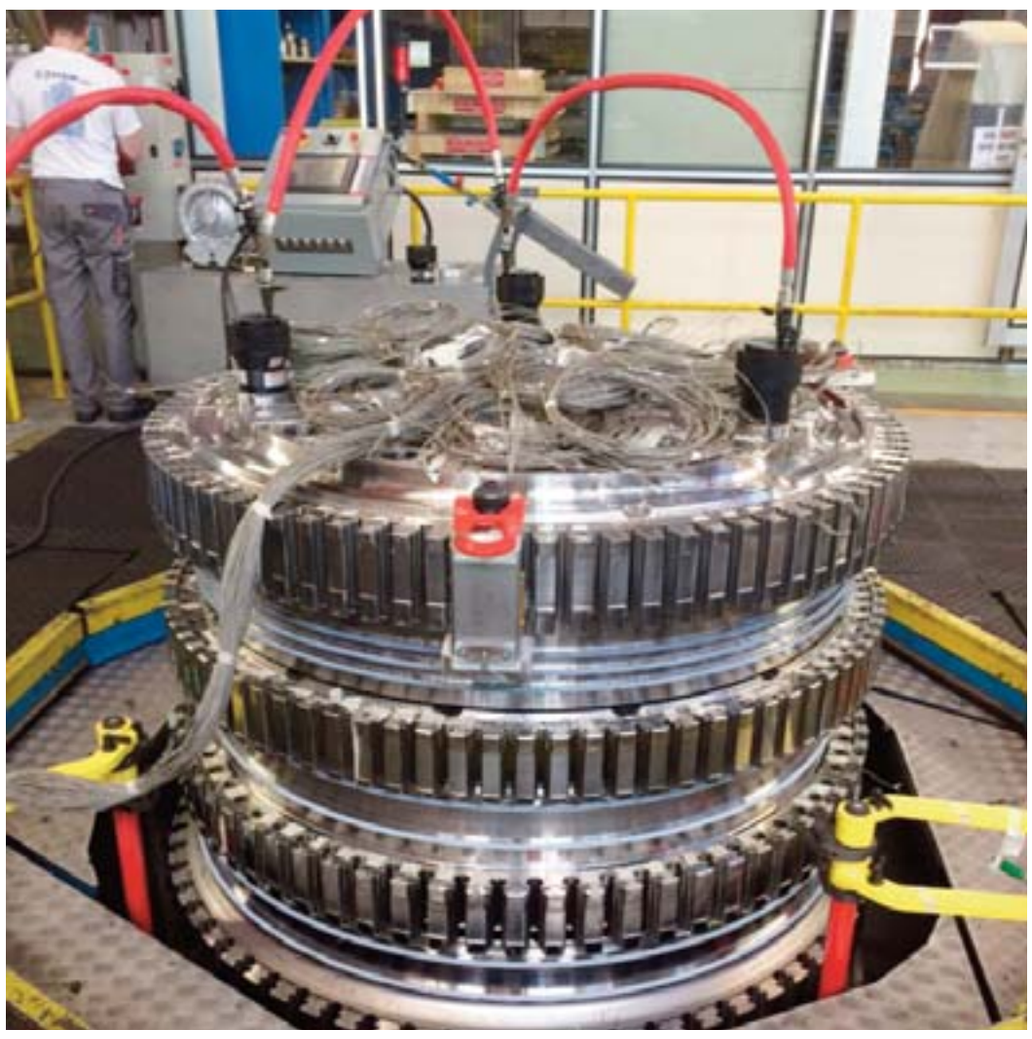
A game-changer

The 9EMax upgrade has completed initial validation testing at a utility plant in Asia and is commercially available for 9E gas turbine customers around the world. 9EMax, part of GE's Fleet360 platform of total plant solutions, was developed utilizing GE's deep domain experience from its global 9E fleet of more than 700 units and with insights from more than 30 million hours of operating data from its installed base.

The combination of this data and expertise along with GE's FastWorks solution development methodology helped ensure 9EMax was designed with customer needs in mind. It resets the operating clock to zero on critical 9E assets that are facing the end of their design life. For younger units, it represents a new alternative to flange-to-flange (F2F) replacements, boosting efficiency by about 4 percentage points and output up to 143 MW with respect to the previous 9E.03 turbine module. With extended maintenance intervals and higher reliability, 9EMax is a cost-effective solution for game changing operational efficiency.

"9EMax Gas Turbine Solution delivers a game-changing performance leap through a new 4-stage turbine module design that can be installed within the 9E's existing footprint. It can help 9E turbine users to cut annual fuel costs by as much as $5 million, while creating the potential for up to $6 million in additional revenue. It also extends the maintenance intervals by delivering up to 32,000 hours or 900 starts maintenance intervals - equivalent to about four years of typical continuous plant operations," Colwell explained.

The validation test monitored and mapped the unit's behavior at typical operating parameters. During these tests, over 1,000 pieces of instrumentations were used to collect data and improve the performance of the machine. These sensors collected over 14 terabytes of data to highlight some of the 9EMax's capabilities: the validation test found that the 9EMax upgrade can increase turbine output up to 143 megawatts (MW) in simple-cycle operation and up to 210 MW in a combined-cycle configuration; it can also achieve up to 37 percent efficiency in simple cycle and up to 53.5 per cent efficiency in combined-cycle configuration.



GE has supported the development of MENAT for over 80 years. It is committed to the region's progress and prosperity through its waves of change and growth, strengthening the digital industrial ecosystem in the country. The company has a presence in 24 countries across MENAT, with more than 9,000 employees, serving over 3,000 customers. For more than 40 years, GE has been supporting Kuwait's infrastructural development needs through public and private partnerships.

Revolutionary H-Class

The 9HA is the result of a $2 billion investment by GE Power. It offers more than 63 percent combined cycle efficiency, leading to the remarkably cost-effective conversion of fuel to electricity to help meet increasingly dynamic power demands. This world record-setting efficiency is delivered with the help of GE's Digital Power Plant capabilities, which help to unlock power that had previously been inaccessible. Capabilities, including the digital control system, use real-time data to deliver better plant outcomes with stable and efficient operations, while providing valuable predictive insights for higher reliability and optimization. The 9HA is a great example of the GE Store at work, as it is comprised of advanced technologies developed across the GE portfolio. Including a simplified air-cooled architecture, advanced materials, and proven operability and reliability, GE's 9HA units deliver exceptionally low life cycle costs per megawatt.

The economies of scale created by this high-power density gas turbine are unprecedented. Moreover, the turbine offers industry-leading flexibility. It allows customers to maintain stable power production and to reliably accommodate grid variations through quick start up, rapid load changes and other features. It can go from start to full load in less than 30 minutes. This enables the HA to deliver reliable and flexible operations not just for large power plants and utilities but also for captive power plants or small grids. It also enables the greater use of renewable energy by enabling quick responses to fluctuations in grid demand and weather changes.

GE's 9HA also accommodates both gas and liquid fuels with wide gas variability including high ethane and liquefied natural gas (LNG). Its fuel flexibility is an ideal fit for the region. With two 50Hz models available (the 9HA.01 unit at 429 MW and the 9HA.02 unit at 519 MW), power plant operators can choose the gas turbine that best fits their needs. Manufactured at GE's Belfort Power Generation Center of Excellence, the technology recently helped set a record for powering the world's most efficient combined-cycle power plant based on an achieved efficiency rate of up to 62.22 percent at EDF's Bouchain plant in France. The Bouchain plant, which officially began operations on June 17, 2016, is also the world's first combined-cycle plant equipped with GE's HA turbine.

The Belfort center is the only producer of medium- and high-power gas turbines in France, and is a global center of excellence for 50 hertz gas turbines. An investment of over $200 million by GE, it has more than 4,000 employees, including 1,800 experts capable of developing advanced simple or combined cycle power plants for customers all over the world. In 1959, Belfort manufactured the first GE-licensed gas turbine. More than 1,800 gas turbine units have been manufactured at the facility to date. In May 2015, GE's record breaking 9HA gas turbine was officially launched at Belfort, where the first unit was built for the EDF Bouchain power plant.

In addition to having commenced operations in Bouchain, GE's HA turbine is being actively sought out by power plant operators in the MENA and Pakistan region. For example, Aluminum Bahrain (Alba) has placed an order for three GE HA gas turbines to power the world's largest single-site smelter. In further localization capabilities, the GE Manufacturing & Technology Center in Dammam now has expanded competencies to locally manufacture the H-class heavy duty turbines.

GE in Kuwait

Since the early 1970's, GE has been a strong partner to Kuwait's public and private sectors - supporting Kuwait's infrastructural needs in the aviation, power, water, oil and gas industries. As a committed partner, GE supports the government in achieving Kuwait's Vision 2035 by offering innovative technological solutions that meet the country's vision and strategy to drive growth. With more than 200 employees based in country, GE is a dedicated partner, in Kuwait, for Kuwait.

Record-breaking expansion

GE's Technology Center in Kuwait houses a large generator - lighting up homes and fueling minds. In one part of this multifaceted, multi-specialty technology center, GE Power uses the power plant equipment to provide advanced, hands-on training and maintenance practice to power plant engineers from Kuwait and the wider region.

In another section of this unique, state-of-the-art facility, GE experts deliver a wide range of technical training programs, using computer simulators and testing labs to improve understanding of power generation operations and troubleshooting methodologies, reflecting the company's strategic commitment to developing the skills and capabilities of Kuwaiti students and professionals. GE is providing key technology to a record-breaking expansion of the Sulaibiya Wastewater Treatment and Reclamation Plant - which is the largest-of-its-kind membrane technology facility in the world.

Powering over 35%

Through its collaboration with the Ministry of Electricity and Water, GE powers 37% of Kuwait's electricity by supplying its advanced gas turbines to six different power plants across the country. With an expected increase of 10 gigawatts of electricity demand by 2022, GE will continue to support the government's efforts to meet the country's growing energy needs. lighting up Kuwait efficiently.

In order to drive the overall efficiency of the Sabiya CCGT Power Station, powered by 6 9FA gas turbines, Sabiya recently completed the purchase of 220 LED lamps to provide an energy-efficient solution for the compartment lighting project. This solution contributes to the reduction of carbon emissions and maintenance costs as well as improves visibility and safety for station employees working in low light conditions. As a pioneer in LED technology, GE Lighting is bringing the latest in lighting solutions to Kuwait that will enhance operational and energy efficiency and reduce emissions, thus meeting the sustainability vision of Kuwait.

Healthcare technologies

Some of GE's latest technologies will equip specialized Kuwaiti facilities such as the new imaging department of the 150-bed Sabah Al Ahmad Cardiac Center which will open in 2017. It will include GE's Revolution GSI, one of the latest CT technologies designed especially for high quality imaging of the heart, helping to cater for the increased prevalence of cardiac disease in Kuwait. Revolution GSI images allow healthcare professionals to make more confident decisions and may help to prevent more expensive invasive procedures, particularly for cardiac patients with high or irregular heart rates.

GE Healthcare will also provide integrated oncology solutions for a new wing of the Kuwait Cancer Control Hospital (KCCC), the third biggest oncology center in the world, with 650 beds, due to open in 2017. This will include the Discovery PET/CT 710, a hybrid imaging system which combines PET, used to record molecular activity which is indicative of rapid tumor growth, with CT which focuses on anatomic location or the physical size of a tumor. Today over 800 GE Healthcare products and technologies are deployed in hospitals and clinics across Kuwait.

Connecting Kuwait to the world

Today, GE and partnership engines move more than 1.8 million passengers through Kuwait each year. With more than 210 engines powering more than half of the country's total fleet, every 30 minutes sees a GE-powered airplane takeoff into the skies of Kuwait.

About GE Power

GE Power is a world leader in power generation with deep domain expertise to help customers deliver electricity from a wide spectrum of fuel sources. The energy powerhouse transforms the electricity industry with digital power plant, the world's largest and most efficient gas turbine, full balance of plant, upgrade and service solutions as well as our data-leveraging software. Its innovative technologies and digital offerings help make power more affordable, reliable, accessible and sustainable.

All respond to gene therapy in new blood cancer study

CHICAGO: Doctors are reporting unprecedented success from a new cell and gene therapy for multiple myeloma, a blood cancer that's on the rise. Although it's early and the study is small - 35 people - every patient responded and all but two were in some level of remission within two months. In a second study of nearly two dozen patients, everyone above a certain dose responded.

Experts at an American Society of Clinical Oncology conference in Chicago, where the results were announced Monday, say it's a first for multiple myeloma and rare for any cancer treatment to have such success. Chemotherapy helps 10 to 30 percent of patients; immune system drugs, 35 to 40 percent at best, and some gene-targeting drugs, 70 to 80 percent, "but you don't get to 100," said Dr. Len Lichtenfeld, deputy chief medical officer of the American Cancer Society. "These are impressive results" but time will tell if they last, he said.

About the disease

Multiple myeloma affects plasma cells, which make antibodies to fight infection. More than 30,000 cases occur each year in the United States, and more than 115,000 worldwide. It's the second fastest growing cancer for men and the third for women, rising 2 to 3 percent per year, according to the National Cancer Institute. About 60,000 to 70,000 Americans have it now.

Nine new drugs have been approved for it since 2000 but they're not cures; only about half of U.S. patients live five years after diagnosis. With cell therapy, "I can't say we may get a cure but at least we bring hope of that possibility," said Dr Frank Fan. He is chief scientific officer of Nanjing Legend Biotech, a Chinese company that tested the treatment with doctors at Xi'an Jiaotong University.

How it works

The treatment, called CAR-T therapy, involves filtering a patient's blood to remove immune system soldiers called T cells. These are altered in a lab to contain a gene that targets cancer and then given back to the patient intravenously. Doctors call it a "living drug"- a one-time treatment to permanently alter cells that multiply in the body into an army to fight cancer. It's shown promise against some leukemias and lymphomas, but this is a new type being tried for multiple myeloma, in patients whose cancer worsened despite many other treatments.

The studies

In the Chinese study, 19 of 35 patients are long enough past treatment to judge whether they are in complete remission, and 14 are. The other five had at least a partial remission, with their cancer greatly diminished. Some are more than a year past treatment with no sign of disease. Most patients had a group of side effects common with this treatment, including fever, low blood pressure and trouble breathing. Only two cases were severe and all were treatable and temporary, doctors said.

The second study was done in the US by Bluebird Bio and Celgene, using a cell treatment developed by the National Cancer Institute. It tested four different dose levels of cells in a total of 21 patients. Eighteen are long enough from treatment to judge effectiveness, and all 15 who got an adequate amount of cells had a response. Four have reached full remission so far, and some are more than a year past treatment.

What experts say

The results are "very remarkable" not just for how many responded but how well, said Dr. Kenneth Anderson of Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Boston. "We need to be looking for how long these cells persist" and keep the cancer under control, he said. Dr Carl June, a University of Pennsylvania researcher who received the conference's top science award for his early work on CAR-T therapy, said "it's very rare" to see everyone respond to a treatment.

His lab also had this happen - all 22 children testing a new version of CAR-T for leukemia responded, his colleagues reported at the conference. "The first patients we treated in 2010 haven't relapsed," June said. Dr Michael Sabel of the University of Michigan called the treatment "revolutionary." "This is really the epitome of personalized medicine," extending immune therapy to more types of patients, he said.

Next steps

Legend Biotech plans to continue the study in up to 100 people in China and plans a study in the U.S. early next year. The treatment is expected to cost $200,000 to $300,000, and "who's going to pay for that is a big issue," Fan said. "The manufacturing process is very expensive and you can't scale up. It's individualized. You cannot make a batch" as is done with a drug, he said. Nick Leschly, Bluebird's chief executive, said the next phase of his company's study will test what seems the ideal dose in 20 more people. — AP

Climate change raises risk: Are inland bridges too low?

DES MOINES: A century-old train trestle stands as one of the trophies of Des Moines' push to spruce up its downtown. Bicyclists and pedestrians pose for pictures beside the brightly painted beams of the Red Bridge and gather on viewing platforms overlooking the Des Moines River. But little more than a decade after it was restored, crews went back to the site with a crane to hoist the span 41/2 feet (1.4 meters) higher, at a cost of $3 million, after experts concluded that the river's flooding risk was nearly double earlier estimates. Climate change was likely to blame.

"It was like a bomb was dropped off in our lap," City Engineer Pam Cooksey said of the revised flood forecasts from the Army Corps of Engineers. The findings suggested that the bridge could act as a dam during bad storms, sending waves of backed-up floodwater into the refurbished business district. Climate change is often seen as posing the greatest risk to coastal areas. But the nation's inland cities face perils of their own, including more intense storms and more frequent flooding. Even as President Donald Trump has announced his intention for the US to withdraw from a global climate agreement, many of the nation's river communities are responding to climate change by raising or replacing bridges that suddenly seem too low to stay safely above water.

The reconstructed bridges range from multi-lane structures that handle heavy traffic loads to small rural spans traversed by country school buses and farmers shuttling between their fields. The bridges are being raised even in states such as Texas, where political leaders have long questioned whether climate change is real. In Milwaukee, bridges have been raised as part of $400 million in flood-management projects across a metro area with 28 communities. In Reno, Nevada, officials spent about $18 million to replace a bridge over the Truckee River last year and plan to replace three more after flood-danger projections were increased by up to 15 percent. Because the cities are inland, "A lot of these are not the kind of places that people are used to thinking of being in the forefront of climate change," said Jim Schwab, manager of the Hazards Planning Center at the American Planning Association, which is working with nearly a dozen cities on flood-mitigation options. Many communities are "still feeling their way through this particular problem," he said.

No one tracks how many communities are raising bridges or replacing them with higher ones, but the Federal Emergency Management Agency says it's now routinely providing money for this purpose, although no dollar total is available. Typically, more than 1,500 bridges are reconstructed each year for an assortment of reasons. Schwab said he's sure hundreds and possibly thousands of bridge-raising projects have been completed recently or are planned. A cursory check by the AP in a handful of states found at least 20 locations where bridges have been raised or construction will begin soon.

Flooding risks

FEMA is now finalizing a rule that states that floods "are expected to be more frequent and more severe over the next century due in part to the projected effects of climate change." That could mean higher costs for a country that sustained more than $260 billion in flood damage between 1980 and 2013. Given the Trump administration's skepticism of climate change, however, a FEMA spokeswoman says the agency "has not determined what its next action will be" on the rule. The Corps of Engineers did not respond to requests for information on cities where flood risks have been reassessed.

Increasing humidity from the more than 1.5 degree increase in global temperatures since 1880 has resulted in more intense downpours, according to David R. Easterling, director of the national climate assessment unit at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. "It causes day after day of rainfall, and that leads to flooding," Easterling said. In some cases, a city's 100-year flood could be seen as twice what it was 40 years ago, with double the risk, as it was for Des Moines. A 100-year flood is the worst flood that can be expected to happen over a century. It has a 1 percent chance of occurring in any given year.

River level forecasts have increased in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, since tropic-like rainstorms in 2008 caused the normally placid Cedar River to climb higher than anyone thought possible, eventually topping the previous record flood by 11 feet. More than 1,100 blocks in Iowa's second-largest city wound up underwater. Afterward, the Corps of Engineers raised Cedar Rapids' projections for a 100-year flood by 8 percent. As part of a massive flood-control project, the city decided to raise its Eighth Avenue Bridge by 14 feet, putting it 28 feet above the average water surface.

"What used to be the norm is no longer the norm," said Rob Davis, the city's flood-control program manager. "The norm is much higher." Elsewhere, the college town of Iowa City plans to add about 5 feet of clearance with a new bridge over the Iowa River, and the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District raised a bridge over the Kinnickinnic River to prevent the waterway from backing up amid downpours.

Disconnected from politics

Similar projects are planned in Hobart, Indiana, and Rockford, Illinois, where higher river levels have been projected. The preparations for climate change seem oddly disconnected from the political debate about the issue. In Texas, where politicians including Sen. Ted Cruz have questioned whether the climate is growing warmer and if humans have caused the change, Austin has raised two bridges in the past five years and plans to improve three more stream crossings, said Pam Kearfott, a supervising engineer in the city's watershed protection department.

Officials "try to stick to the technical basis for change" and ignore the politics, she said.

San Antonio is among other Texas cities that have raised bridges in anticipation of greater dangers. Sterling Burnett, a research fellow at the Heartland Institute, a think tank that promotes skepticism about human-caused climate change, said the new flooding predictions and climate outlook could be exaggerated, but he doesn't begrudge local governments for raising bridges and making other preparations. "They have to work with the data given to them and make decisions," Burnett said.

In the West, small communities in the Ross Valley north of San Francisco anticipate worse seasonal flooding from climate change. They plan to replace five bridges that are now too low, at a cost of more than $10 million. As Cooper Martin, who heads the National League of Cities' Sustainable Cities Institute, puts it, "With the changing climate, cities have to do something." —AP

DES MOINES: In this March 28, 2017, photo, the Red Bridge pedestrian bridge is seen over the Des Moines River. —AP

BEIJING: California Gov. Jerry Brown, left, chats with China's Science and Technology Minister Wan Gang as they attend the Clean Energy Ministerial International Forum on Electric Vehicle Pilot Cities and Industrial Development, at a hotel. —AP

California Gov Brown says US will stay in climate fight

BEIJING: With President Donald Trump pulling the US out of the Paris climate accord, China and California signed an agreement yesterday to work together on reducing emissions, as the state's governor warned that "disaster still looms" without urgent action. Gov Jerry Brown told The Associated Press at an international clean energy conference in Beijing that Trump's decision to pull the US out of the Paris agreement will ultimately prove only a temporary setback.

For now, he said, China, European countries and individual US states will fill the gap left by the federal government's move to abdicate leadership on the issue. "Nobody can stay on the sidelines. We can't afford any dropouts in the tremendous human challenge to make the transition to a sustainable future," Brown said. "Disaster still looms and we've got to make the turn." Brown later held a closed-door meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping, during which the governor's office said the two pledged to expand trade between California and China with an emphasis on so-called green technologies that could help address climate change. Trump's decision to leave the Paris accord has drawn heavy criticism within the US and internationally, including in China, which swiftly recommitted itself to the agreement forged with the administration of former president Barack Obama. Trump argued that the Paris agreement favors emerging economies such as China's and India's at the expense of US workers.

Sidestepping Trump

Yesterday's agreement between California and China's Ministry of Science and Technology effectively sidestepped Trump's move, bringing about alignment on an issue of rising global importance between the world's second-largest economy - China - with California, which has the largest economy of any US state and the eighth largest in the world.

Brown signed similar collaboration agreements over the past several days with leaders in two Chinese provinces, Jiangsu and Sichuan. Like the Paris accord, the deals are all nonbinding. They call for investments in low-carbon energy sources, cooperation on climate research and the commercialization of cleaner technologies. The agreements do not establish new emission reduction goals.

The US has long been a leader in the clean energy arena, driving innovations in electric cars, renewable power and other sectors of the industry. California, with some of the strictest climate controls in the nation, has been at the forefront of the sector. China in recent years overtook the U.S. as the world leader in renewable power development. But it's also struggled to integrate its sprawling wind and solar facilities into an electricity grid still dominated by coal-fueled power plants.

Public pressure

At the same time, Chinese leaders face growing public pressure at home to reduce the health-damaging smog that blankets many urban areas. China is by far the world's largest user of coal, which accounts for almost two-thirds of its energy use and has made it the No. 1 emitter of climate-changing greenhouse gases.

Communist Party leaders pledged that greenhouse gas emissions will peak no later than 2030 under the Paris pact, and start to fall after then. They have canceled the planned construction of more than 100 new coal-fired power plants and plan to invest at least $360 billion in green-energy projects by the end of the decade. The nation's consumption of coal fell in 2016 for a third consecutive year, but have rebounded slightly in 2017. It could meet its 2030 target a decade early.

Trump Energy Secretary Rick Perry also is attending this week's energy meeting in Beijing. Observers say delegates from other countries will be listening closely to the former Texas governor to gauge how Trump administration policies will shape global energy trends. During a Tuesday forum devoted to capturing carbon dioxide emitted from coal plants and other large industrial sources, Perry said his agency was pursuing an "all of the above" strategy that includes research intended to spur innovation for coal, nuclear, renewables and other fuels. He left the event without taking questions.

Perry is from a state that is known for its oil production but that's also emerged as a leader in renewables development. Texas has some of the largest wind farms in the country and a fast-expanding solar sector. Trump is a strong advocate of boosting U.S. fossil fuel industries, in particular coal mining. Cheap natural gas and tighter pollution restrictions toppled coal from its dominant position in the US power sector during Obama's tenure. Experts say it's unlikely to regain that position anytime soon, regardless of what Trump does.

Without mentioning Trump by name, Brown told attendees at a forum on electric vehicles that "there are still people in powerful places who are resisting reality, who are resisting the obvious science that we know governs our lives." Later, when asked by the AP what could prompt the US to return to the forefront of climate change efforts, Brown replied, "Science, facts, the world, the marketplace." —AP

Swarm: Thousands of rats swarm Myanmar villages

YANGON: Thousands of rats have descended on villages on an island in southern Myanmar, a local official said yesterday, in what some have taken to be an ill omen of impending disaster. Residents of Haingyi Island, one of the larger islands in the Irrawaddy Delta, have been battling the plague of rodents since the critters scurried into their villages over the weekend. Short of pied pipers, desperate authorities have resorted to paying residents 50 kyat (four US cents) for each dead animal in a bid to contain the outbreak.

"More than 4,000 rats have been killed since they tried to enter the villages," regional MP Phyo Zaw Shwe told AFP. "According to traditional beliefs, these animals can predict bad weather. So people here are also worried about floods or earthquakes." Studies by Japanese scientists have shown mice and rats are sensitive to electromagnetic waves similar to what often occurs before a major earthquake-although there has been no notable seismic activity in Myanmar the last few days.

Pictures shared on social media showed locals collecting piles of the dead animals. Phyo Zaw Shwe said some of the bodies had been sent away for testing for disease, but nothing had been found so far. A villager in Than Cho Tan village told local media residents were killing the animals with "sticks, slingshots, and rocks". "This evening, the rats entered our village as well and so far we've managed to kill over 800," he was quoted as saying by News Watch.

Myanmar is no stranger to rodent mobs. Chin State, in the northwest, has repeatedly been hit by swarms of rats who come to gorge on bamboo fruit, which only appear once every 50-or-so years. In the latest iteration in 2008, hundreds of people reportedly died when the rats turned from devouring the fruit to eating the crops of the local villagers. — AFP

'Ramadan Nutrition Plan' app helps diabetics in Ramadan

KUWAIT CITY: Continuing efforts to advance diabetes management strategies during Ramadan in the region, the Diabetes & Ramadan International Alliance in partnership with International Diabetes Federation (IDF) and the Gulf Group for the Study of Diabetes, convened for the 5thDAR International Alliance congress, with the support of an unrestricted educational grant from Sanofi. A cornerstone of Ramadan diabetes management is patient education, and experts emphasized the crucial role of pre-Ramadan counseling by HCPs to reduce health risks associated with fasting, backed by clinical evidence and research presented from various countries.

"Last year, we released the 'Guidelines on Diabetes Management during Ramadan', to provide a universal direction for all those involved in working with patients. This year, the consolidated review of our work was published in Elsevier's 'Diabetes Research and Clinical Practice' medical journal; a first of its kind article that provides evidence based strategies to enhance the management of Diabetes during Ramadan. Our long term goal is to bring about a progressive behavior change among fasting patients and communities," said Dr Mohamed Hassanein, Chairman of Diabetes & Ramadan International Alliance, Consultant in Endocrinology.

Backing up with research

A large amount of research was presented to back up the guidelines published last year. Experts discussed the bio-chemical (cholesterol, kidney function, glucose control) and bio-metric (blood pressure and weight) changes that take place in the body during the Ramadan fasting period. Studies demonstrated how there was no significant change in a patients' overall health, with a marginal improvement in blood pressure, when diabetes is managed effectively.

However, this information cannot be generalized, as some patients can improve in health, while some might get worse. A high emphasis was placed on the importance of consulting with a doctor to work on an individual's personal interest and medical history, and prescribe the best course of treatment and action. A study presented by Dr Fatheya Alawadi, Head of the Endocrine Department, Dubai Hospital on 'Attitudes and behavior of people with Diabetes during Ramadan', highlighted how patients benefited from proper pre-Ramadan education and counseling.

During Ramadan, there is a dramatic change in eating patterns compared with other months of the year. Dietary recommendations need to be individualized and tailored to patients' lifestyle requirements, age, and other medical needs. This makes dietary advice critically important in the pre-Ramadan assessment. Accordingly, the DAR International Alliance has developed the Ramadan Nutrition Plan (RNP), a web-based tool designed to help HCPs in delivering patient-specific medical nutrition therapy (MNT) during Ramadan fasting.

Cultural and regional differences can make it challenging for HCPs to deliver individualized patient-applicable dietary advice. To assist in this regard, the RNP includes meal plans for different countries and in different languages. Meal plans are categorized in several daily caloric targets. This may aid HCPs and patients to plan daily meals with the aim of maintaining body weight if they are lean, or reducing body weight if they are overweight or obese. The RNP has been adopted for use in many countries and it may allow patients with limited access to HCPs to construct a healthy eating plan for Ramadan.

High risk patients

"A lack of knowledge and awareness on safe fasting measures for diabetics mean advice and guidance provided by HCPs may be inadequate, especially in Muslim-minority countries. For example, in a survey of HCPs in the US, only one-third of physicians actively enquired whether their Muslim patients intended to fast during Ramadan, and many did not feel comfortable managing these patients. Embracing and utilizing advances in technology may be one way to improve accessibility to information about management of diabetes during Ramadan, especially for people in remote regions," said Prof Adel Al Sayed, Chair of the IDF MENA Region.

"Patients from high risk groups include - Type I Diabetes patients, Type II patients on insulin therapy, pregnant woman with gestational diabetes and patients with kidney disease. People need to understand that they are not obligated to fast, if they are high risk patients. If they wish to fast, it is their responsibility to identify their own level of risk, and try to address all possible measures to minimize the risk in consultation with their physician. This includes - the choice of treatment, the timing of treatment, the dose during Ramadan, when to monitor blood glucose levels, frequency of monitoring, and most importantly, to accept the possibility of breaking the fast, as soon as the person notices that his or her glucose level is too low or too high, even if they do not feel the symptoms," added Dr. Mohamed Hassanein.

"Structured diabetes education is all about giving patients the knowledge to make informed decisions regarding their behavior and enabling them to effectively self-manage their condition. Several barriers to guideline implementation originate within the individual (the patient or HCP) or within the wider cultures of the community or healthcare system. Key solutions to overcoming such barriers include raising awareness on issues surrounding diabetes, giving proper direction on religious tenets, and providing effective, socio-culturally sensitive patient education. Following a highly individualized management plan and close follow-up is an essential approach to avoid development of health complications among patients," expressed Dr Monira Al Arouj, Consultant Diabetologist, Dasman Diabetes Institute, Kuwait.

Dr Mohamed Hassanein, Chairman of Diabetes & Ramadan International Alliance

"At Sanofi, we hope to sustain all efforts to support the Diabetes & Ramadan International Alliance in partnership with IDF and Emirates Diabetes Society, towards ensuring that we all can collaboratively identify and address challenges associated with management of diabetes during Ramadan. We recognize the need for continued scientific research in this area to build up practical experiences that will in turn lead to significant positive health outcomes for people globally," said Jean-Paul Scheuer, Country Chair& General Manager, Sanofi Gulf.

India's Adani to start work on mine near Great Barrier Reef

SYDNEY: Indian mining giant Adani yesterday said it will start work on a huge US$16 billion coal project that environmentalists warn will damage Australia's Great Barrier Reef. Billionaire chairman Gautam Adani said in Townsville that the board had made its "final investment decision" which marked the "official start" of the Carmichael coal mine, destined to be one of the world's largest.

Gautam Adani

The controversial project-the biggest investment in Australia ever by an Indian company — encountered numerous regulatory and legal hurdles, leading to seven years of delays, with a lease finally granted last year. It has also been slammed by environmentalists who say it will hurt the reef, a World Heritage-listed biodiverse site stretching along Australia's northeastern coast, which is already threatened by climate change.

"Now the time for waiting is over and the time for doing is beginning," said Federal Resources Minister Matt Canavan. The development proposes exporting coal to India from a massive open-cut and underground coal mine 160 kilometers northwest of Clermont in central Queensland, home to the reef, via a 189-kilometre rail link to port. The conglomerate, which had delayed final approval due to uncertainty over royalty payments, forecasts it will produce 60 million tons of thermal coal a year for export. It also estimates it will generate 10,000 direct and indirect jobs, with pre-construction works starting in the September quarter of 2017.

Adani hit out at activists who have challenged the project for years, accusing them of exploiting legal loopholes to stall development. "We have been challenged by activists in the courts, in inner city streets, and even outside banks that have not even been approached to finance the project," he said. "We are still facing activists. But we are committed to this project. We are committed to regional Queensland and we are committed to addressing energy poverty in India."

Canavan also brushed off activist concerns, saying they should remember the "quarter billion Indians who don't have electricity at all". "It is about providing a benefit to those people to have electricity and bring them from the suffering of poverty and disadvantage," he said. "That does a lot more for the world, our globe, our environment, than anyone tweeting in air-conditioned rooms in Sydney who might be opposed to it."

Earlier this year a group of prominent Australians urged Adani to abandon the mine. Signatories to an open letter included former Australian Test cricket captains Ian and Greg Chappell, Pulitzer Prize-winning author Geraldine Brooks, Australian-based British comedian Ben Elton, and rock group Midnight Oil.

They cited public opposition, risks to miners' health, the potential impact on the reef, and India's reputation as reasons not to proceed. Environmentalists said yesterday Adani had yet to reveal how it would fund the mine, with numerous banks ruling out finance for the project. Greenpeace Australia called it "toxic" and a "disaster for the climate", while WWF-Australia chief Dermot O'Gorman warned of a risk to the reef.—AFP

App helps Mali skin doctors reach out to distant patients

BAMAKO: In Mali, where skin conditions are widespread and skin doctors are scarce, physicians have turned to technology to treat patients remotely. From his Bamako office, Professor Ousmane Faye, one of a small number of dermatologists in Mali, examines photos of an arm and a torso afflicted by a skin pigmentation disorder. The photos arrived the same day the patient visited his doctor in Koulikoro, 57 kilometers away.

Faye's pilot programme, in place for 18 months, allows general practitioners working in even the most remote areas to consult with a specialist. In a country that has around one dermatologist per million people, that is an invaluable aid. For in Mali, according to estimates, nearly 30 percent of the population suffers from skin diseases, such as leprosy, psoriasis and eczema.

"The patient from Koulikoro suffers from hypochromia lesions with some healthy patches of skin," says Faye, head of dermatology at Mali's national disease control centre (CNAM). "Two months ago, the patient had treatment that made the lesions worse," he added. By this he meant traditional remedies. But thanks to the "Bogou" app, designed by a Malian developer, the professor can bring his specialist knowledge to bear on the information sent over by general practitioners, using his computer or even his mobile phone.

Using a secure platform protected with a password, Faye says he can see images posted by the general practitioner in Koulikoro. "Then I can confirm the doctor's diagnosis and even give advice." Provided clear images are available, Faye's line of work is particularly well-suited to remote diagnosis, as dermatology is based on observation by the human eye, he explains. "There is a triple benefit: time, money and training", for the doctors out in the field, he says.

KOULIKOURO: A doctor of a health centre in Koulikoro takes pictures of a patient suffering from a skin disease. — AFP

Next-day treatment

Out in Banamba, about 140 kilometers northeast of Bamako, patient Fatoumata Konare has reaped the benefits. "It had been itching for a long time," she says of her skin condition. Her doctor took photos when she went in to see him, sent them on, and told her to return the next day for a prescription. "I went to buy the pills and the lotion and was healed. I don't need to go anywhere else, everything was taken care of in Banamba," she says.

The Pierre Fabre foundation which is financing the program, said the results have been "solid", with 175 complex cases diagnosed remotely. The foundation promotes the use of new technologies to improve diagnosis and treatment of skin diseases in Africa, and the idea is to expand the project from Mali to other African countries. Already, 20 doctors and nurses have been trained with a goal of extending the service throughout Mali over the next two years. They will first focus on reaching the most disadvantaged and remote areas that have internet coverage. — AFP

Cartier's new iconic scents

These exclusive dainty miniatures serve as a shimmering showcase to the most iconic scents of the collection: Oud & Oud, Oud & Santal and Oud & Musc. The Moucharaby patterned damask that envelops the bottles honors the creative ties between Cartier and the Orient, whose myths and icons were reinterpreted by the jeweler in the Art Deco period. Today these aesthetic influences once again intertwine, each a little richer for the exchange. True Cartier elegance is referenced as the design of a geometric motif brooch dating from 1909 is married with the magic and twinkling charms of the Orient. To nurture the grand tradition of dispatching art de vivre to the four corners of the globe, this olfactory triptych is stowed in a travel presentation case specially designed by Cartier.

PAAET's College of Nursing receive new applicants

Assistant dean of PAAET's College of Nursing, Dr Ali Al-Hajraf said that the college was currently preparing to receive new applicants. Al-Hajraf also stressed that one of the five PAAET colleges, the college of nursing provided students with up to date nursing training programs to graduate as highly competent nurses well-prepared to work in local areas. Further, Al-Hajraf said that the college had conducted so many studies concerning nationalizing the nursing sector. On her part, assistant dean for students' affairs, Dr Lila Al-Shatti explained that the college provides four programs and added that the college also signed a memo of understanding with KOC to provide graduates with job opportunities.

BEC Bonanza

Bahrain Exchange Company (BEC), specialists in worldwide money transfers and currency exchange, have launched their latest promotional campaign 'BEC Bonanza'. Fronted by the company's Brand Ambassador Bob, the BEC Buddy, the campaign will consist of 5 prize draws taking place on the 18th June, 9th and 27th July, 16th August and 5th September 2017 where one lucky customer will win a new Chery E5 and twenty lucky customers will win 20 gold coins of 4grams on each draw.

Running from the 28th May to 5th September 2017, the campaign will be open to all customers that make any money transfer or currency exchange transaction from one of its 40+ branches, plus customers who send money online through BEC's secure online money transfer service 'BEC Online' will also be eligible to take part. Customers will be entered into the draw for the transactions made between each draw dates throughout the campaign period.

Mathews Varughese, BEC General Manager commented on the campaign, "As we approach the holy month of Ramadan, we are delighted to spread goodwill amongst our customers and reward their loyalty with the chance to win incredible prizes. We would like to take this opportunity to wish our customers and their families a healthy and blessed Ramadan."BEC currently has over 42 branches across Kuwait and specializes in sending money around the globe safely and quickly to over 46,000 locations in 30 countries through its own money transfer product - EzRemit. Its global reach is extended to over 200 countries through its partnership with Money Gram an international remittance company.

Real Estate House to host Gergaian ceremonies

Real Estate House's CEO, Ali Al-Kulaib said that one of the main goals of the company currently working developing Mubarakiya Market was to focus on traditional and social activities while developing the area's architecture and services. Al-Kulaib added that with this in mind, Real Estate House Company would organize Gergaian ceremonies on June 8 and 9 at the restaurants yard outside the market.

National Forum conducted AGM and Farewell

NAFO Kuwait conducted its 13th Annual General Body Meeting (AGM) at NRC-Salmiya on the afternoon of Friday 28th April 2017. The meeting was attended by large number of NAFO members and their families. NAFO Vice-President, Sreekumar P Pillai, welcomed the gathering and briefly reminded about the need of further strengthening NAFO's continued social, cultural and welfare contributions. NAFO Patron, Vijay Karayil, while felicitating the meeting stressed the importance and urgency for preparing and empowering children with value added educational scheme "NAFO Gurukulam". He also greeted Advisory Board member Ajayakumar B Nair who leaving for good after a span of 40 years of expat life in Kuwait, cherishing the warmness of memories while associating with NAFO fraternity.

President, O N Nandakumar, in his address stressed the significance of AGM, which according to him is a golden opportunity for members to raise their views and opinions regarding organizational planning and functioning. A detailed annual report briefing NAFO's socio-cultural and welfare activities conducted during the year 2016/17, and an action plan for the year 2017/18, was presented by General Secretary R Vijayakrishnan. An audited account statement of the same year, including proposed budget for the year 2017/18, was then deliberated by Treasurer, Unnikrishna Kaimal.

BS Pillai, Chairman of the "NAFO-Kerala" society registration committee, specifically mentioned about NAFO's heroic decision of registering NAFO as a society in Kerala, which is a continuation of further expansion and globalization of NAFO. BS Pillai also clarified about the aims, prospects and vision behind the planned establishment of NAFO society.

The AGM overwhelmingly and unanimously endorsed the annual report, account statements and the budget proposals. NAFO Advisory Board member, V R Vijayan Nair, in his felicitation address reiterated the value and essence of traditional family bonding, and wholeheartedly appreciated NAFO's activities. O N Sureshkumar, Convener General Committee and Jayalakshmi Pramod, Chief Co-coordinator -Ladies' Wing while addressing the gathering recapped the urgency and requirement of more enthusiastic involvement and participation by NAFO members in organizational meetings and activities. All the felicitators also bid farewell greetings to Ajaykumar Nair.

Highlight of this year's AGM was the honoring of Ajayakumar Nair by adorning him with a traditional Ponnada and presenting a memento respectively by President O N Nandakumar and Vijaykrishnan, General Secretary. MS Nair read a brief profile of Ajaykumar as a gesture of formal introduction. Later, Ajayakumar Nair rendered a sensitive thanks giving address to the gathering and whole heartedly wished NAFO on all its future endeavors. P Balasundaran Nair, Chairman of socio-welfare committee and Madhu G Menon, Convener of 14th Anniversary program committee also spoke on the occasion to detail the on-going and up-coming activities of respective committees.

Flare Fitness concludes charity campaign

Flare Fitness club announced the success of its 3rd charitable event campaign 'Transform your power to the less fortunate', which was held on the 8th day of Ramadan at Flare Fitness club located in Shuwaikh demonstrating Flare's social and humanitarian role in this holy month. The managing partner at Flare Mr Yousef Al Shaya expressed his sincere gratitude to everyone who participated in the success of this event which created a form of physical strength, social responsibility and charitable actions. These attributes define Flare Fitness as a brand which provides more than just sporty exercises and services. He added that the money collected will go towards Kuwait Food Bank, noting that the number of participants reached more than 300 participants.

It is worth mentioning that Flare Fitness club's role isn't limited to provide sports exercises and routines, but it has also evolved to be one of the leading local sports brand in the social scene in Kuwait. The Fitness club organized Flare Festival in the Gulf University of Science and Technology, recently, which was a great success. It was one of the biggest events in the Middle East that aimed to spread obesity awareness amongst the student community.

The Promenade joins forces with Faisal Clinic's 'Get Fit Ramadan' program

The Promenade mall, the neighborhood destination in the heart of Kuwait, has teamed up with Faisal Clinic, local doctors, dieticians and fitness professionals to encourage the people of Kuwait to stay active and healthy during Ramadan with a fun fitness program.

With an objective of bringing together the entire spectrum of Kuwait's society to work out under one roof and enhance community spirit during the Holy Month, the 'Get Fit Ramadan' program is designed to take place at the mall, Sundays through Wednesdays, until June 14. The pre-iftar one-hour session from 5-6 pm targets all members of the family and community with five different training programs tailored for different age groups, whether guests want to enjoy a light walk or a higher intensity workout. There is also a special children's exercise zone for children aged 5 to 13 with lots of fun activities while women can enjoy their workout in private in the 2nd floor of the mall that's completely dedicated for females.

Instructors from The Promenade's Wiggles along with other local personal trainers, are hosting the fitness sessions and offering training advice and tips on how to stay active and healthy during Ramadan. Dieticians are also on hand, giving tips on the best food to eat to break your fast after exercise, and the right nutrition to fuel yourself after a Ramadan workout. Medical professionals from the Fawzia Sultan Rehabilitation Institute are on site offering free health advice.

"Supporting the community and giving back to society is at the core of what we strive to achieve and this initiative is just one of our many commitments to our corporate social responsibility," said Noor Al-Sadoun, of The Promenade. "We felt this was a great way to bring everyone together and show people how they can stay active at this special time of year." She added. The 'Get Fit Ramadan' program, which runs until Wednesday, June 14, incorporates fun weekly competitions on Thursdays, during which participants can pick up prizes for their efforts from stores in The Promenade and other local businesses.

Huawei empowers Young Kuwaiti talents to kick-start their careers

As part of Huawei Technologies Kuwait's long-term commitment to the country, Huawei trained 33 local graduates and welcomed eight bright Kuwaiti employees onboard. Huawei Technologies, one of the leading global ICT solutions provider, recently held a congratulatory ceremony to mark the successful completion of the second season of its annual Graduate Training Program.

Designed to empower young Kuwaiti talents by facilitating their transition into the job market, Huawei's one-year training program saw 33 outstanding Kuwaiti graduates acquire hands-on, cross-functional professional experience to kick-start their careers and drive the growth of the knowledge-based economy. In recognition of their outstanding achievements, Huawei welcomed eight of the program graduates to its dynamic workforce, as part of its firm commitment to work in partnership with local communities.

Championing the cause of education and skills building to drive innovation, economic growth and private sector development, Huawei's Graduate Training Program provided bright Kuwaiti graduates with first-hand learning experience on the latest cutting edge technologies and industry best practices. The trainees were given the opportunity to rotate among various departments to gain a 360 degree perspective, whilst acquiring both technical and management skills. Six participants also received world-class ICT training at Huawei's technology labs and R&D center at its Headquarters in China, learning directly from innovators and senior Huawei practitioners.

Commenting on the occasion, Mr Trevor Liu, Huawei Technologies Kuwait CEO stated: "It is a proud moment for us to watch the new leaders of tomorrow make their mark with Huawei. I would like to congratulate the outstanding Kuwaiti trainees for their eagerness to learn and for their quest in ensuring the sustainability of their country's future. We continue to invest in training programs that enable Kuwaiti youth acquire ICT and market-labor skills and help them kick start their careers as valuable members of the society. By facilitating skills building programs, we seek to not only create economic opportunities for promising Kuwaiti youth, but also to empower the government to achieve its 2035 Vision and transform Kuwait into a thriving regional hub, powered by the information technology."

Throughout the traineeship, Huawei conducted thorough assessment sessions to provide graduates with real-time feedback and coaching to maximize their learning experience. More than half of the participants received a stipend increase for their achievements and all the trainees who successfully completed the one-year training were commended with a Huawei Certificate of Excellence in recognition of their exemplary hard work. Eight promising Kuwaiti trainees were welcomed to Huawei Kuwait workforce as permanent employees.

OSN MOVIES ACTION

00:15 Batman: Bad Blood
01:30 Spooks: The Greater Good
03:15 The Gallows
05:00 The Throwaways
06:45 Mission: Impossible - Rogue Nation
09:00 Batman: Bad Blood
10:15 The Throwaways
12:00 Spooks: The Greater Good
13:45 Mission: Impossible - Rogue Nation
16:00 Age Of Tomorrow
17:45 Hard Target 2
19:30 Run All Night
21:30 Star Wars: The Force Awakens

ANIMAL PLANET HD

00:45 Animal Cops Miami
01:40 Pit Bulls & Parolees
02:35 Tanked
03:25 The Lion Queen
04:15 Preposterous Pets
05:02 River Monsters
05:49 Pit Bulls & Parolees
06:36 Going Ape
07:00 Gorilla School
07:25 Preposterous Pets
08:15 Pit Bulls & Parolees
09:10 The Lion Queen
10:05 Tanked
11:00 Preposterous Pets
11:55 Animal Cops Miami
12:50 Pit Bulls & Parolees
13:45 River Monsters
14:40 The Lion Queen
15:35 Tanked
16:30 River Monsters
17:25 Dr. Jeff: Rocky Mountain Vet
18:20 From WAGs To Riches
19:15 Tanked
20:10 Preposterous Pets
21:05 Dr. Jeff: Rocky Mountain Vet
22:00 From WAGs To Riches
22:55 The Lion Queen
23:50 River Monsters

BBC FIRST

00:20 Doctors
00:55 Prime Suspect: Tennison
01:45 Silent Witness

Patrol
05:55 Catch A Contractor
06:50 Framework
07:40 Hungry Investors
08:30 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
09:20 Lip Sync Battle
09:45 Lip Sync Battle
10:10 Bondi Ink.
11:00 Framework
11:50 Catch A Contractor
12:40 Disaster Date
13:05 Disaster Date
13:30 Lip Sync Battle
13:55 Lip Sync Battle
14:20 Bondi Ink.
15:10 Framework
16:00 Sweat Inc.
16:55 The Jim Gaffigan Show
17:25 The Jim Gaffigan Show
17:50 Frankenfood
18:15 Frankenfood
18:39 Impractical Jokers
19:03 Disaster Date
19:27 Lip Sync Battle
19:50 Lip Sync Battle
20:13 Disaster Date
20:37 Disaster Date
21:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
21:30 The President Show
22:00 The Jim Gaffigan Show
22:25 The Jim Gaffigan Show
22:50 Tosh.0
23:15 Lip Sync Battle
23:40 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah

Discovery Family

00:30 Nextworld
01:20 Guinness World Records Smashed New Zealand
01:45 Guinness World Records Smashed New Zealand
02:10 Guinness World Records Smashed UK
03:00 What Happened Next?
03:25 What Happened Next?
03:50 Ultimate Survival
04:40 How It's Made
05:05 How It's Made
05:30 Storm Chasers
06:20 Mythbusters
07:00 Kenny The Shark
07:25 Bear Grylls Survival School
07:50 K9 Cops
08:40 How It's Made
09:05 How It's Made
09:30 Nextworld
10:20 Mythbusters
11:10 K9 Cops
12:00 Ultimate Survival

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 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
07:25 Sofia The First
07:50 The Lion Guard
08:15 PJ Masks
08:35 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
09:05 Goldie & Bear
09:35 The Lion Guard
10:00 Sofia The First
10:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
11:00 Little Mermaid
11:25 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
11:50 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
12:15 Gummi Bears
12:40 Miles From Tomorrow
13:10 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
13:35 PJ Masks
14:00 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
14:30 The Lion Guard
14:55 Unbungalievable
15:00 Goldie & Bear
15:30 PJ Masks
15:55 Sofia The First
16:20 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
16:50 Doc McStuffins
17:15 The Lion Guard
17:40 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
18:05 PJ Masks
18:35 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
19:05 PJ Masks
19:35 PJ Masks
20:05 Goldie & Bear
20:35 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
21:00 Gummi Bears
21:25 Sofia The First
21:50 Minnie's Bow-Toons
22:00 Little Mermaid
22:30 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
22:55 PJ Masks
23:20 Henry Hugglemonster
23:35 The Hive
23:45 Loopdidoo

Discovery Channel HD

00:20 Street Outlaws
01:10 Todd Sampson's Body Hack
02:00 Marooned With Ed Stafford

19:25 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
19:55 K.C. Undercover
20:20 Mech-X4
20:45 Disney11
21:10 Walk The Prank
21:35 Disney Mickey Mouse
21:40 Disney Mickey Mouse
21:45 Marvel's Guardians Of The Galaxy
22:10 Ultimate Spider-Man
22:35 Boyster
23:00 Programmes Start At 6:00am KSA

E HD

00:05 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
00:55 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
01:50 E! News
02:50 Celebrity Style Story
03:20 Celebrity Style Story
03:50 Hollywood & Football
04:40 Hollywood & Football
05:30 Celebrity Style Story
06:00 La Clippers Dance Squad
06:55 E! News
07:10 La Clippers Dance Squad
08:10 E! News: Daily Pop
09:10 WAGs
10:05 WAGs
11:00 WAGs
12:00 E! News
12:15 Second Wives Club
13:10 Second Wives Club
14:05 Second Wives Club
15:00 E! News
15:15 E! News: Daily Pop
16:15 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
17:10 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
18:05 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
19:00 E! News
20:00 Botched
21:00 Botched
22:00 Botched
23:00 E! News
23:15 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry

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
03:00 Man Fire Food
03:30 Man Fire Food
04:00 Chopped
05:00 Guy's Grocery Games
06:00 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics
06:30 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics
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 Bake With Anna Olson
10:30 Bake With Anna Olson
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 Bake With Anna Olson
17:30 Bake With Anna Olson
18:00 Chopped
19:00 Guy's Grocery Games
20:00 Chopped
21:00 Kids BBQ Championship
22:00 The Big Eat - Middle East
22:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
23:00 Chopped

itv HD CHOICE

00:10 Alphabetical
01:00 Emmerdale
01:30 Coronation Street
02:00 Coronation Street
02:30 Who's Doing The Dishes?
03:25 Grantchester
04:40 Catchphrase
05:15 Masterpiece With Alan Titchmarsh
06:10 Alphabetical
07:05 Who's Doing The Dishes?
08:00 Grantchester
09:20 Catchphrase
10:00 Masterpiece With Alan Titchmarsh
10:55 Alphabetical
11:50 Who's Doing The Dishes?
12:45 Emmerdale
13:15 Coronation Street
13:45 Coronation Street
14:15 Alphabetical
15:10 Who's Doing The Dishes?
16:00 This Is England '86
16:55 Safe House
17:50 Masterpiece With Alan Titchmarsh
18:45 Emmerdale
19:15 Coronation Street

19:45 Coronation Street
20:10 Who's Doing The Dishes?
21:00 This Is England '86
21:55 Safe House
22:50 Emmerdale
23:15 Coronation Street
23:40 Coronation Street

HD HISTORY

00:20 Ultimate Soldier Challenge
01:10 Alone
02:00 Swamp People
02:50 Storage Wars
03:15 American Pickers
04:05 Pawn Stars
04:30 Pawn Stars
05:00 Mountain Men
06:00 Leepu And Pitbull
06:50 Duck Dynasty
07:15 Duck Dynasty
07:40 Counting Cars
08:05 Counting Cars
08:30 Pawn Stars
08:55 Pawn Stars
09:20 Storage Wars
09:45 Storage Wars
10:10 American Pickers
11:00 Search For The Lost Giants
11:50 Duck Dynasty
12:15 Duck Dynasty
12:40 Swamp People
13:30 Ax Men
14:20 Mountain Men
15:10 Leepu And Pitbull
16:00 Storage Wars
16:25 Storage Wars
16:50 Pawn Stars
17:15 Pawn Stars
17:40 Alone
18:30 Swamp People
19:20 Mountain Men
20:10 American Pickers
21:00 Detroit Steel
21:50 Big Easy Motors
22:15 Big Easy Motors
22:40 Forged In Fire
23:30 Forged In Fire

NAT GEO people HD

00:15 Places We Go
00:45 Eat Street
01:10 Andy And Ben Eat Australia
01:40 Mega Food
02:35 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
03:00 The Shelbourne
03:30 Rustic Adventures Italy
03:55 Miguel's Feasts
04:25 Miguel's Feasts
04:50 Andy And Ben Eat Australia
05:20 Andy And Ben Eat Australia
05:45 What's For Sale?
06:15 Gok's Chinese Takeaway
07:10 Mega Food
08:05 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
08:30 The Shelbourne
09:00 Rustic Adventures Italy
09:25 Miguel's Feasts
09:55 Miguel's Feasts
10:20 Andy And Ben Eat Australia
10:50 Andy And Ben Eat Australia
11:15 What's For Sale?
11:45 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
12:10 A Is For Apple
12:40 A Is For Apple
13:05 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
13:35 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
14:00 Straight To The Source: Korean Food
14:30 Mega Food
15:25 Rustic Adventures Italy
15:50 Miguel's Feasts
16:20 Miguel's Feasts
16:45 Andy And Ben Eat Australia
17:15 What's For Sale?
17:40 What's For Sale?
18:10 Charlie Luxton's Homes By The Sea
19:05 Rustic Adventures Italy
19:30 Miguel's Feasts
20:00 Miguel's Feasts
20:30 Andy And Ben Eat Australia
21:00 What's For Sale?
21:30 What's For Sale?
22:00 Charlie Luxton's Homes By The Sea
22:55 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
23:20 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
23:50 Mega Food

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CHANNEL HD

00:10 Monster Fish
01:00 Wicked Tuna: North vs South
02:00 Air Crash Investigation
03:00 Explorer
04:00 Monster Fish
05:00 Samurai Bow
06:00 Situation Critical
07:00 Dog Whisperer
08:00 Evacuate Earth

AMELIA ON OSN MOVIES HD

09:00 Showdown Of The Unbeatables
10:00 Cesar Millan's Dog Nation
11:00 Beast Hunter
12:00 I Wouldn't Go In There
13:00 Science Of Stupid
13:30 Science Of Stupid
14:00 Evacuate Earth
15:00 Dog Whisperer
16:00 Cesar Millan's Dog Nation
17:00 Beast Hunter
18:00 I Wouldn't Go In There
19:00 Evacuate Earth
20:00 Cesar Millan's Dog Nation
20:50 Beast Hunter
21:40 I Wouldn't Go In There
22:30 Evacuate Earth
23:20 Science Of Stupid
23:45 Science Of Stupid

NAT GEO WILD HD

00:20 Hyena Queen
01:10 Snake Underworld
02:00 Croc Invasion
02:50 Wild Amazon
03:45 America's National Parks
04:40 World's Deadliest Animals
05:35 Croc Invasion
06:30 Wild Amazon
07:25 America's National Parks
08:20 World's Deadliest Animals
09:15 Cougar V. Wolf
10:10 Wild Case Files
11:05 Sahara
12:00 River Jaws: Monster Catfish
12:55 Kings Of The Kill
13:50 Monster Fish
14:45 Hooked
15:40 Savage Kingdom
16:35 Battle Of The Swamp Dragons
17:30 Wild Case Files
18:25 Animal Fight Club 4.5
19:20 Hooked
20:10 Savage Kingdom
21:00 Battle Of The Swamp Dragons
21:50 Wild Case Files
22:40 Animal Fight Club 4.5
23:30 River Jaws: Monster Catfish

OSN MOVIES HD FAMILY

00:40 Eight Below
02:40 The Last Flight Of Noah's Ark
04:20 Toy Story
05:50 Eight Below
07:50 Toy Story
09:15 The Sorcerer's Apprentice
11:05 Mary Poppins
13:25 Toy Story 2
15:00 Hercules (1997)
16:35 K-9 Adventures: Legend Of The Lost Gold
18:10 Peter Pan Live!
20:30 The Unbeatables
22:10 Hercules (1997)
23:45 Peter Pan Live!

OSN MOVIES HD COMEDY

01:15 Dickie Roberts: Former Child Star
03:00 Fierce Creatures
04:45 Highland Park
06:15 Hope Springs
08:00 Fierce Creatures
09:45 Highland Park
11:15 Hope Springs
13:00 Indian Summer
14:45 Outside Bet
16:30 After The Ball
18:15 Confessions Of A Shopaholic
20:15 Death At A Funeral
22:00 Growing Up And Other Lies
23:30 Burying The Ex

OSN MOVIES FESTIVAL

01:30 Healing
03:30 Late Bloomers
05:00 Of Mice And Men
07:00 Healing
09:00 Memories
10:45 Late Bloomers
12:15 Every Thing Will Be Fine
14:15 Manny
15:45 Chariots Of Fire
17:45 The Help
20:15 The Assassination Of Jesse James
23:00 Every Thing Will Be Fine

OSN MOVIES HD KIDS

01:00 Blue Elephant 2
02:45 Frog Kingdom
04:15 The Adventures Of Rocky And Bullwinkle
06:00 Mune
07:45 Cher Ami
09:30 Bonta
11:00 Blue Elephant 2
12:45 Frog Kingdom
14:30 Paws
16:15 Bonta
18:00 Outback
19:45 Egon And Donci
21:15 Paws
23:00 Cher Ami

OSN MOVIES HD

00:45 The Invention Of Lying
02:30 The Hurricane
05:00 The Bucket List
06:45 Rocky III
08:30 The Invention Of Lying
10:15 Beaches
12:30 Rocky III
14:15 The Bucket List
16:00 Amelia
18:00 Seventh Son
19:45 Everest
22:00 Rocky IV
23:45 X-Men: First Class

Discovery Science

00:30 How Do They Do It?
00:55 Food Factory
01:20 Strangest Weather On Earth
02:10 NASA's Unexplained Files
03:00 How To Survive An Asteroid Strike: An Asteroid...
03:48 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
04:36 Strangest Weather On Earth
05:24 Mythbusters
06:12 How Do They Do It?
06:36 Food Factory
07:00 How Do They Do It?
07:26 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
08:14 Mythbusters
09:02 NASA's Unexplained Files
09:50 How To Survive An Asteroid Strike: An Asteroid...
10:38 Strangest Weather On Earth
11:26 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
12:14 Mythbusters
13:02 NASA's Unexplained Files
13:50 How To Survive An Asteroid Strike: An Asteroid...
14:38 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
15:26 Strangest Weather On Earth
16:14 NASA's Unexplained Files
17:02 How To Survive An Asteroid Strike: An Asteroid...
17:50 How Do They Do It?
18:15 Food Factory
18:40 Mythbusters
19:30 How Things Work
20:20 NASA's Unexplained Files
21:10 Telescope
22:00 How Things Work
22:50 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
23:40 Mythbusters

TLC HD

00:20 Body Bizarre
01:10 Monsters Inside Me
02:00 Cake Boss
02:50 Say Yes To The Dress
03:35 Outdaughtered: Busby Quints
04:20 Little People, Big World
05:10 Toddlers & Tiaras
06:00 Obsessive Compulsive Cleaners
06:50 Oprah: Where Are They Now?
07:40 Oprah's Master Class
08:30 Little People, Big World
09:20 Ugly House To Lovely House
10:10 Say Yes To The Dress
11:00 Cake Boss
11:50 Obsessive Compulsive Cleaners
12:40 Outdaughtered: Busby Quints
13:30 Cake Boss
14:20 Oprah: Where Are They Now?
15:10 Toddlers & Tiaras
16:00 Little People, Big World
16:50 Ugly House To Lovely House
17:40 Say Yes To The Dress
18:30 Oprah: Where Are They Now?
19:20 Cake Boss
20:10 Obsessive Compulsive Cleaners: Country House...
21:00 My 600lb Life
22:40 The Boy Who Wants His Leg Cut Off
23:30 My 600lb Life

travel channel

00:00 Bizarre Foods America
01:00 Mysteries At The Monument
02:00 Going RV
02:30 Big Time RV
03:00 Booze Traveler
04:00 Bizarre Foods: Delicious Destinations
05:00 Bizarre Foods America
06:00 Mysteries At The Monument
07:00 House Hunters International
09:00 Going RV
09:30 Big Time RV
10:00 Hotel Impossible
11:00 Mysteries At The White House
12:00 Texas Flip And Move
13:00 House Hunters International
15:00 Going RV
15:30 Big Time RV

HARD TARGET 2 ON OSN MOVIES ACTION

02:50 Silent Witness
04:00 Doctors
04:30 Doctors
05:00 The Musketeers
06:00 Father Brown
06:50 Doctors
07:20 Doctors
07:50 New Tricks
08:45 The Musketeers
09:40 Father Brown
10:30 Doctors
11:00 Doctors
11:35 New Tricks
12:30 The Musketeers
13:25 Father Brown
14:15 Doctors
14:45 Doctors
15:15 New Tricks
16:10 The Musketeers
17:10 Father Brown
18:00 Doctors
18:30 EastEnders
19:00 New Tricks
20:00 Kat & Alfie: Redwater
21:00 Maigret
22:35 The Kettering Incident
23:30 Doctors

crime & investigation network

00:00 It Takes A Killer
00:30 It Takes A Killer
01:00 Fred Dinenage: Murder Casebook
02:00 Jack The Ripper
03:00 It Takes A Killer
03:30 It Takes A Killer
04:00 It Takes A Killer
04:30 It Takes A Killer
05:00 Fred Dinenage: Murder Casebook
06:00 My Crazy Ex
07:00 I Love You...But I Lied
08:00 Evil Up Close
09:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
10:00 Homicide Hunter
11:00 It Takes A Killer
12:30 It Takes A Killer
13:00 I Love You...But I Lied
14:00 Evil Up Close
15:00 Homicide Hunter
16:00 Crime Stories
17:00 It Takes A Killer
19:00 Evil Up Close
20:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
21:00 Homicide Hunter
22:00 My Haunted House
23:00 Paranormal State
23:30 Paranormal State

COMEDY CENTRAL

00:05 Brotherhood
00:30 Brotherhood
00:55 Impractical Jokers
01:20 Impractical Jokers
01:45 Lip Sync Battle
02:10 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
03:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
03:25 Framework
04:15 Sweat Inc.
05:05 Disorderly Conduct: Video On

12:50 How It's Made
13:15 How It's Made
13:40 Storm Chasers
14:30 Kenny The Shark
14:55 Bear Grylls Survival School
15:20 K9 Cops
16:10 Nextworld
17:00 Bondi Vet
17:50 Everest: Beyond The Limit
18:40 What Happened Next?
19:30 How It's Made
20:20 Mythbusters
21:10 Bondi Vet
22:00 Everest: Beyond The Limit
22:50 What Happened Next?
23:15 What Happened Next?
23:40 Ultimate Survival

ID

00:30 Pandora's Box: Unleashing Evil
01:20 Adnan Syed: Innocent Or Guilty?
02:10 Grave Secrets
03:00 Who Killed Jane Doe?
03:48 I Almost Got Away With It
04:36 California Investigator
05:01 California Investigator
05:24 Deadly Affairs
06:12 Southern Fried Homicide
07:00 The Locator
07:25 The Locator
07:50 I Almost Got Away With It
08:40 California Investigator
09:05 California Investigator
09:30 Deadly Affairs
10:20 Southern Fried Homicide
11:10 Betrayed
12:00 The Locator
12:25 The Locator
12:50 I Almost Got Away With It
13:40 California Investigator
14:30 Deadly Affairs
15:20 Southern Fried Homicide
16:10 The Detectives Club: New Orleans
17:00 The Locator
17:25 The Locator
17:50 I Almost Got Away With It
18:40 California Investigator
19:05 California Investigator
19:30 Deadly Affairs
20:20 Southern Fried Homicide
21:10 Vanity Fair Confidential
22:00 Betrayed
22:50 Murder Chose Me
23:40 Grave Secrets

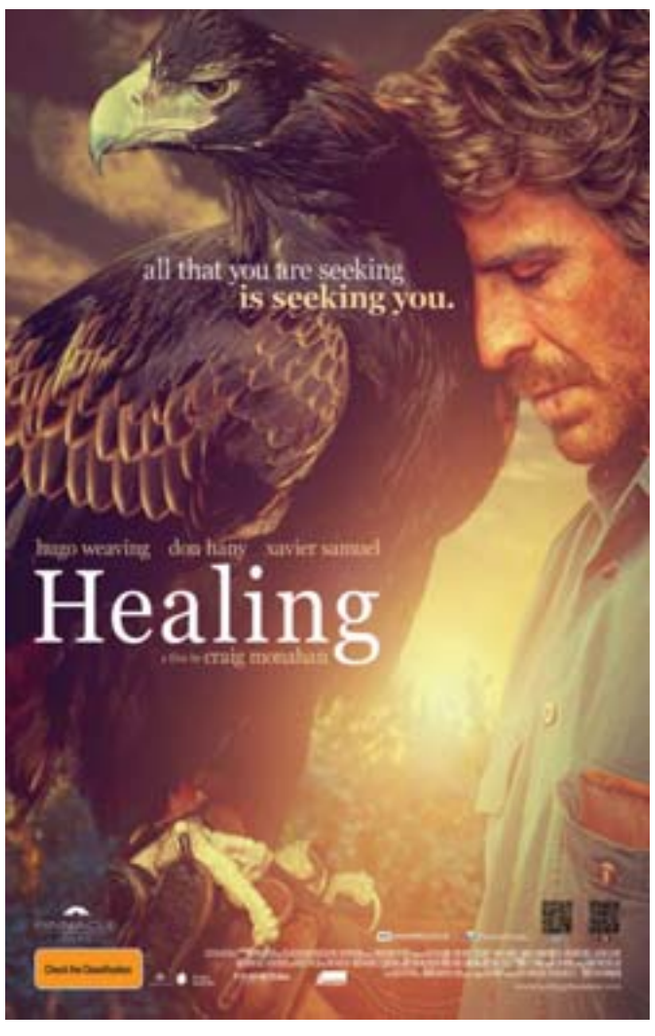
Disney Junior

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

02:50 Running Wild With Bear Grylls
03:40 Misfit Garage
04:30 Garage Gold
05:00 How Do They Do It?
05:30 How Do They Do It?
06:00 Gold Divers
06:50 Street Outlaws
07:40 Misfit Garage
08:30 What On Earth?
09:20 Garage Gold
09:45 How Do They Do It?
10:10 How Do They Do It?
10:35 Todd Sampson's Body Hack
11:25 Marooned With Ed Stafford
12:15 Fukushima: On The Frontline With Joel Lambert
13:05 How Do They Do It?
13:30 Garage Gold
13:55 Garage Gold
14:20 Gold Rush
15:10 What On Earth?
16:00 Gold Divers
16:50 Misfit Garage
17:40 Street Outlaws
18:30 How Do They Do It?
18:55 How Do They Do It?
19:20 What On Earth?
20:10 Garage Gold
20:35 Garage Gold
21:00 Abandoned Engineering
21:50 Man vs Weird
22:40 Incredible Engineering Blunders: Fixed
23:30 Misfit Garage

Disney XD

06:00 Right Now Kapow
06:25 Disney11
06:50 Penn Zero: Part Time Hero
07:15 Milo Murphy's Law
07:25 Danger Mouse
07:40 Supa Strikas
08:10 K.C. Undercover
08:35 Counterfeit Cat
09:00 Lab Rats
09:25 Lab Rats
09:50 Future-Worm!
10:20 Pair Of Kings
10:45 Pair Of Kings
11:10 Danger Mouse
11:35 Supa Strikas
12:00 Supa Strikas
12:30 Gravity Falls
12:55 Annedroids
13:20 Atomic Puppet
13:45 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
14:10 Disney Mickey Mouse
14:15 Mighty Med
14:40 Kirby Buckets
15:05 Lab Rats
15:30 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
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 Mighty Med
19:00 Atomic Puppet



HEALING ON OSN MOVIES FESTIVAL

CLASSIFIEDS

Kuwait Times

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 7, 2017

KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (01/06/2017 TO 07/06/2017)

SHARQIA-1
FIREMAN SAM: Alien Alert! The Movie 9:45 PM
Abu Shanab (Re-Release) 11:15 PM

SHARQIA-2
AL FERAN (KUWAITI) 9:30 PM
THE EXCEPTION 11:00 PM
AL FERAN (KUWAITI) 1:15 AM
FOOTBALL MATCH- "Real Madrid vs Juventus" 9:45 PM
AL FERAN (KUWAITI) 12:30 AM

SHARQIA-3
KING ARTHUR: LEGEND OF THE SWORD 10:00 PM
Mantaqh Mahzourah (Re-Releasee) 12:30 AM

MUHALAB-1
Abu Shanab (Re-Release) 9:45 PM
KING ARTHUR: LEGEND OF THE SWORD 12:05 AM

MUHALAB-2
FIREMAN SAM: Alien Alert! The Movie 9:30 PM
AL FERAN (KUWAITI) 11:00 PM
AL FERAN (KUWAITI) 12:30 AM

MUHALAB-3
THE EXCEPTION 10:00 PM
Hasan wa Boqloz (Arabic) (Re-Release) 12:15 AM

FANAR-1
SACHIN: A BILLION DREAMS -Hindi 10:00 PM
Mantaqh Mahzourah (Re-Releasee) 12:45 AM

FANAR-2
MINIONS (Re Release) 9:30 PM
Abu Shanab (Re-Release) 11:30 PM
FOOTBALL MATCH- "Real Madrid vs Juventus" 9:45 PM
Abu Shanab (Re-Release) 12:30 AM

FANAR-3
FIREMAN SAM: Alien Alert! The Movie 9:45 PM
KING ARTHUR: LEGEND OF THE SWORD 11:15 PM

FANAR-4
THE EXCEPTION 10:15 PM
FOOTBALL MATCH- "Real Madrid vs Juventus" 9:45 PM
THE EXCEPTION 12:30 AM

FANAR-5
AL FERAN (KUWAITI) 10:15 PM
AL FERAN (KUWAITI) 11:45 PM
AL FERAN (KUWAITI) 1:15 AM

MARINA-1
KING ARTHUR: LEGEND OF THE SWORD 10:00 PM
Abu Shanab (Re-Release) 12:30 AM

MARINA-2
FIREMAN SAM: Alien Alert! The Movie 9:30 PM
Hasan wa Boqloz (Arabic) (Re-Release) 11:00 PM
Hasan wa Boqloz (Arabic) (Re-Release) 1:00 AM

MARINA-3
DIARY OF A WIMPY KID: THE LONG HAUL 9:45 PM
THE EXCEPTION 11:45 PM

AVENUES-1
MINIONS (Re Release) 9:30 PM
ALIEN: COVENANT 11:30 PM

AVENUES-2
MINIONS(Re Release)-3D-4DX 10:00 PM
KING ARTHUR: LEGEND OF THE SWORD (2D-4DX) 12:05 AM

AVENUES-3
THE BOSS BABY 10:30 PM
FOOTBALL MATCH- "Real Madrid vs Juventus" 9:45 PM
HERE ALONE 12:30 AM

AVENUES-4
ALIEN: COVENANT 10:15 PM
Safra 5 Njoom (Kuwaiti Film) (Re-Release) 12:45 AM

360º- 1
KING ARTHUR: LEGEND OF THE SWORD 9:45 PM
NO SAT
FOOTBALL MATCH- "Real Madrid vs Juventus" 9:45 PM
SAT
KING ARTHUR: LEGEND OF THE SWORD 12:30 AM

360 º- 2
THE EXCEPTION 10:15 PM
THE EXCEPTION 12:45 AM

360º- 3
AL FERAN (KUWAITI) 9:30 PM
AL FERAN (KUWAITI) 11:00 PM
AL FERAN (KUWAITI) 12:30 AM

AL-KOUT.1
THE EXCEPTION 10:00 PM
Abu Shanab (Re-Release) 12:15 AM
FOOTBALL MATCH- "Real Madrid vs Juventus" 9:45 PM
Abu Shanab (Re-Release) 12:30 AM

AL-KOUT.2
AL FERAN (KUWAITI) 9:45 PM
AL FERAN (KUWAITI) 11:15 PM
AL FERAN (KUWAITI) 12:45 AM

AL-KOUT.3
Hasan wa Boqloz (Arabic) (Re-Release) 10:15 PM
KING ARTHUR: LEGEND OF THE SWORD 12:30 AM

AL-KOUT.4
FIREMAN SAM: Alien Alert! The Movie 9:30 PM
Safra 5 Njoom (Kuwaiti Film) (Re-Release) 11:00 PM
Safra 5 Njoom (Kuwaiti Film) (Re-Release) 1:00 AM

BAIRAQ-1
MINIONS (Re Release) 9:45 PM
THE BOSS BABY 11:45 PM

BAIRAQ-2
FIREMAN SAM: Alien Alert! The Movie 10:00 PM
DIARY OF A WIMPY KID: THE LONG HAUL 11:30 PM

BAIRAQ-3
KING ARTHUR: LEGEND OF THE SWORD 9:30 PM
AL FERAN (KUWAITI) 12:05 AM

PLAZA
GODHA -Malayalam 9:30 PM
SACHIN: A BILLION DREAMS -Hindi 12:05 AM

LAILA
MINIONS (Re Release) 10:00 PM
AL FERAN (KUWAITI) 12:05 AM

AJIAL.1
GODHA -Malayalam 9:30 PM
GODHA -Malayalam 12:05 AM

SITUATION VACANT

Excellent cook required to work for a respectful family for handsome salary. Tel: 99006777. **(C 5319) 7-6-2017**

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Subhash Vishnu Andraz S/o Vishnu Andraz, holder of Indian Passport No. J2750368 & Civil ID No. 284010806937 has changed my name to Subhash Vishnu Murgaonkar, before father name Vishnu Mulgaonkar the new name Vishnu Murgaonkar, hereinafter in all my dealings and document, I will be known by name of Subhash Vishnu Murgaonkar. **(C 5317) 6-6-2017**

ACCOMMODATION

Sharing accommodation available with separate room and other facility near Al-Rashid hospital Salmiya for a small Indian family or a working lady immediately. Contact: 99315825. **(C 5318) 7-6-2017**

Sharing accommodation available in Farwaniya block 6, street 107, opp Animal Health Department. For Indians, executive bachelor/ family/ working ladies. Contact: 66625901. **(C 5316) 5-6-2017**

EMERGENCY 112

Automated enquiry about the Civil ID card is 1889988

PRAYER TIMINGS

Fajr:	03:14
Shorook:	04:48
Duhr:	11:47
Asr:	15:21
Maghrib:	18:46
Isha:	20:17

Flight Schedule

Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page (www.kuwait-airport.com.kw)

DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

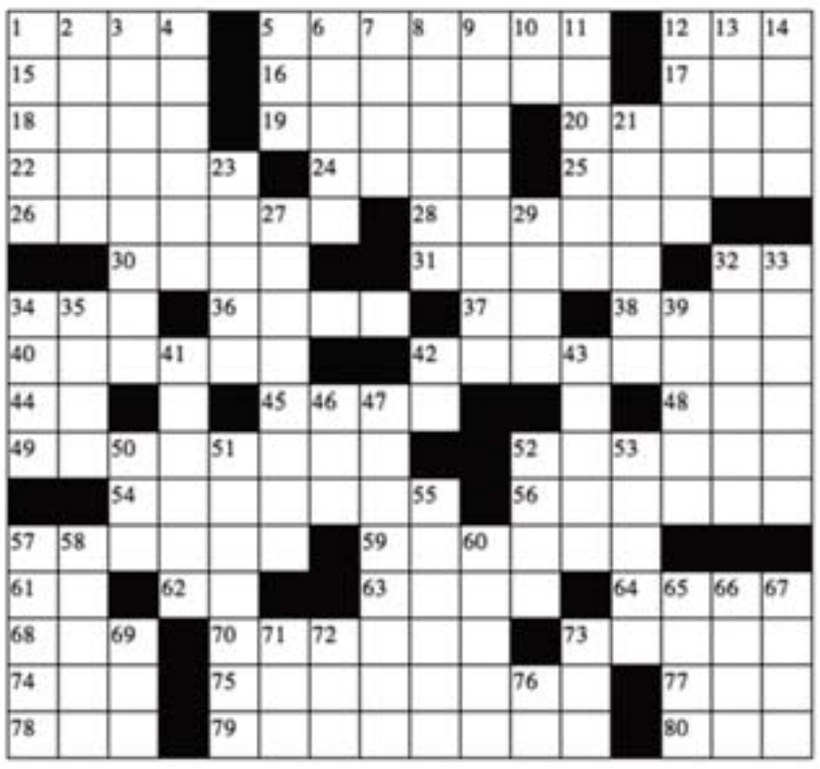
Arrival Flights on Wednesday 7/6/2017

Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
JZR	553	Alexandria	00:15
KAC	786	Jeddah	00:30
KAC	102	London	00:55
DLH	635	Doha	01:00
JZR	539	Cairo	01:20
MSR	618	Alexandria	01:35
RJA	642	Amman	01:45
KLM	446	Bahrain	02:05
QTR	1086	Doha	02:05
PGT	830	Istanbul	02:10
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:15
ICV	856	Luxembourg	02:45
KAC	418	Manila	02:50
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:10
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15
KAC	382	Delhi	03:15
QTR	1076	Doha	03:40
KAC	544	Cairo	03:50
KAC	796	Madinah	03:55
CEB	018	Manila	04:00
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	04:15
KAC	358	Kochi	04:50
FEG	931	Alexandria	05:00
KAC	784	Jeddah	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
THY	6562	Istanbul	06:15
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:35
KAC	206	Islamabad	06:40
KAC	302	Mumbai	06:55
JZR	1541	Cairo	07:10
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	09:20
IRA	665	Shiraz	09:25
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40
AXB	189	Delhi	09:45
MSC	415	Sohag	10:15
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40
MEA	404	Beirut	10:55
SYR	341	Damascus	11:00
AXB	889	Mangalore/Bahrain	11:05
JZR	561	Sohag	11:10
KAC	742	Dammam	11:45
IAW	157	Al Najaf	12:00
KAC	774	Riyadh	12:45
THY	766	Istanbul	12:50
FEG	953	Asyut	12:55
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00
KAC	514	Tehran	13:10
CLX	792	Luxembourg	13:15
KAC	662	Abu Dhabi	13:15
KNE	529	Jeddah	13:40
KAC	672	Dubai	13:55
IRC	6521	Lamerd	14:00
QTR	1078	Doha	14:05
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
KAC	788	Jeddah	14:55
KAC	304	Mumbai	14:55
KAC	692	Muscat	14:55
ETD	303	Abu Dhabi	15:05
KNE	683	Madinah	15:05
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
SAW	705	Damascus	15:50
SVA	504	Madinah	16:00
RJA	640	Amman	16:00
MSR	E70	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	1777	Jeddah	16:35
NIA	361	Alexandria	16:50
AZQ	4565	Baghdad	17:00
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	18:05
KAC	616	Bahrain	18:20
MSR	620	Cairo	18:30
KAC	512	Mashhad	18:40
GFA	217	Bahrain	19:05
UAE	875	Dubai	19:05
ABY	123	Sharjah	19:20
KAC	154	Istanbul	19:30
KAC	674	Dubai	19:40
KAC	776	Riyadh	19:50
FDB	057	Dubai	19:50
KAC	620	Doha	19:50
KAC	104	London	20:00
OMA	647	Muscat	20:05
KNE	381	Taif	20:10
DLH	634	Frankfurt	20:15
MEA	402	Beirut	20:15
QTR	1088	Doha	20:35
JZR	702	Taif	20:55
KAC	564	Amman	21:00
ETD	307	Dhabi	21:10
KLM	445	Amsterdam	21:15
ALK	229	Colombo	21:15
UAE	859	Dubai	21:15
GFA	219	Bahrain	21:50
QTR	1082	Doha	22:00
ETD	309	Abu Dhabi	22:10
AIC	975	Goa	22:25
BBC	043	Dhaka	22:30
JZR	241	Amman	22:55
MSR	2614	Cairo	23:30
FDB	071	Dubai	23:35

Departure Flights on Wednesday 7/6/2017

Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
AIC	988	Hyderabad/Chennai	00:05
JZR	1540	Cairo	00:20
JAI	573	Mumbai	00:30
MSC	406	Sohag	00:30
FDB	072	Dubai	00:30
MSR	2615	Cairo	00:30
KAC	363	Colombo	01:55
DLH	635	Frankfurt	02:00
MSR	619	Alexandria	02:35
ETH	621	Addis Ababa	03:05
PGT	831	Istanbul	03:10
KLM	446	Amsterdam	03:30
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
JZR	560	Sohag	04:45
KAC	103	ondon	05:00
CEB	019	Manila	05:30
QTR	1077	Doha	05:35
KAC	303	Mumbai	5:50
FEG	954	Asyut	05:55
RJA	643	Amman	06:25
THY	771	Istanbul	06:25
GFA	212	Bahrain	06:50
KAC	501	Beirut	07:50
KAC	171	Frankfurt	07:50
THY	6562	Hanoi	08:15
BAW	156	London	08:20
KAC	741	Riyadh	08:35
KAC	513	Tehran	08:45
KAC	661	Abu Dhabi	08:45
KAC	101	London	09:00
KAC	671	Dubai	09:15
KAC	787	Jeddah	09:15
KAC	117	New York	09:15
KAC	691	Muscat	09:30
JZR	534	Cairo	09:30
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	1776	Jeddah	11:00
AXB	190	Delhi	11:05
MSC	416	Sohag	11:15
GFA	214	Bahrain	11:35
MEA	405	Beirut	11:55
JZR	776	Jeddah	12:00
SYR	342	Latakia	12:00
AXB	890	Mangalore	12:05
KAC	511	Mashhad	12:45
IAW	158	Al Najaf	13:00
JZR	786	Riyadh	13:10
JZR	176	Dubai	13:10
THY	767	Istanbul	13:45
FEG	932	Alexandria	13:55
MSR	611	Cairo	14:00
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
KAC	615	Bahrain	15:10
QTR	1079	Doha	15:15
KAC	563	Amman	15:40
SVA	501	Jeddah	15:45
KNE	530	Jeddah	15:55
KAC	619	Doha	16:00
JZR	701	Madinah	16:00
KAC	775	Riyadh	16:05
OMA	646	Muscat	16:10
ABY	128	Sharjah	16:15
ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20
SAW	706	Damascus	16:50
MSR	576	Sharm el-Sheikh	16:50
RJA	641	Amman	16:55
SVA	505	Madinah	16:55
FDB	052	Dubai	17:05
KAC	503	Beirut	17:15
JZR	266	Beirut	17:15
JZR	552	Alexandria	17:25
QTR	1073	Doha	17:25
JZR	240	Amman	17:30
KAC	361	Colombo	17:35
KAC	357	Kochi	17:40
UAE	858	Dubai	17:40
KAC	381	Delhi	17:50
NIA	362	Alexandria	17:50
KAC	343	Chennai	18:00
KAC	283	Dhaka	18:00
SVA	511	Riyadh	18:15
GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
JZR	538	Cairo	18:30
KAC	785	Jeddah	18:45
AZQ	4566	GYD	19:00
QTR	1081	Doha	19:15
MSR	621	Cairo	19:30
GFA	218	Bahrain	19:50
ABY	124	Sharjah	20:00
FDB	058	Dubai	20:30
UAE	876	Dubai	20:35
KAC	331	Trivandrum	20:35
KAC	353	Bangalore	20:55
DLH	634	Doha	21:00
KAC	1543	Cairo	21:00
OMA	648	Muscat	21:05
KNE	232	Riyadh	21:10
MEA	403	Beirut	21:15
KAC	301	Mumbai	21:40
QTR	1089	Doha	21:45
KAC	203	Bahrain	21:50
KAC	205	Islamabad	21:55
ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	22:00
ALK	230	Colombo	22:20
KLM	445	Bahrain	22:25
UAE	860	Dubai	22:35
KAC	383	Delhi	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

CROSSWORD 1630



ACROSS

1. A city in northwestern Syria.
5. Absence of the mammary glands (either through surgery or developmental defect).
12. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
15. Very thin especially from disease or hunger or cold.
16. Appointed for life and not subject to dismissal except for a grave crime.
17. A person's brother or sister.
18. A republic consisting of 26 of 32 counties comprising the island of Ireland.
19. Having a tendency (to).
20. Affect with wonder.
22. Any property detected by the olfactory system.
24. Remove with or as if with a ladle.
25. Of or relating to punishment.
26. Subdivision not used in some classifications.
28. A member of the Iroquoian people formerly living east of Lake Ontario.
30. Concerning those not members of the clergy.
31. A cushion on a throne for a prince in India.
34. The compass point that is one point east of due south.
36. Made from residue of grapes or apples after pressing.
37. A state in the Rocky Mountains.
38. King of Denmark and Norway who forced Edmund II to divide England with him.
40. Relating to the blood vessels or blood.
44. The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.
45. A member of an extinct North American Indian people who lived in the Pit river valley in northern California.
48. The compass point that is one point north of due east.
49. A member of a North American people formerly living in the Colorado river valley in Arizona.
54. United States aviator who held several speed records and headed the women's Air Force pilots in World War II (1910-1980).
56. Small genus of succulent annual herbs found on sandy shores of North America and Europe.
57. A range of mountains (usually with jagged peaks and irregular outline).
59. Polish labor leader and statesman (born in 1943).
61. A soft heavy toxic malleable metallic element.
62. An official prosecutor for a judicial district.
63. South American armadillo with three bands of bony plates.
64. Any of numerous local fertility and nature deities worshipped by ancient Semitic peoples.
68. The residue that remains when something is burned.
70. Costing nothing.
74. The corporate executive responsible for the operations of the firm.
75. The time and process of budding and unfolding of blossoms.
77. Japanese ornamental tree with fragrant white or pink blossoms and small yellow fruits.
78. Either extremity of something that has length.
79. A port city is southern Indonesia.
80. Not divisible by two.

DOWN

1. At right angles to the length of a ship or airplane.
2. A French river.
3. A learner who enrolls in (or is enrolled in) a class or course of study.
4. Septicemia caused by pus-forming bacteria released from an abscess.
5. A nucleotide derived from adenosine that occurs in muscle tissue.
6. Common black European thrush.
7. Small buffalo of the Celebes having small straight horns.
8. A bright spot on the parhelic circle.
9. A wooden peg that is used to fasten timbers in shipbuilding.
10. That is to say.
11. Extinct small mostly diurnal lower primates that fed on leaves and fruit.
12. (Hindu) A manner of sitting (as in the practice of Yoga).
13. An ancient Egyptian city on the west bank of the Nile opposite Cairo.
14. Norwegian mathematician (1802-1829).
21. Aristocratic Italian family of powerful merchants and bankers who ruled Florence in the 15th century.
23. (Jungian psychology) The inner self (not the external persona) that is in touch with the unconscious.
27. A genus of herbs and shrubs belonging to the family Euphorbiaceae.
29. Tropical starchy tuberous root.
32. Small bulb or bulb-shaped growth arising from the leaf axil or in the place of flowers.
33. Standing posture.
35. Used as a Hindi courtesy title.
39. The mother-in-law of Ruth whose story is told in the Book of Ruth in the Old Testament.
41. A term of address for an English lord.
42. Of or relating to the stomach and intestines.
43. Remove gas from.
46. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
47. A native American chieftain who argued for peace with the European settlers (16th century).
50. (informal) Of the highest quality.
51. A town in Italy in southwestern Sicily near the coast.
52. Type genus of the Aceraceae.
53. Jordan's port.
55. Scottish mathematician who invented logarithms.
58. Realistic Norwegian author who wrote plays on social and political themes (1828-1906).
60. The sacred city of Lamaism.
65. Projectiles to be fired from a gun.
66. In bed.
67. Set down according to a plan.
69. An open box attached to a long pole handle.
71. A nucleic acid that transmits genetic information from DNA to the cytoplasm.
72. A unit of pressure.
73. White crystalline compound used as a food additive to enhance flavor.
76. Not out.

Yesterday's Solution

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

STAR TRACK

Aries (March 21-April 19)

Work seems intense today but you possess a powerful, persistent drive and are a hard, steady worker. Some people find you deep, with a sense of mystery. You are willing to do work today that others would not go near, quietly putting an end to some difficult problems. Later today you might be helping others to learn technical techniques so that you will eventually not be so overburdened. You are able to direct others in your business and this may lead to a leadership position. You busy yourself this afternoon in some project that you had been putting off for some time. You will be creating a new form or format for presentation to some very important people. Some people may wonder how the business could ever get along without you.

Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You are friendly and encouraging today. You somehow manage to find a creative environment or the creative in any environment, so as to provide the most beneficial area in which to work or play. Others want to join you in this project. You have a built-in sense of what the public wants and can always come up with just the right image. You find it easy to work with the emotions and feelings of others and with great imagination. You are great with kids and big on animals, sports and the outdoors. You are an instant umbrella of warmth, friendship and self-expression. Clear decisions affecting others could be made easily at this time. These are the attitudes and circumstances in which you find yourself teaching others.

Gemini (May 21-June 20)

There are lots of energy and action this day. Your dreams and imaginings keep bumping into the real and the actual. You quickly pick up on what is expected of you, and you are accountable. You are learning to plan ahead as you see your goals begin to develop. You do the best you can in every situation that you experience. It takes judgment to make the choices that best benefit a situation. Consider this: your powers of perception are particularly sharp at this time, and you would do well now to work out the details of any plans that you have previously made. This evening, you may feel focused and even a bit radiant. You are either entertaining company or being entertained yourself tonight. The snacks are low calorie and nutritional-good for you!

Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You may realize that you may have been stagnating lately. There are opportunities today to rise above the mundane. Saying or writing with style comes naturally as you seek to write a program or progress report. It may seem that you are always writing technical material, and just now there is a desire for variety with some of your work. You may find yourself at a used book store reading all types of subjects. You may even find yourself involved with two books at once. Increasing your vocabulary expertise can be a fun ongoing activity, and you could find a friend to join you. Your ability to discriminate real breakthroughs and to spot new trends makes you able to work in areas at the very fringe of technology these days-more technology to write.

Leo (July 23-August 22)

Before work begins this morning, conversations with co-workers could be in the religious realm or at least, spiritual. You have little interest in spirituality that is rampant these days. You could probably bring imagination and religious understanding to physical and scientific studies. Opportunity for further thought regarding the spirit tends to crop up during the day-you are open to new ways of thinking. Continued success on the career level may point to your abandoning some of your dreams. This afternoon, family matters tend to take precedence and you may have to help a young person to understand the word-concentration. You may even think of some fun exercise or game to play with the kids that will help with concentration.

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. You have the perfect combination to be in a management position at this time. If you think you are ready, this time may be best for pushing through any changes you may want to make in your career. You have good insight into all social activities that are around you and if you are not careful, you may find yourself involved in many club or social group responsibilities. You like to facilitate, compromise and otherwise show your talents-like a coat of many colors. New and creative projects help you to change that feeling of being in a rut. Chatting with neighbors or siblings this evening will help you to relax.

Libra (September 23-October 22)

An emphasis on discipline with regard to work and health is a keynote of the cycle now dawning in your life. Procedures, scheduling, details: you may become weak in some areas unless you take steps to correct any deficiencies. Deficiencies may only be when you fail to meet a deadline. You can do this . . . You will be pleased with your progress. Otherwise, you will have to run faster just to avoid falling behind. A desire for variety marks this phase and this especially applies to romantic experience and artistic taste. The latter tend to focus on literature and poetry. Communication with distant family members is possible this afternoon. A sociable, congenial, slightly frivolous orientation sets in this evening. A social involvement can be enjoyable.

Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

This is a good time for promoting yourself and for letting others know what you have to offer. Right now, the key to career moves involves attending to nagging details-whatever you have neglected before. This is a time during which you may be able to move ahead with your ambition and your general life's purpose. You would make an excellent teacher of philosophy or religion-you cannot help but communicate these subjects to others and enchant all who come to know you. Your understanding of the unity behind appearances, along with the ability to put these thoughts into words, is a rare and valuable gift. You would make a good director, photographer, choreographer, etc. You like working with mental images.

Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

You might like to ignore responsibilities and do some socializing, but realities demand you tend to business and forget your friends for the moment. This is one of the best times to make progress, push forward and rise to prominence. It will be hard for you to do wrong-all the cycles are working in your favor. Your career seems to get the support you need and this is one area of life that runs smoothly. You seem to understand what the public wants and mass marketing could be a natural for you. This is also a time when you may marry or take on a new role in the community or with other people. Your mind is ever on communication, how you present yourself, especially when negotiating. Enjoy cooking a new recipe tonight.

Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Independence on the part of people or events somehow challenges your authority today. Also, the forces of change assert themselves now and again, managing to overrule and overturn whatever you have managed to secure. Observing others, you will find that some people just naturally deal well with upheavals and adjustments-yet others may find much difficulty. You have great discipline and may find it enjoyable to teach young people how to solve difficulties they may uncover. You can demonstrate a good sensitivity and understanding about the needs of others. You know just the right words that will communicate positive messages. This could involve political issues. If not community politics, possibly club politics.

Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Opportunities may go against your own sense of responsibility. Career choices may require that you temporarily neglect the home. This is a tough call, and some compromise is perhaps the best way to a workable solution. This is a perfect time to be assertive and to move forward in your career decisions. You are driven when it comes to fulfilling your ambitions and carving out a career. There is no lack of energy or drive here, and nothing can stand in your way. Everything is poured into making the right moves-the correct decisions. You are outgoing, enthusiastic and always diplomatic-everybody's favorite. Politics or some other public career seems inevitable. Some experienced politician may tutor you in this process if that is what you want.

Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You enjoy working with whatever is psychological-the hidden, vulnerable, sensitive areas of the mind and self. You can handle material that is sensitive or taboo without batting an eye. This interest in all that is psychological makes you an excellent teacher. You also have a natural grasp for writing and after you worked with research, reports and projects, you may decide to go in a different direction. The different direction is what today is about. Where could you apply your talents and be the happiestyour drive in the area of psychology, meditation, renewals of direction or perhaps, concentration on a focus to improve, may mean an advice column. If you are not with a mate, this may be a time you will meet someone very special.

WORD SEARCH

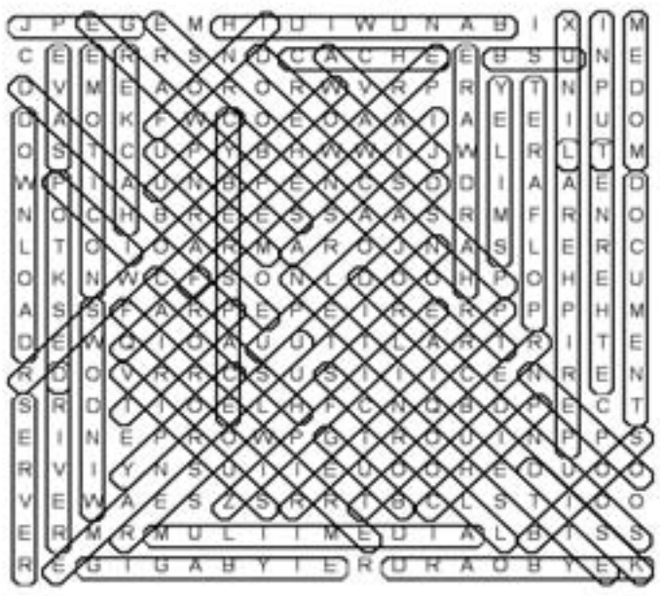
Countries of Europe

Find and circle all of the Countries of Europe that are hidden in the grid.
The remaining letters spell a secret message.
Note: IRELAND and NORTHERN IRELAND are separately hidden and do not overlap.

ALBANIA, ANDORRA, ARMENIA, AUSTRIA, AZERBAIJAN, BELARUS, BELGIUM, BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA, BULGARIA, CROATIA, CYPRUS, CZECH REPUBLIC, DENMARK, ENGLAND, ESTONIA, FINLAND, FRANCE, GEORGIA, GERMANY, GREECE, HUNGARY, ICELAND, IRELAND, ITALY, LATVIA, LIECHTENSTEIN, LITHUANIA, LUXEMBOURG, MACEDONIA, MALTA, MOLDOVA, MONACO, NETHERLANDS, NORTHERN IRELAND, NORWAY, POLAND, PORTUGAL, ROMANIA, RUSSIAN FEDERATION, SAN MARINO, SCOTLAND, SLOVAKIA, SLOVENIA, SPAIN, SWEDEN, SWITZERLAND, TURKEY, UKRAINE, SERBIA/MONTENEGRO, VATICAN CITY, WALES

Yesterday's Solution

Computer Jargon 2



ASCII, BANDWIDTH, BIOS, BUG, CACHE, CHIP, COPY, CPU, CRASH, CYBERSPACE, DATABASE, DESKTOP, DISK, DOCUMENT, DOWNLOAD, DRIVER, EMOTICON, ETHERNET, FAQ, FIREWIRE, FONT, FREEWARE, GIGABYTE, HACKER, HARDWARE, INPUT, JAVA, JPEG, KEYBOARD, LINUX, MENU, MODEM, MULTIMEDIA, NETIQUETTE, OPEN, PASSWORD, PCI, PERIPHERAL, PORT, PRINTER, REBOOT, RESOLUTION, SAVE, SCROLL, SERVER, SMILEY, SOUNDCARD, SPYWARE, TERAFLOP, TROJAN HORSE, UPLOAD, USB, USERNAME, VIRUS, WEB BROWSER, WINDOWS, ZIP FILE

The hidden word is: MICROPROCESSOR

Daily SuDoku

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

Yesterday's Solution

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

For labor-related inquiries and complaints:
Call MSAL hotline 128

Hospitals

Sabah Hospital	24812000
Amiri Hospital	22450005
Maternity Hospital	24843100
Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital	25312700
Chest Hospital	24849400
Farwaniya Hospital	24892010
Adan Hospital	23940620
Ibn Sina Hospital	24840300
Al-Razi Hospital	24846000
Physiotherapy Hospital	24874330/9

Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khaldiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401
Jabriya	25316254
Maidan Hawally	25623444
Bayan	25388462
Mishref	25381200
W Hawally	22630786
Sabah	24810221
Jahra	24770319
New Jahra	24575755
West Jahra	24772608
South Jahra	24775066
North Jahra	24775992
North Jleeb	24311795
Ardhiya	24884079
Firdous	24892674
Omariya	24719048
N Khaitan	24710044
Fintas	23900322

PHARMACIES
ON 24 HRS DUTY

GOVERNORATE	PHARMACY	ADDRESS	PHONE
Ahmadi	Sama Safwan	Fahaeel Makka St	23915883
	Abu Halaifa	Abu Halaifa-Coastal Rd	23715414
	Danat Al-Sultan	Mahboula Block 1, Coastal Rd	23726558
Jahra	Modern Jahra	Jahra-Block 3 Lot 1	24575518
	Madina Munawara	Jahra-Block 92	24566622
Capital	Ahlam	Fahad Al-Salem St	22436184
	Khaldiya Coop	Khaldiya Coop	24833967
Farwaniya	New Shifa	Farwaniya Block 40	24734000
	Ferdous Coop	Ferdous Coop	24881201
	Modern Safwan	Old Kheitan Block 11	24726638
Hawally	Tariq	Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St	25726265
	Hana	Salmiya-Amman St	25647075
	Ikhlas	Hawally-Beirut St	22625999
	Hawally & Rawdha	Hawally & Rawdha Coop	22564549
	Ghadeer	Jabriya-Block 1A	25340559
	Kindy	Jabriya-Block 3B	25326554
	Ibn Al-Nafis	Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St	25721264
	Mishrif Coop	Mishrif Coop	25380581
	Salwa Coop	Salwa Coop	25628241

STATE OF KUWAIT
DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION
METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT

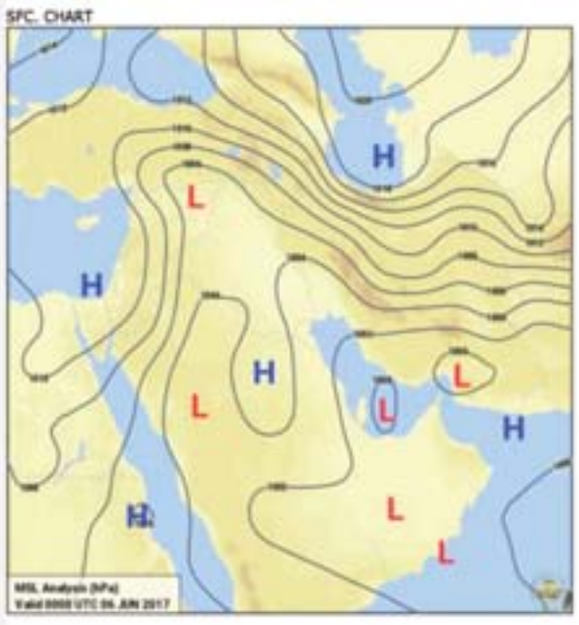
Tel: (+965) 161 Ext: 2627 - 2630
Fax: (+965) 24348714
www.met.gov.kw

Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours
Issued 06/06/2017-07:00 LT UTC +3hr

Max Temperature 45 °C

By Day : Hot with light to moderate north westerly to light variable wind, with speed of 08 - 30 km/h
By Night : Fair with light variable wind changing to light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 06 - 26 km/h

SFC. CHART



Four-Day Forecast

	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Expected Weather	hot	very hot	hot + raising dust	very hot + raising dust
Min Temp °C	28	30	31	32
Max Temp °C	46	47	46	47
Wind Direction	north westerly to light variable	north westerly	north westerly	north westerly
Wind Speed km/h	08 - 28	15 - 40	20 - 45	20 - 40

All times are local time (GMT+3) unless otherwise stated

Warnings & Weather Watches
no warnings or weather watches

Kuwait Forecast

Station	MIN °C REC	Max °C EXP
KUWAIT CITY	32	45
KUWAIT AIRPORT	26	45
ABDALY	26	45
BUBYAN	27	44
JAHRA	31	46
FAILAKA ISLAND	27	43
SALMIYAH	31	43
AHMADI	32	40
JAL ALIYAH	28	44
QAROH ISLAND	30	37
UMM AL-MARADEM	29	39
NUWAISIB	29	43
WAFRA	30	44
SALMY	26	43
MUTRIBA	25	46

Recorded Yesterday at Kuwait Airport

Max Temp (°C)	44
Min Temp (°C)	30
Max Rel Hum (%)	24
Min Rel Hum (%)	06
Max Wind Speed (km/h) and Direction	46 N
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR	0 mm

Sunrise	04:48
Sunset	18:45

Prayer Times

Fajr	03:14
Sunrise	04:48
Zuhr	11:47
Asr	15:21
Sunset	18:45
Isha	20:16

INTERNATIONAL CALLS

Afghanistan	0093	Lithuania	00370
Albania	00355	Luxembourg	00352
Algeria	00213	Macau	00853
Andorra	00376	Macedonia	00389
Angola	00244	Madagascar	00261
Anguilla	001264	Majorca	0034
Antiga	001268	Malawi	00265
Argentina	0054	Malaysia	0060
Armenia	00374	Maldives	00960
Australia	0061	Mali	00223
Austria	0043	Malta	00356
Azerbaijan	00994	Marshall Islands	00692
Bahamas	001242	Martinique	00596
Bahrain	00973	Mauritania	00222
Bangladesh	00880	Mauritius	00230
Barbados	001246	Mayotte	00269
Belarus	00375	Mexico	0052
Belgium	0032	Micronesia	00691
Belize	00501	Moldova	00373
Benin	00229	Monaco	00377
Bermuda	001441	Mongolia	00976
Bhutan	00975	Montserrat	001664
Bolivia	00591	Morocco	00212
Bosnia	00387	Mozambique	00258
Botswana	00267	Myanmar (Burma)	0095
Brazil	0055	Namibia	00264
Brunei	00673	Nepal	00977
Bulgaria	00359	Netherlands	0031
Burkina	00226	Netherlands Antilles	00599
Burundi	00257	New Caledonia	00687
Cambodia	00855	New Zealand	0064
Cameroon	00237	Nicaragua	00505
Canada	001	Nigar	00227
Cape Verde	00238	Nigeria	00234
Cayman Islands	001345	Niue	00683
Central African	00236	Norfolk Island	00672
Chad	00235	N. Ireland (UK)	0044
Chile	0056	North Korea	00850
China	0086	Norway	0047
Colombia	0057	Oman	00968
Comoros	00269	Pakistan	0092
Congo	00242	Palau	00680
Cook Islands	00682	Panama	00507
Costa Rica	00506	Papua New Guinea	00675
Croatia	00385	Paraguay	00595
Cuba	0053	Peru	0051
Cyprus	00357	Philippines	0063
Cyprus (Northern)	0090392	Poland	0048
Czech Republic	00420	Portugal	00351
Denmark	0045	Puerto Rico	001787
Diego Garcia	00246	Qatar	00974
Djibouti	00253	Romania	0040
Dominica	001767	Russian Federation	007
Dominican Republic	001809	Rwanda	00250
Ecuador	00593	Saint Helena	00290
Egypt	0020	Saint Kitts	001869
El Salvador	00503	Saint Lucia	001758
England (UK)	0044	Saint Pierre	00508
Equatorial Guinea	00240	Saint Vincent	001784
Eritrea	00291	Samoa US	00684
Estonia	00372	Samoa West	00685
Ethiopia	00251	San Marino	00378
Falkland Islands	00500	Sao Tome	00239
Faroe Islands	00298	Saudi Arabia	00966
Fiji	00679	Scotland (UK)	0044
Finland	00358	Senegal	00221
France	0033	Seychelles	00284
French Guiana	00594	Sierra Leone	00232
French Polynesia	00689	Singapore	0065
Gabon	00241	Slovakia	00421
Gambia	00220	Slovenia	00386
Georgia	00995	Solomon Islands	00677
Germany	0049	Somalia	00252
Ghana	00233	South Africa	0027
Gibraltar	00350	South Korea	0082
Greece	0030	Spain	0034
Greenland	00299	Sri Lanka	0094
Grenada	001473	Sudan	00249
Guadeloupe	00590	Suriname	00597
Guam	001671	Swaziland	00268
Guatemala	00502	Sweden	0046
Guinea	00224	Switzerland	0041
Guyana	00592	Syria	00963
Haiti	00509	Serbia	00381
Holland (Netherlands)	0031	Taiwan	00886
Honduras	00504	Tanzania	00255
Hong Kong	00852	Thailand	0066
Hungary	0036	Togo	00228
Ibiza (Spain)	0034	Tonga	00676
Iceland	00354	Tokelau	00690
India	0091	Trinidad	001868
Indian Ocean	00873	Tunisia	00216
Indonesia	0062	Turkey	0090
Iran	0098	Tuvalu	00688
Iraq	00964	Uganda	00256
Ireland	00353	Ukraine	00380
Italy	0039	United Arab Emirates	00976
Ivory Coast	00225	United Kingdom	0044
Jamaica	001876	Uruguay	00598
Japan	0081	USA	001
Jordan	00962	Uzbekistan	00998
Kazakhstan	007	Vanuatu	00678
Kenya	00254	Venezuela	00582
Kiribati	00686	Vietnam	0084
Kuwait	00965	Virgin Islands UK	001284
Kyrgyzstan	00996	Virgin Islands US	001340
Laos	00856	Wales (UK)	0044
Latvia	00371	Yemen	00967
Lebanon	00961	Yugoslavia	00381
Liberia	00231	Zambia	00260
Libya	00218	Zimbabwe	00263
Lesotho	00266		

PRIVATE CLINICS

Ophthalmologists

Dr. Abidallah Al-Mansoor	25622444
Dr. Samy Al-Rabeea	25752222
Dr. Masoma Habeeb	25321171
Dr. Mubarak Al-Ajmy	25739999
Dr. Mohsen Abel	25757700
Dr Adnan Hasan Alwayl	25732223
Dr. Abdallah Al-Baghly	25732223

Ear, Nose & Throat (ENT)

Dr. Ahmed Fouad Mouner	24555050 Ext 510
Dr. Abdallah Al-Ali	25644660
Dr. Abd Al-Hameed Al-Taweel	25646478
Dr. Sanad Al-Fathalah	25311996
Dr. Mohammad Al-Daaory	25731988
Dr. Ismail Al-Fodary	22620166
Dr. Mahmoud Al-Booz	25651426

General Practitioners

Dr. Mohamme Y Majidi	24555050 Ext 123
Dr. Yousef Al-Omar	24719312
Dr. Tarek Al-Mikhazeem	23926920
Dr. Kathem Maarafi	25730465
Dr. Abdallah Ahmad Eyadah	25655528
Dr. Nabeel Al-Ayoobi	24577781
Dr. Dina Abidallah Al-Refae	25333501

Urologists

Dr. Ali Naser Al-Serfy	22641534
Dr. Fawzi Taher Abul	22639955
Dr. Khaleel Abidallah Al-Awadi	22616660
Dr. Adel Al-Hunayan FRCS (C)	25313120
Dr. Leons Joseph	66703427

Plastic Surgeons

Dr. Mohammad Al-Khalaf	22547272
Dr. Abdal-Redha Lari	22617700
Dr. Abdel Quttainah	25625030/60

Family Doctor

Dr Divya Damodar	23729596/23729581

Psychiatrists

Dr. Esam Al-Ansari	22635047
Dr Eisa M. Al-Balhan	22613623/0

Gynaecologists & Obstetricians

DrAdrian arbe	23729596/23729581
Dr. Verginia s.Marin	2572-6666 ext 8321
Dr. Fozeya Ali Al-Qatan	22655539
Dr. Majeda Khalefa Aliytami	25343406
Dr. Ahmad Al-Khooly	25739272
Dr. Salem soso	22618787

General Surgeons

Dr. Amer Zawaz Al-Amer	22610044
Dr. Mohammad Yousef Basher	25327148

Internists, Chest & Heart

Dr. Adnan Ebil	22639939
Dr. Mousa Khadada	22666300
Dr. Latefa Al-Duweisan	25728004
Dr. Nadem Al-Ghabra	25355515
Dr. Mobarak Aldoub	24726446
Dr Nasser Behbehani	25654300/3

Paediatricians

Dr. Khaled Hamadi	25665898
Dr. Abd Al-Aziz Al-Rashed	25340300
Dr. Zahra Qabazard	25710444
Dr. Sohail Qamar	22621099
Dr. Snaa Maaroof	25713514
Dr. Pradip Gujare	23713100
Dr. Zacharias Mathew	24334282

Dermatology

Dr. Mohammed Salam Bern University	23845955

Dentists

Dr Anil Thomas	3729596/3729581
Dr. Shamah Al-Matar	22641071/2
Dr. Anesah Al-Rasheed	22562226
Dr. Abidallah Al-Amer	22561444
Dr. Faysal Al-Fozan	22619557
Dr. Abdallateef Al-Katrash	22525888
Dr. Abidallah Al-Duweisan	25653755
Dr. Bader Al-Ansari	25620111

Neurologists

Dr. Sohal Najem Al-Shemeri	25633324
Dr. Jasem Mola Hassan	25345875

Gastrologists

Dr. Sami Aman	22636464
Dr. Mohammad Al-Shamaly	25322030
Dr. Foad Abidallah Al-Ali	22633135

Endocrinologist

Dr. Abd Al-Naser Al-Othman	25339330
Dr. Ahmad Al-Ansari	25658888
Dr. Kamal Al-Shomr	25329924

Physiotherapists & VD

Dr. Deyaa Shehab	25722291
Dr. Musaed Faraj Khamees	22666288

Rheumatologists:

Dr. Adel Al-Awadi	25330060
Dr. Khaled Al-Jarallah	25722290

Internist, Chest & Heart

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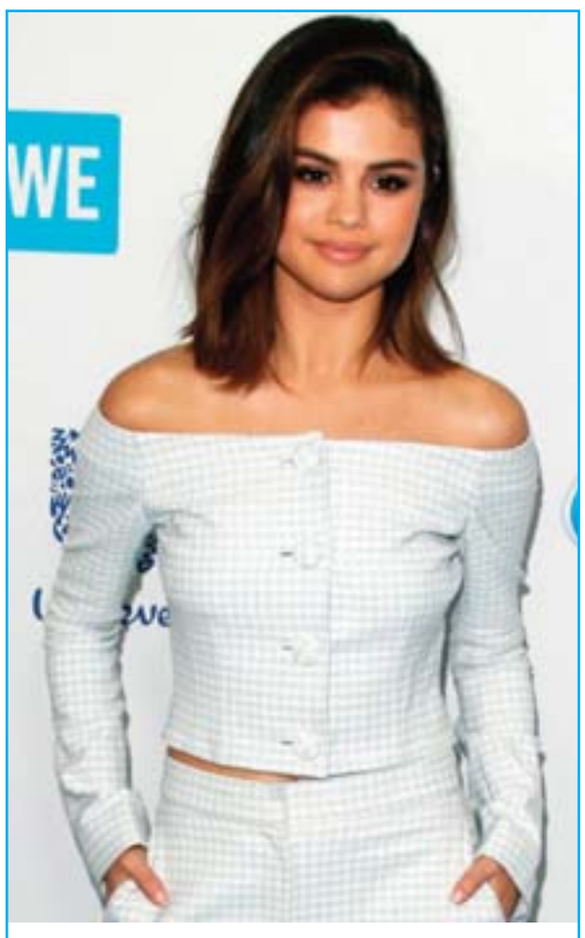
Dua Lipa finds writing lyrics therapeutic

Dua Lipa finds writing songs like therapy. The 21-year-old pop beauty channels her "sadness" in her lyrics and finds it helps get things "off her chest" by putting pen to paper. She said: "I say that a lot of my inspiration comes from sadness, and I am okay, thank you. I find it the easiest and most therapeutic to be able to write about my experiences in that way, and that's how I get things off my chest." The 'Lost In Your Light' singer's self-titled debut album talks a lot about love and heartbreak despite sounding upbeat, but Dua is no longer fazed by her exes knowing she has written about them. She told DIY magazine: "It used to be scary when I'm writing about a certain experience and I'm worried about the person I'm writing about will find out it's about them. But I'm no longer worried. I'm really okay with people knowing certain songs are about them. I just feel good about it. But yes, I'm okay. It's just a way of me getting all my feelings out." Simply jotting down her thoughts brings the 'Hotter Than Hell' hitmaker "clarity" about that moment in life she is writing about. She added: "It gives me so much clarity. I can then understand why certain things happen in the way that they have, and I'm able to finally put it out on to paper. It makes me okay with the situation." Dua has a ballad in 'Homesick' on the record, which is out now, but she wasn't worried it would change the style of the entire album, which is mainly upbeat pop. Asked if she was reluctant to include the track, which features Chris Martin from Coldplay, she said: "No because I love them. I love ballads, I love singing along to them. They're really emotional. As long as I could put my own take on it, and that it didn't feel that far away from what I do. I feel like the ballad still touches on my personal style, musically."

Guns n' Roses 'planning on' album

Guns N' Roses are "planning on" releasing another album. The 'Paradise City' rockers - currently comprised of Axl Rose, Slash, Duff McKagan, Richard Fortus, Dizzy Reed, Frank Ferrer, and Melissa Reese - haven't "started recording anything" for a potential seventh studio album just yet, but guitarist Richard Fortus believes the idea of a new album would be "too good not to happen". He said: "We haven't started recording anything, when I say that, as far as in the studio doing an album. We've been recording a lot of stuff, just ideas, assembling ideas, but not going into a studio and actually tracking a new record. "It's sort of too good not to happen at this point, that's how I feel about it. This band is really a force right now, and I definitely hope that we do, and I think we're all sort of counting on it, and we're also planning on it." Richard also went on to praise frontman Axl Rose on his songwriting skills, as he dubbed the 'Welcome To The Jungle' hitmaker as a "genius". He told the 'StageLeft' podcast: "I think the genius of Axl is his ability to assemble songs, from different parts, and make them feel cohesive as a song. I've never seen anybody able to do that in the same way." If the band were to release a new record, it would be their first in almost a decade, as their last album 'Chinese Democracy' was released in 2008. A new album would also mark the first since 1993's 'The Spaghetti Incident?' to include Slash and Duff McKagan, who left the 'Sweet Child O' Mine' hitmakers in 1996 and 1997 respectively.

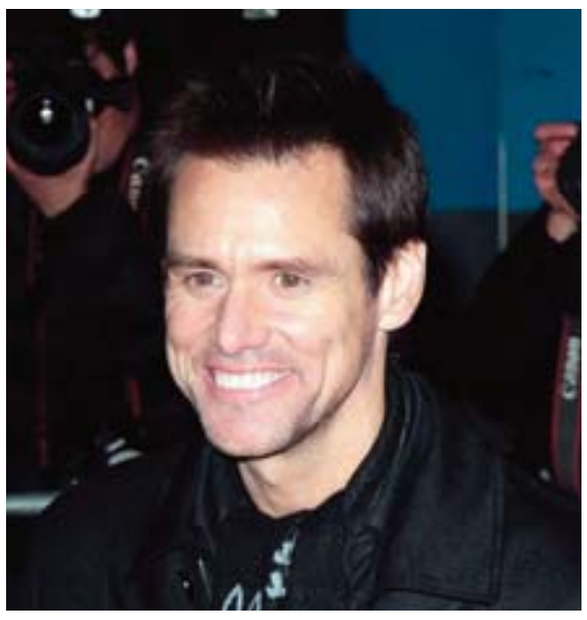


Selena Gomez admits her music is 'evolving'

Selena Gomez's new music will mark an "evolution" in her sound. The 24-year-old star has promised that her upcoming record will be markedly different from her 2015 album 'Revival', which featured hits such as 'Hands to Myself' and 'Same Old Love'. She told SiriusXM: "It's an evolution and I know it's different and I just wanted it to sound like something I've never done before." As well as touring and making new music, Selena has recently served as a producer on the TV series '13 Reasons Why' - which is based on the book 'Thirteen Reasons Why' by Jay Asher. And the brunette beauty has admitted she can see "so much" of herself in the show's character Hannah Baker, a school girl whose suicide is central to the plot. She recently explained: "I see myself in Hannah so much. Seven years ago I did and even more so today, which I think is funny because it's backwards. The older I get the more insecure I get, which is odd. But that's something a lot of people can relate to." In the show, Hannah is the subject of constant rumors and is perceived to be promiscuous by her classmates. And according to Selena, she can empathize with some of the character's struggles. She shared: "Her personality is a quiet strength. I've never really been the one to be in anyone's face. A lot of girls feel like they have to be a certain way for attention. "Social media has amplified all of that. I get that she didn't want that to be what her life was."

JIM CARREY'S THE MASK WAS SUPPOSED TO BE A HORROR FILM

Jim Carrey's beloved fantasy comedy film 'The Mask' was originally intended to be a horror movie. The 1994 movie - starring the Hollywood funnyman and a young Cameron Diaz - was a huge box office hit and is still popular with family audiences now who love Carrey as unlucky bank clerk Stanley Ipkiss and his madcap green-faced alter ego. Now, director Chuck Russell has revealed he had to battle bosses at New Line to let him make the film a comedy as opposed to the horror romp they had envisioned. Speaking to Xfinity about the 30th anniversary of his cult classic Freddy Krueger installment 'A Nightmare on Elm Street 3: Dream Warriors', Russell said: "It's a great example of really fighting for your vision in a film. We changed it from a horror film into a comedy. It was original conceived as being a horror film. That was a real battle. New Line wanted a new kind of Freddy [Krueger] movie." The 'I Am Wrath' helmer understands why New Line thought the character would best be presented on the big screen as murderous villain because the Dark Horse comic book series - which is what the film is based on - presents a far more gruesome individual. Russell added: "By coincidence, I had seen the same original Mask comic they ended up buying, and I thought, 'That's really cool, but it's too derivative of Freddy Krueger.' It really was. He would put on the mask and kill people. And have one-liners. It was a really cool, splatterpunk, black and white comic. They've redone the comics to be more like my movie, but the original comics were really cool, dark and scary. But I knew, as a film, it would be very reminiscent of Freddy Krueger." 'The Mask' was one of three films released that year starring Carrey, the other two being 'Dumb and Dumber' and 'Ace Ventura: Pet Detective', which made him a global superstar. Russell, 59, knew he wanted Carrey, 55, for the lead role, even though he wasn't widely known back then, after watching him do a stand-up comedy routine in Los Angeles. The filmmaker shared: "He wasn't really desired as a leading man at that time. [When I saw] him he looked like a hallucination live on stage. Jim read it and he said, 'I'll be doing this role at grocery store openings when I'm 70.'

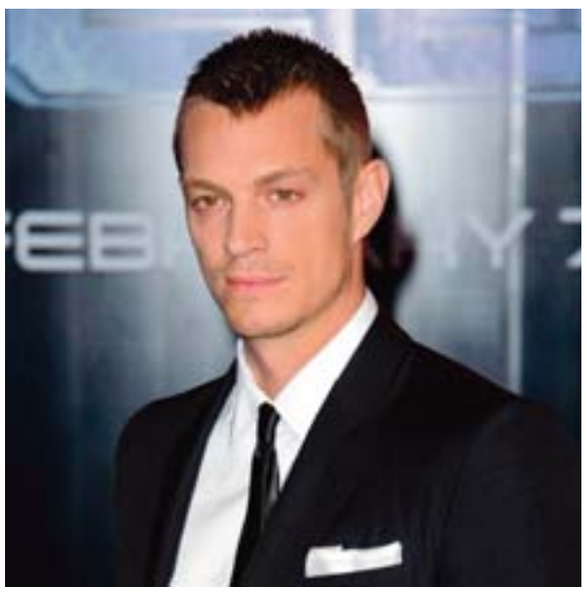


Jake Johnson took on Mummy for wife

Jake Johnson took on his role in 'The Mummy' because his wife is fascinated by Tom Cruise. The 39-year-old actor had reservations about signing up for the movie as he was aware of the 54-year-old star's passion for doing his own stunts, and was reluctant to put himself at risk, but eventually changed his mind at the request of spouse Erin Payne. He said: "I remember saying to my wife 'I have a chance to play Tom Cruise's friend in 'The Mummy' but I don't know if I want to do it', because there were a lot of stunts and I know that Tom does them himself and I didn't want to die on the side of an airplane for a movie. "And my wife said 'I have never said this before but I really want you to do it because I really want to hear more about Tom Cruise'. "There is no PR team telling me to say this but he is genuinely just a sweet, passionate, awesome guy." And Jake - who plays Sergeant Chris Vail - admits making the film was unlike anything he'd ever experienced because Tom is so "relentless" and passionate about details, to the point where the 'New Girl' star and his wife had to relocate to London just so he could learn to ride a horse with a family of experts sought out by his co-star. He told the Metro newspaper: "It was a lot of work because Tom is relentless. "He loves making movies in a way that, honestly, I have never seen. Every single detail matters to this guy. "There is a sequence where I ride a horse, so he and Universal got me the best horse trainers - the Dent family in England. "I moved my family to Richmond in London for three and a half months so I could train on the Dent farm, galloping through the English countryside. It was utter madness."

Joel Kinnaman: Suicide Squad 2 to film in 2018

Joel Kinnaman has revealed 'Suicide Squad 2' will be filmed next year. The 37-year-old actor "definitely" wants to return to the franchise as Red Flag, and confirmed work is currently underway on a script, with shooting expected to commence "sometime" in 2018. He told The Hollywood Reporter: "As far as I know they're writing the script and I think the plan is to shoot it sometime in 2018, but that could change. I think I'll definitely come back for it." Joel would love 'Suicide Squad' director David Ayer to return to helm the highly-anticipated sequel, but he hasn't signed up for the project and is busy working on another DC Universe movie, 'Gotham City Sirens'. And though he hasn't seen a plot for the film yet, the actor knows what he'd like to see his character and fellow supervillains, including Harley Quinn (Margot Robbie), Deadshot (Will Smith) and Captain Boomerang (Jai Courtney), get up to in the sequel. He added: "Ultimately, I'd love for David Ayer to direct it, but if he doesn't want to direct it then someone who is great with character and that's able to ground the story and maybe put these characters in a more normal situation. It would be really interesting to see these crazy characters interact with regular people as well." Mel Gibson was previously linked with the vacant director's chair, but insisted it was all just speculation. He said recently: "I don't know. I just met some guys about story points. It's not a done deal or anything, but it's just fun to shoot the pool, you know, when it comes to stories. "I love doing it. And if we can elevate any type of concept, it's good. We'll see."



Jamie Foxx suffers from 'performance anxiety'

Jamie Foxx thinks all actors and actresses suffer from "performance anxiety". The Hollywood star's latest movie sees him appear alongside the likes of Ansel Elgort, Lily James and Jon Hamm in the new action film 'Baby Driver' - but Jamie believes that even the best, most experienced performers feel anxious about watching themselves on screen. He shared: "They're cutting the movie as it goes and that's sort of fly. I think every actor and actresses has performance anxiety. We're like, 'Damn, does this s**t look right?!'" Jamie plays the part of Bats, a cohort of the movie's bank robbing crew, and the actor revealed he's already received the seal of approval from his daughter Annalise. He told Collider: "He's sort of like the angry dude. He's killing everybody. My seven-year-old daughter asked me what I was doing today and I'm like, 'Killing some more people.' "She's cool with it. She was on the set of 'Django' before, so she understands what it is. It's sort of a familiarity with the role. But, I think the difference is how the music is playing and how it's being set up." Jamie's on-screen character has a number of tattoos in the movie and the actor revealed the idea belonged to director Edgar Wright. Asked how long it took him to get ready each day on set, Jamie explained: "It's about 25 minutes. It's just some stick-ons, like the character's name is Bat, so he's got bats and stuff. But I think it's sort of his way of stylizing this movie as well. It's sort of on the nose. They're trying to add some originality to it. "I think we're in a time now where there's not a lot of original movies. I don't know if you could name an original. So, he tries to make his mark. Him and Quentin Tarantino are homies, so they share the same type of creative mind. There's not a lot out there."

Steven Tyler of Aerosmith performs at the Royal Arena in Copenhagen, on June 5, 2017. — AFP

'WONDER WOMAN' IS A HIT THAT EVEN HOLLYWOOD CAN'T IGNORE

Batman is the superhero with the calling-card beam of light, but Wonder Woman sent a signal over the weekend that even Hollywood couldn't miss. Patty Jenkins' "Wonder Woman" grossed $103.3 million in North America over its debut weekend, a figure that easily surpassed industry expectations, set a new record for a film directed by a woman and bested all previous stand-alone female superhero movies put together. (There aren't many and there hasn't been one in 12 years.)

Strong reviews (93 percent on Rotten Tomatoes) and word of mouth (an A CinemaScore) pushed the film into must-see status. Wonder Woman, that Amazonian warrior-princess last in the spotlight in '70s, lassoed the zeitgeist. By Monday, Warner Bros had to increase its weekend estimate up by almost $3 million because audiences kept coming on Sunday. "Wonder Woman" is a hit, and in a movie industry that has seldom put female filmmakers behind the camera for its biggest blockbusters, it could be an important one. It certainly had that feel opening weekend, where droves of moviegoers came wearing "We are all Diana" T-shirts, young girls flocked in Wonder Woman outfits and even movie stars were blowing kisses at the movie and calling it a "game changer."

Raises awareness

"I am a filmmaker who wants to make successful films, of course. I want my film to be celebrated," Jenkins said before her film's debut. "But there's a whole other person in me who's sitting and watching what's happening right now who so hopes, not for me, that this movie defies expectation. Because I want to see the signal that that will send to the world." Jenkins' objective appeared to be met by the opening of "Wonder Woman," a heavily marketed $150 million movie that spent a decade in development before finally - after hordes of other superheroes - making it to the big screen.

"Wonder Woman" didn't surpass the openings of previous DC Comics adaptations: the terribly received "Batman v Superman" and "Suicide Squad." But unlike those releases, "Wonder Woman" is good enough to play strongly through the next few weeks. "The momentum is with us in every way," said Warner Bros distribution chief Jeff Goldstein. That was decidedly not the case heading into the weekend. "Wonder Woman" came on the heels of disappointing DC Comics films and a lackluster early summer box office where little besides "Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2" has caught fire. But more importantly, Jenkins and "Wonder Woman" burst

In this May 25, 2017 file photo, director Patty Jenkins, left, and actress Gal Gadot arrive at the world premiere of "Wonder Woman" at the Pantages Theatre in Los Angeles.

through Hollywood's glass ceiling with one of the rarest things: A summer blockbuster helmed by a woman. "Maybe this raises awareness that female directors are a force to be reckoned with," said Paul Dergarabedian, senior media analyst for comScore. That's been especially hard-to-miss this summer. Sofia Coppola, whose upcoming June release "The Beguiled" remakes the 1971 Don Siegel-Clint Eastwood movie from a female perspective, last week became just the second female filmmaker to win best director at the Cannes Film Festival.

Modern society

"I try to keep making work and I have a female point of view that I embrace," Coppola said recently. "I don't want to speak so politically. I just feel like that's not my role. But I'm happy to put my work out there." Cannes juror Jessica Chastain also drew widespread applause for questioning the quality of the female characters on view at the festival. Her fellow jury member Maren Ade, the German director of "Toni Erdmann," spoke about the dearth of female filmmakers. "I found after a while always being surrounded by men doing this job, the impression comes up that it's maybe not a good job for a woman," Ade said. "I think that's completely wrong and I think we need much more women doing films. We all want the film business to reflect modern society."

This image released by Warner Bros Entertainment shows Gal Gadot in a scene from "Wonder Woman." — AP photos

With its action movies and comic-book films, summer has long been the most male moviegoing season of the year - one where even female Ghostbusters are enough to spark a tempestuous culture war. But Jenkins and Coppola have some company this season. Next week, Lucia Aniello, a writer and director from "Broad City," will release her bachelorette comedy "Rough Night." In August, Kathryn Bigelow returns with her Detroit riots thriller "Detroit." It's shaping up to be an atypically tough summer for misogyny at the multiplex.

Yet researchers who have spent years charting the lack of progress for female directors in Hollywood are skeptical much has changed. "High-profile cases, such as Kathryn Bigelow and Patty Jenkins, can dramatically skew our perceptions of how women are actually faring as film directors," said San Diego State University professor Martha M Lauzen, executive director of the Center for the Study of Women in Television and Film. "While their successes are encouraging, it is important to consider the larger picture and to continue counting the numbers of women working on screen and behind the scenes so we can have a conversation about women's representation and employment that is grounded in a verifiable reality."—AP

OWNER OF LARGEST STAR WARS MEMORABILIA COLLECTION ROBBED

This file photo shows Steve Sansweet, owner and self-proclaimed CEO of Rancho Obi-Wan, the world's largest private collection of Star Wars memorabilia in Petaluma, California. — AFP

The owner of the largest collection of Star Wars memorabilia said on Monday a longtime friend had robbed him of more than 100 items, including rare vintage US and foreign carded action figures. Steve Sansweet, who runs Rancho Obi-Wan, a non-profit museum north of San Francisco that houses more than 400,000 Star Wars collectibles, said the theft took place over several months in late 2015 through 2016. "We're missing about 120 to 130 items worth some $200,000," he told AFP. He said the majority of the items stolen are vintage US and foreign carded action figures, many of them rare.

Sansweet, a former Wall Street Journal reporter who worked for 15 years as head of fan relations at Lucasfilm before retiring in 2011, identified the suspect as Carl Cunningham, a well-known Star Wars collector and R2-D2 builder from Marietta, Georgia. "I've known him for 20 years," Sansweet said. "He shared our hospitality, he stayed with us, he ate our food, he had the run of the museum as few people had because we trusted him, and he turns around and does something like this." A spokesman for the Sonoma County Sheriff's Office confirmed to AFP that Cunningham on March 13 had been charged with felony grand theft and was free on bail.

Reading from the charge sheet, Sergeant Spencer Crum said Cunningham had visited Sansweet several times and had easy access to the collection recgonized by Guinness World Records as the largest in the world "as he voluntarily dusted pieces and did cleanup work around the museum." The theft came to light after a major collector and owner of several Star Wars websites raised the alarm upon discovering that one of his collectibles-a rare prototype rocket-firing Boba Fett action figure-was stolen from his Texas warehouse.

A toy dealer subsequently came forward to say he had purchased the item as well as a number of other rare Star Wars collectibles from Cunningham. Sansweet said Cunningham had sent him email and text messages admitting the theft. "He says ... he's in therapy and seeking to understand himself and apologizes," Sansweet said. "To have a friend come in and do something like this, it could destroy your faith in humanity," he added, appealing to anyone who may have purchased any stolen Star Wars collectibles to come forward. "It is our goal to resolve this situation as quickly as possible and to continue to use the collection at Rancho Obi-Wan to 'Inspire through the Force' despite the destruction caused by one person," he said. — AFP

In this Oct 17, 1986 file photo, Chuck Berry performs during a concert celebration for his 60th birthday at the Fox Theatre in St Louis, Mo Berry died March 18, 2017 at the age of 90.

In this Feb 26, 2012 file photo, Chuck Berry plays "Johnny B Goode" at the John F Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum in Boston, an event where he and Leonard Cohen were honored with Awards for Song Lyrics of Literary Excellence.

Chuck Berry's final album was made on his own terms

Chuck Berry did things his own way, right up to his final album, a 10-song set nearly four decades in the making. The St Louis native widely hailed as the father of rock 'n' roll announced plans for the album "CHUCK" in October on his 90th birthday. The music took on added poignancy when Berry died in March. The album will be released Friday. It's a fitting finale from the guitar master who melded blues, R&B and country music into a sound that took over the 1950s, forever changing the cultural landscape. Some of the new songs, like "Wonderful Woman" and "Big Boys," feature the same driving rhythm of his earliest hits like "Maybellene" and "Roll Over Beethoven." In fact, one of the new songs, "Lady B. Goode," offers the perspective of the woman left behind by his legendary "Johnny B. Goode."

But Berry's son, Charles Berry Jr, said his father did not set out to make a legacy album. "I think this was just his next body of work, and it just took a lot longer than the other albums to get released," Charles Berry Jr, 55, said in an interview with The Associated Press. That's an understatement. Jim Marsala, who played bass guitar in Berry's band for 41 years, said Berry began working on new material soon after the release of his previous album, "Rock It," in 1979. Always marching to his own beat, Berry was in no particular hurry. For 10 years, he recorded songs, or riffs for songs, or whatever came to mind. All of the tracks were destroyed in a 1989 fire at a studio near his home in Wentzville, Missouri, a St Louis suburb.

Nightly trip

At that point, "he has nothing," Charles Berry Jr said. "So, he builds another studio and goes back to work, re-creating and creating new music." In the meantime, Berry continued to perform, including monthly shows for nearly two decades at Blueberry Hill, a venue in another St Louis suburb, University City, until age 88. Marsala directed the band, Charles Berry Jr played guitar, and the always unpredictable frontman commanded the stage, taking his bandmates on a nightly trip they could never anticipate.

"The show was completely ad-libbed," Marsala said. "You never knew what was coming next. We usually started out with 'Roll Over Beethoven,' 'School Days,' and then 'Sweet Little Sixteen,' and then from there it was whatever he felt like playing." Marsala made sure he stood to Berry's left, better to see where Berry's hands were on the neck of his guitar "so I knew what key he was in. So when he would do his four-bar intro I had hand signals. I would flash to the keyboard player so he would know what key we were in. And we'd come in on the fifth bar. It worked great." Charles Berry Jr smiled as he recalled those shows. "He'd be up onstage and just start doing stuff," he said. "And it'd be, 'OK, let's just follow him wherever he's going.'"—AP

Arundhati Roy releases first novel in 20 years

Arundhati Roy's eagerly-awaited second novel went on sale yesterday, two decades after her prize-winning debut "The God of Small Things" propelled her to global fame and launched her career as an outspoken critic of injustice in her native India. Roy became the first Indian woman to win the prestigious Booker Prize with her 1997 work, which sold around eight million copies and turned the young author into a star of the literary world. In the years that followed, she turned to non-fiction writing, taking on issues ranging from poverty and globalization to the conflict in Kashmir in essays that were often highly critical of India's ruling class.

Her campaigning earned her the wrath of many in the Indian establishment and has clearly influenced her latest novel "The Ministry of Utmost Happiness", which she has said took 10 years to produce. Publisher Penguin says it takes the reader "from the cramped neighborhoods of Old Delhi into the burgeoning new metropolis" and on to the troubled Kashmir Valley and the jungles of central India, racked by a long-running Maoist rebellion. "There was this huge sense of urgency when I was writing the political essays, each time you wanted to blow a space open, on any issue," Roy told The Hindu daily in an interview published last week.

"But fiction takes its time and is layered... It is not just a human rights report about how many people have been killed and where. How do you describe the psychosis of what is going on? Except through fiction." Roy was praised at home when she became the first resident Indian to win the Booker for her novel about twins growing up in the southern state of Kerala. Previous Indian winners had lived outside the country. The Times of India in an editorial entitled "Novel Indian" quoted a "prophecy" by James Joyce-"The East shall wake the West awake/And ye shall have night for morn"-which it said "seems to be coming true".

Roy recalled in a recent BBC interview how she was suddenly on the cover of every magazine-until she spoke out against India's nuclear tests a year later. "Not that I had a say in it, but I was being marketed as this new product of the global India," she said. "And then suddenly the government did these nuclear tests... and I wrote this essay condemning the tests, and at that point the fairy princess was kicked off her pedestal in a minute."

'Scarring'

Roy, now 55, went on to become one of India's most famous and polarizing authors. She was briefly jailed for contempt of court over her activism and still faces a sedition charge for challenging in 2010 India's right to rule the disputed Kashmir region. She argues that India's economic boom has made a small minority rich on the sufferings of the poor, and has spent time researching the fight by Maoist rebels for land rights in the resource-rich jungles of central India.

Her criticism of the ruling Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party has been particularly fierce. She once called for Prime Minister Narendra Modi to be put on trial over the deadly anti-Muslim riots in the state of Gujarat in 2002, when he was chief minister. Modi has been dogged by accusations he turned a blind eye to the violence, but a Supreme Court-ordered investigation in 2012 cleared him of any wrongdoing. Internationally she remains a huge draw, lauded both for her activism and her writing, and the reviews of her second novel have been broadly-though not universally-positive.

This file photo shows Indian writer Arundhati Roy (center) talking to reporters as she takes part in a protest against the Communist Party of India (CPI) outside their headquaters in New Delhi. — AFP

The Financial Times said it was "as remarkable as her first" and admirers would not be disappointed, while The New Yorker called it a "scarring novel of India's modern history".

But some critics were skeptical about her attempts to introduce political causes into her fiction. "'Ministry' is two decades of polemic distilled into one book, with a superstructure of fiction to hold it together," said The Economist. "It does not work."—AFP

A visitor watches a mural by the Mexican artist Juandres Vera at the 'Magic City - The Art of the Street' exhibition.

A man takes a picture of the street art mural by the Dutch artist Leon Keer.

'MAGIC CITY – THE ART OF THE STREET' EXHIBITION

A young woman looks at the street art mural by the Dutch artist Leon Keer at the 'Magic City - The Art of the Street' exhibition in Munich, southern Germany, yesterday. The exhibition presents murals, graffiti, 3D works and installations by more than 40 artists from more than 20 nations. — AFP photos

The mural by the US artist Tristan Eaton is pictured.

A young woman looks at the street art bus stop mural of the Great Britain artist Replete.

Visitors watch the street art mural by the US artist Tristan Eaton.

The street art installation of German artist Andy K is pictured.

Solo climber is 1st up Yosemite's El Capitan without ropes

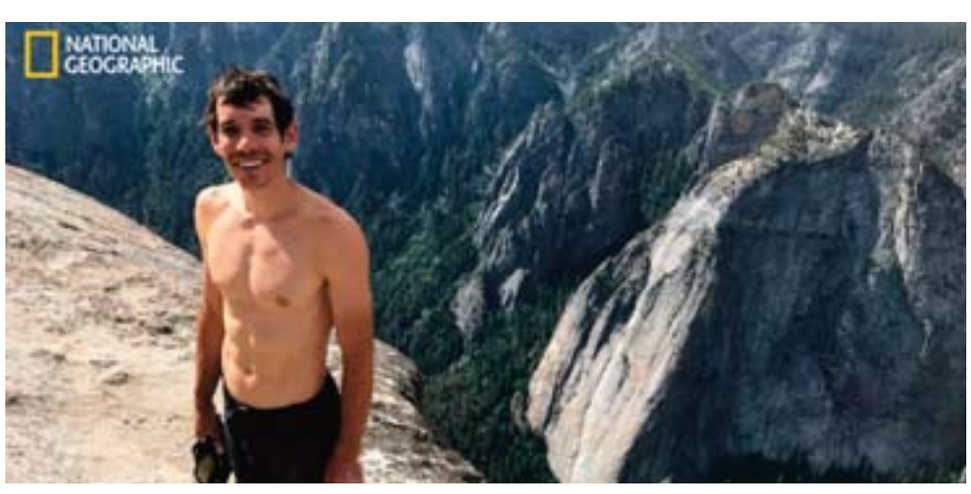
This file photo shows El Capitan in Yosemite National Park, Calif. — AP photos

An elite rock climber became the first to climb alone to the top of the massive granite wall known as El Capitan in Yosemite National Park without using ropes or safety gear. Alex Honnold completed the "free solo" climb Saturday in nearly four hours, according to National Geographic, which documented the historic ascent. A photo posted on the magazine's website shows the grinning 31-year-old wearing just a pair of black pants after reaching the summit.

Honnold, who grew up in Sacramento and now lives in Las Vegas, said he's been dreaming about the feat for at least eight years. "Each year I'd come (to Yosemite) and look up at the wall," he told the San Francisco Chronicle in a telephone interview. "And I'd think, 'Oh my God, how can I do it?'" He said he started rehearsing the route, climbing it with partners and a rope, and occasionally hiking up to the summit to propel himself down.

Observers said his climb has pushed the limits in a sport that requires a high level of athleticism, risk-taking and mental focus. "This has never been done before ... and it's hard to imagine anybody ever coming close to what he's done," said Daniel Duane, author of "El Capitan: Historic Feats and Radical Routes." "He is totally alone at the top of his game." The climb up 3,000-foot (914-meter) El Capitan used to take days to complete with the aid of ropes, safety gear and a partner. In the past few decades, speed climbers working in tandem and using ropes have set records in reaching the top of the steep cliff.

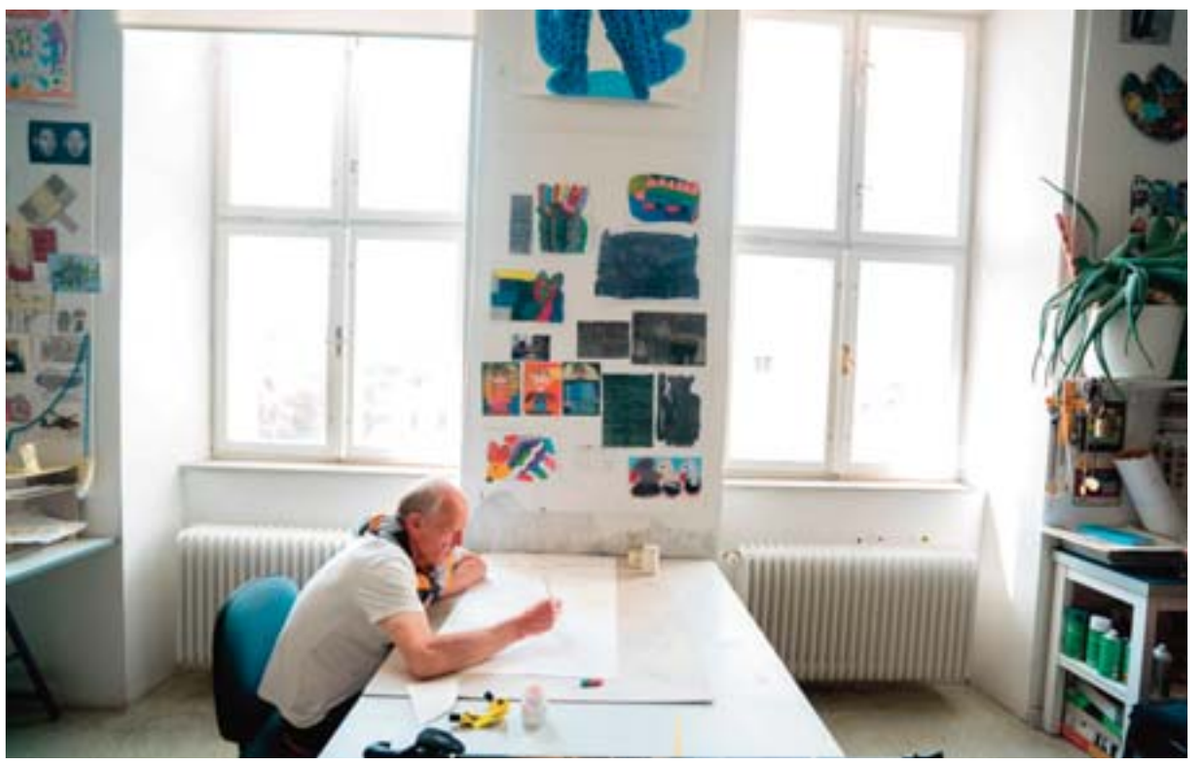
In January 2015, Tommy Caldwell and Kevin Jorgeson became the first to "free climb" the Dawn Wall - a particularly steep route to the top of El Capitan - by grabbing just the rock and using ropes only to catch them if they fell. They did it in 19 days. Honnold is first to climb the iconic rock alone without protection in mere hours.



This photo provided by National Geographic shows Alex Honnold atop El Capitan in Yosemite National Park, Calif, after he became the first person to climb alone to the top of the massive granite wall without ropes or safety gear.

"To climb without ropes where the slightest slip is literally fatal in that arena requires enormous self-control and focus," Duane said. "It requires this intense cognitive effort to keep fear at bay and focus on the task in front of you." He said Honnold has a rare ability to control fear and his body for a long period of time. "He's shown awesome grace under pressure," said Hans Florine, a fellow climber who with Honnold holds the speed record for climbing the Nose route of El Capitan in about two hours and 23 minutes. — AP

Miss Katharina works on her painting at Art Brut Center Gugging in Maria Gugging, Austria.



Karl Vondal works on his painting at Art Brut Center Gugging.

Austria's fantastical factory of 'raw art'

Nestled in the hills of Austria sits Gugging, an artists' colony with a difference where the worlds of psychiatry and art collide-with spectacular success. Over the past 50 years, mentally ill patients here have churned out an astounding 75,000 recognized artworks, some selling for over 100,000 euros ($110,000). In particular, it is a wellspring for "Art Brut", producing some of the giants in the popular genre like August Walla, Oswald Tschirtner and Johann Hauser. "Raw art" or "outsider art", as it is known in English, is art by those untrained in-and untainted by-artistic conventions.

To the Frenchman who coined the term, Jean Dubuffet (1901-1985), it is found in the works of "primitive societies", of children-and of the mentally ill. Until July 2, Dubuffet's sensation-causing 1949 "L'Art Brut" exhibition in Paris that started it all is being staged again at the Gugging Museum. Featured are works by those Dubuffet met while scouring Europe's care homes for people with mental illnesses, like Adolf Woelfli, a Swiss suffering from psychosis and hallucinations.

Others include schizophrenic Aloise Corbaz who would use, at first in secret, juice from petals and toothpaste to create colorful and fantastical images, often of lovers. "Up until then (1949), what they produced was seen, at best, as a kind of curiosity, certainly not as works of art," Johann Feilacher, director of the Gugging Art Brut Centre, told AFP.

Nazis to Bowie

The early history of the Gugging psychiatric hospital, in the forested hills north of Vienna, is dark. During World War II, the Nazis killed hundreds of its patients. In the 1950s though, its new director, Leo Navratil, began to diagnose his patients by getting them to draw. Amazed by the results, Navratil began a correspondence with Dubuffet and as the output of its patients grew, so did Gugging's fame as a mecca for art brut. In 1981, Navratil founded at Gugging an art and psychotherapy center, later renamed the House of Artists.

A commercial gallery and museum followed, drawing a growing stream of visitors. One was David Bowie, who bought several works for his art collection. The psychiatric clinic itself closed around a decade ago, but the artists' colony remains. "For us, the residents are first and foremost artists with special needs, not patients," said Feilacher, who took over from Navratil in 1986. Walla, Tschirtner and Hauser are dead now but half a dozen Gugging artists still generate works today bought by galleries and collectors the world over.

They include Franz Kernbeis, who, when first admitted in 1955, would remain immobile for hours, Karl Vondal, who specialises in erotic works, and Johann Garber. "Along with the Creative Growth Art Center in Oakland (California), Gugging is one of the rare places in the world to have produced so many great artists," said Sarah Lombardi, director of the Art Brut Collection in Lausanne, Switzerland, home to Dubuffet's legacy.

'Beautiful to paint'

The artists split the proceeds from sales 50:50 with the gallery, in which they are also shareholders. Garber, whose busy surrealistic designs adorn Gugging's walls and whose technicolour ear sculpture is a Vienna landmark, also has an exhibition on. "I am an artist and a genius," Garber told AFP. "It is beautiful to draw and paint. We are happy that we have a place where we can live and draw." Just being part of Gugging is no guarantee of success, however. Not all of the 15 residents produce work "particular enough to be recognized artworks," said Feilacher. "Some of them develop late, some of them never." — AFP

Peer Alexander works on his painting at Art Brut Center Gugging .

Artist Johann Garber shows creations of his colleagues at the Art Brut Center Gugging.

Age is just a number for Hong Kong's harbor swimmers

Hong Kong's Victoria Harbor is one of the world's busiest ports, but every morning daring elderly swimmers dive in to its choppy waters against a teeming backdrop of ferries, cargo ships and fishing boats. The city's older generations fill public spaces as the sun rises, practicing sword dancing and tai chi, or playing impromptu games of badminton. On the western tip of Hong Kong Island, they choose to take a dip, rarely put off by inclement weather or imminent typhoons. Lau Sam-lan, 74, has been swimming there daily for around 30 years, one of many regulars who have been doing so for decades.

"Swimming makes me feel healthier and relaxed," he says, goggles perched atop his head. "I would feel uncomfortable if I didn't come." Known as the "Sai Wan swimming shed", with basic changing rooms and showers housed in corrugated iron-clad huts, it harks back to a time in the mid-20th century when there were many others dotted around the harbor. But with worsening pollution and the arrival of chlorinated public pools, the sheds fell out of fashion.

Sai Wan is the last one standing. It was built in 1988 by local residents with approval from the government after one swimming shed nearby was swept away by a typhoon and another demolished for redevelopment. Steep steps cut down a jungle-clad hillside alive with high-pitched cicadas to a secluded hollow. Below the changing huts there, swimmers dive off a spindly wooden pier with the hazy city skyline in the distance. Fast commuter ferries ply the channel behind and rickety sampans putter past, with hulking cargo ships easing by like slow-moving buildings further out.

The swimmers are not worried about pollution-water quality has improved recently as the government tries to clean up the harbor, they say. There have been four drownings since the shed was built, but that has not put them off. "I'm not scared, I've even saved two people," says retiree Lau. A ring attached to a rope is thrown to anyone in trouble, there is no lifeguard. The Sai Wan swimmers pay HK$150 ($19) a month to use the shed and there are around 80 members of what has become a close-knit community, the youngest in their 50s.

Lita Wong, 62, says visiting gives her a moment of calm before she heads to work at a trading company. She has been swimming there for 25 years. "I know the people here and I like the environment, although there are a lot of mosquitoes," says Wong. She comes despite having two shared pools at her apartment complex, saying she prefers salt water. "The first day I came here I felt scared because of the stones, the waves, the ferries, the hydrofoils," Wong remembers. "But time goes by and I overcome."— AFP

Lau Sam-lan, 74, swims in front of a view of Kowloon (back) off the western tip of Hong Kong Island.

Kwok Man Tim, 71, clings onto railings of a wooden pier below the "Sai Wan swimming shed".

A man stands on a wooden pier below the 'Sai Wan swimming shed' after swimming off the western tip of Hong Kong Island.

A man warms up on a stairway leading down to a wooden pier below the 'Sai Wan swimming shed'.

Lau Sam-Lan, 74, swims off the western tip of Hong Kong Island.

A woman using a life ring and Lau Sam-lan, 74 (right) swim off the western tip of Hong Kong Island. — AFP photos

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Lifestyle

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Visitors stand inside an installation by Japanese artist Yayoi Kusuma titled 'The Spirits of the Pumpkins Descended into the Heaven' during a media preview at National Gallery Singapore yesterday. Over 120 works from Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama's titled 'YAYOI KUSAMA: Life is the Heart of a Rainbow' will be on exhibit at National Gallery Singapore from June 9 to September 3.— AFP

Colombian garbage man builds library from discarded books

Emptying the bins of Colombia's capital, Jose Alberto Gutierrez one day found a copy of the classic novel "Anna Karenina," and kept it. That was 20 years ago-and the garbage man continued to collect Bogota's discarded books, amassing 25,000 in a free library, swelled by donations. "I realized that people were throwing books away in the rubbish. I started to rescue them," Gutierrez, a stocky, grey-haired man of 54, told AFP. He never got past primary school as a student, but is now dubbed "The Lord of the Books," in demand from schools across the country.

Epic undertaking

That first copy of Tolstoy was soon joined by "The Little Prince," "Sophie's World," "The Iliad" and various novels by Colombian master Gabriel Garcia Marquez. Gutierrez's neighbors started coming round to borrow books to help their children with schoolwork. "There was a lack of them in our neighborhood, so we started to help." Now a whole floor of his house, on a hill in the working class Nueva Gloria district of the capital, is taken up by stacks of books.

Along with wife Luz Mery Gutierrez and their three children, Gutierrez opened it as a free library in 2000. Volunteers joined in, word spread, and the garbage man found himself invited to international book fairs in Santiago, Monterrey as well as in the capital.

Spreading the words

Where once he supplied the library by rescuing books from the street, now most his stock comes from donations. Aside from donations, Gutierrez covers any further expenses from his own pocket. "We have a blessed curse upon us," he said. "The more books we give away, the more come to us." The collection got so big that they had to halt the children's reading sessions they held in the house, for lack of space. Instead they started traveling around the country to deliver free books to hundreds of poor and remote districts.

Books for peacetime

Gutierrez says his mother gave him a love of literature by reading cartoons to him in the country shack where he grew up. "It was she who enlightened me," he says. Having not finished school as a boy, he is now, well into middle age, studying for his school leaver's exam. Among the people across the vast jungle nation who have contacted him to ask for books was a fighter in the FARC leftist rebel group. Its 7,000 members are gathered in demobilization zones to disarm under a peace accord signed last year with the government.

The FARC member asked Gutierrez to send books for the fighters. They will have to learn and train for new jobs once they lay down their weapons and make the transition to civil life. "Books transformed me, so I think books are a symbol of hope for those places," Gutierrez said. "They are a symbol of peace." — AFP

Jose Alberto Gutierrez (left) and colleagues collect garbage in Bogota. — AFP photos

Books stacked in Jose Alberto Gutierrez's library on the first floor of his house.

Jose Alberto Gutierrez checks books stacked in his library on the first floor of his house.

Jose Alberto Gutierrez reads an old newspaper among books stacked in his library.

Jose Alberto Gutierrez (right) accompanied by a fellow garbage collector drives a garbage truck through the streets of Bogota.