

Amir receives phone call from French president



France's Fillon charged over 'fake jobs' scandal



Saudi film fest head says cinema needs state funding



Schmeichel thwarts Sevilla as Leicester rekindle fairytale



PRISON SUICIDE UNDER PROBE, 3 SENIOR OFFICERS SUSPENDED

NOD TO OIL PRICE HIKE IN KPC BUDGET, NATO DEAL

By B Zlzak

KUWAIT: Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah yesterday told the National Assembly that the public prosecution has started an investigation into the suspected suicide of the prisoner who was accused of assaulting jailed opposition figure and former MP Musallam Al-Barrak last month. The minister said three senior officers have been suspended for three months until the investigation into the issue is completed. Last month, Barrak, who is serving his last days of a two-year jail term, was attacked by an inmate serving a jail term for abusing drugs.

Barrak escaped unhurt but opposition MPs demanded that the incident be investigated, especially after reports that the attacker was moved to Barrak's ward at the Central Jail just a few days ago and his transfer was not in line with regulations. The interior ministry announced late Monday that the assailant, a non-Kuwaiti, was found hanging in his ward and that an investigation was immediately launched. A number of opposition MPs said that there is a lot of suspicion surrounding the whole case and demanded that Barrak be accorded sufficient protection.

Several MPs even demanded that senior officers responsible for the Central Jail must be suspended while an independent investigation is launched. Sheikh Khaled insisted that the ministry has nothing to hide and will provide all the information about the case. During the debate, MPs approved a proposal to set a two-hour debate after two weeks about the employment of Kuwaiti citizens and the rising rate of appointing expats in public jobs.

In the quiet session, the Assembly agreed with an overwhelming majority to raise the oil price index in Kuwait Petroleum Corp's (KPC) budget to \$35 a barrel. The Assembly also approved a troop transit treaty Kuwait signed with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), despite some objection. The approval of raising the oil price at KPC came despite a warning by head of the budgets committee MP Adnan Abdulsamad that the approval may require the government to re-prepare the budget for next fiscal year starting April 1.

Continued on Page 13

PIRATES HIJACK FREIGHTER OFF SOMALIA COAST

MOGADISHU: Armed attackers have boarded an oil tanker and forced its Sri Lankan crew to change course towards the northeastern Somali coast, in what could be the first pirate attack since 2012. After sending a distress signal on Monday afternoon, the assailants boarded the Aris 13, taking its eight Sri Lankan crewmembers hostage and forcing the vessel to divert course. "What we know for sure is that a small tanker has been attacked and has diverted course," John Steed, a former British army officer who heads the Horn of Africa section of the Oceans Beyond Piracy NGO, said yesterday.

"Whether this is a pirate attack needs to be confirmed. For example, we do not know what the demands of those men are. But this looks pretty much like the old piracy attack scenario," he said. Earlier reports said the vessel was Sri Lankan-flagged, but the foreign ministry in Colombo denied the claim. "The ministry is taking action to verify the alleged incident, and initial enquiries have revealed that while the vessel involved is not registered under a Sri Lankan flag, it has an eight-member Sri Lankan crew," it said in a statement on Facebook.

According to the Marine Traffic website, which lists the movements of ships around the globe, the Aris 13 is a Comoros-flagged vessel. The tanker was carrying fuel from Djibouti to Mogadishu when it was seized.

Continued on Page 13

SCHOOL'S AMIR MURAL SETS RECORD



KUWAIT: Students and teachers of a school in Jahra governorate pose in front of a mural made of 149,000 newspaper and magazine clippings depicting the face of HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah that entered the Guinness Book of World Records. — KUNA (See Page 40)

TRUMP MEETS TOP SAUDI PRINCE

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump met Saudi Arabia's Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman at the White House yesterday for a discussion that was likely to touch on investment opportunities in the kingdom and efforts to stop the war in Syria. Trump, who took office in January, and Prince Mohammed who is also the kingdom's defense minister, kicked off their talks in the Oval Office, where they posed for a picture in front of journalists and did not take questions.

US Vice President Mike Pence, Trump's senior adviser and son-in-law Jared Kushner, chief of staff Reince Priebus and strategist Steve Bannon were also present. The meeting was the first since Trump's inauguration with the powerful prince, who is leading the king-



WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump and Saudi Deputy Crown Prince and Defense Minister Mohammed bin Salman shake hands in the State Dining Room before lunch at the White House yesterday. — AFP

dom's efforts to revive state finances by diversifying the economy away from a reliance on falling crude oil revenues. After visiting in the Oval

Office, Trump and his advisers joined the prince and the Saudi delegation for lunch in the White House state dining room. — Reuters

ALTERKAIT: ARKAN ACHIEVES GROWTH, 20% RISE IN PROFIT

KUWAIT: Arkan Al Kuwait Real Estate Co, one of the largest real estate companies listed on the Kuwait Stock Exchange, disclosed that its earnings reflected a continued growth in income and an increase in profit during the first quarter of the fiscal year 2016-2017 ending January 31, 2017. The leading real estate investment company reported its financial results following its board meeting last week. Arkan Al Kuwait Real Estate Co achieved a net profit exceeding KD 900,000 for the first quarter of 2017, recording an increase of 20 percent compared to KD 752,000 in 2016.

The financial results of the first quarter ending January 31, 2017 reflected an increase of 17 percent in total revenues compared to the same period in 2016, reaching KD 1.265 million after KD 1.0 million recorded in 2016. As at the end of this year's first quarter, the estimated total asset value of Arkan Al Kuwait Real Estate Co has been calculated to reach more than KD 50 million, an increase of 24 percent compared to KD 10 million in 2016.

Commenting on this remarkable achievement, Abdul Rahman Hamad Alterkait, Board Member and CEO of Arkan Al Kuwait Real Estate Co, said: "Last year, Arkan Al Kuwait had registered noteworthy achievements, including the announcement of additional projects, where the company contemplated the opportunity to purchase a commercial plot in Kuwait City".

"Driven firmly and strongly, we started the year by taking over some newly developed real estate ready for lease services, as well as many other promising projects worth more than KD 10 million, and expect to record further success for both Arkan Al Kuwait and its esteemed investors," he concluded.

It is worth noting that Arkan Al Kuwait Real Estate Co

has acquired three prestigious investment towers in Salmiya, Hamad Al-Mubarak Street, beside Al-Mowasat Hospital, and two properties in Farwaniya and Salmiya that have been rented to ministries. Thus, Arkan Al Kuwait Real Estate Co has accomplished a newly outstanding asset achievement to be added to the company's record of distinctive assets.

The beginning of this year has already witnessed significant development in terms of the company's empowerment. In 2017, Arkan Al Kuwait Real Estate Co is expected to launch additional investment ventures and many other projects related to the hospitality business, BOT and third party property real estate feasibility, evaluation and property management targeted at promoting growth and progress. The launch and development of all these ventures will be determined by and based on the speculations of Kuwait real estate market.

In the same pulse of achievements, Arkan Al Kuwait Real Estate Co endeavors to obtain the ISO 9001 Quality Management System Certificate aiming to certify its quality service and robust processes in meeting customers' changing needs and expectations. This marks a unique step that highlights Arkan Al Kuwait Real Estate Co's relentless pursuit in applying best practices of growth sustainability and prosperity achievement.



Abdul Rahman Hamad Alterkait, CEO of Arkan Al Kuwait Real Estate Co

DUBAI NABS MAN BEHIND VIDEO OF CAT FED TO DOGS

DUBAI: Police in Dubai have arrested a man who was behind a gruesome video showing a cat being fed alive to dogs as a punishment for eating birds, local press said yesterday. The video, which was widely shared on social media, showed a man offering the cat in an open cage to two Rottweilers, encouraging them to devour the terrified feline. "You eat pigeons and chickens?" a man is heard in the video saying to the cat, as it is being mauled by one of the dogs. "Eat the cat, eat it," he orders.

Continued on Page 13



Kuwait Times
THE FIRST DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF

Shoot & Win

Photography Competition
SHOOT & WIN
Today See page 20

Sponsored By
ZAIN
Canon
Jassem Al-Sabah



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Kuwaiti singer Abdulaziz Al-Mufrej and his family members. — KUNA photos



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Habib Eid bin Jamea and Falah Eid bin Jamea.

AMIR RECEIVES PHONE CALL FROM FRENCH PRESIDENT

HIS HIGHNESS RECEIVES NEW AMBASSADORS' CREDENTIALS

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received yesterday a phone call from French President Francois Hollande which focused on bolstering ties. The phone conversation also touched on issues of mutual interests and also on recent happenings within the regional and international domains. His Highness the Amir thanked the French leader on his keenness to further bolster bilateral relations. Meanwhile, His Highness the Amir received at Bayan Palace yesterday the visiting UN Secretary-General envoy for humanitarian affairs Dr Ahmad Al-Meraikhi. Deputy Minister of the Amiri Diwan Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah was present at the meeting. Meraikhi also met with Kuwaiti First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, who congratulated him on his new post, reiterating Kuwait's support for UN humanitarian efforts across the world. The meeting was attended by several senior officials of the Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Ahmad Fahad Al-Fahad, Advisor at the Amiri Diwan Advisor Mohammad Abdullah Abu Al-Hassan, Head of Amiri protocols Sheikh Khaled Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah Al-Nasser Al-Sabah, Assistant Foreign Minister for Protocol Affairs Ambassador Dhari Ajran Al-Ajran, and Amiri Guard Commander Brigadier Fahad Abdulrahman Al-Zaid.

Receptions

Separately, His Highness the Amir received at Bayan Palace yesterday Habib Eid bin Jamea and Falah Eid bin Jamea; who also met with His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah later yesterday. Furthermore, His Highness the Crown Prince received engineer Ahmad Al-Jassar, Dr Abdulmohsen Jamal, and Dr Hassan Ashkanani; who presented to him a copy of his book on the Dilmun civilization in Kuwait. Earlier yesterday, His Highness the Amir and His Highness the Crown Prince met separately with His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

Also yesterday, His Highness the Amir received Kuwaiti singer Abdulaziz Al-Mufrej and his family members. During the meeting, Mufrej thanked His Highness the Amir for the attention and care he showed for his medical condition recently. He said His Highness the Amir's support has helped in his successful medical treatment, hoping



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Habib Eid bin Jamea and Falah Eid bin Jamea.

that he would sing again very soon.

In other news, His Highness the Amir, the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, is set to attend and patronize the graduation ceremonies for officers at the Saad Al-Abdullah Academy for Security

Sciences. The ceremony takes place today at 10:30 am. Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince is set to patronize the ceremony of His Highness the Crown Prince's Cup and Prize for Horse Racing organized by Al-Jahra Equestrian Club. Governor of

the Capital district, retired Lieutenant General Thabit Mohammad Al-Muhanna will represent His Highness the Crown Prince in the event, which takes place today 04:30 pm in late Sheikh Sabah Al-Nasser Al-Sabah racetrack. — KUNA



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives credentials of the newly appointed Ambassador of Cameroon.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives credentials of the newly appointed Ambassador of Ethiopia.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives credentials of the newly appointed Ambassador of Swaziland.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives credentials of the newly appointed Ambassador of Guyana.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives credentials of the newly appointed Ambassador of Norway.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives credentials of the newly appointed Ambassador of Iraq.

BYBLOS COMPLEX

For Rent in Salmiya

Luxury Apartments Complex
Magnificent Sea View

- 3 Bedrooms, 3 Baths, Maid (140m)
- 2 Bedrooms, 2 Baths, Maid (100m)
- 2 Bedrooms, 2 Baths (80m)

Apartments equipped with kitchen appliances

Facilities:-

● Swimming Pool and Jacuzzi	● Free High Speed Internet
● Health Club	● Security System & Guards (24hrs.)
● Full maintenance	● Furnishing Option Available
● Assigned Shaded Parking	● Billiard and Table Tennis

Tel: 1840888 - 66515305 - 98878036
www.ream.com.kw

VISA WAIVER AGREEMENT EFFECTIVE IN TWO MONTHS: GERMAN EMBASSY

KUWAIT: The Embassy of Germany in Kuwait released the following statement commenting on a recent visa waiver agreement for diplomatic and service passports signed between Kuwait and Germany on Monday. The statement reads as follows: "After several years of negotiations, a visa waiver agreement for diplomatic and service passports between Germany and Kuwait was signed Monday by German Ambassador to Kuwait Karlfried Bergner, and Kuwait's Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah. The ceremony was attended by various dignitaries and members of the German Embassy and Kuwait's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. "The signing of the bilateral agreement was an important first step to simplify travelling procedures for diplomatic and service passport holders of both countries and will now be followed by implementing this agreement into national law in both countries, after which it will become effective in a couple of months. "Please keep checking our Embassy homepage for updates - as soon as this new regulation has

entered into force, we will inform you. Until then, all holders of Kuwaiti passports are still required to obtain a visa before travelling to Germany. Holders

of regular private Kuwaiti passports are not included in this visa waiver agreement and do still need a visa for Germany and the Schengen States."

IRAQI PRESIDENT TO VISIT KUWAIT SOON

BAGHDAD: Iraqi President Fuad Masum is expected to visit Kuwait in the near future, an Iraqi official said yesterday. Advisor to the Iraqi President Hussain Al-Hindawi said that Masum's visit to Kuwait is part of an Arab tour that will also take him to Egypt and other north African nations. Moreover, he noted that the date for the visit has not been set yet, but it is on the horizon. Hindawi also underscored the Iraqi President's eagerness to mend fences with Kuwait, saying that previous meetings between the two Gulf neighbors' leaders had been fruitful and productive. Kuwait has fervently supported Iraq in its fight against the so-called Islamic State (IS), as copious amounts of Kuwaiti aid has trickled into the war-torn nation. — KUNA



Iraqi President Fuad Masum

PIONEER KUWAITI BUSINESSMAN JAMIL SULTAN PASSES AWAY

KUWAIT: Kuwait lost one of its most prominent entrepreneurs, Jamil Sultan bin Essa Al-Qanaie, who passed away on Monday at the age of 67. A pioneering businessman known for his exceptional forward thinking and vision, Sultan is credited for several successful ventures in the Kuwaiti private sector, including the creation of the Sultan Center supermarket chain, and turning a small state-owned public warehousing company into a worldwide logistics firm known as 'Agility'. Sultan also opened the first large mall in Kuwait, Souq Sharq, and managed the Free Trade Zone during its glory days. Known for his passion for farming, Sultan established the 'Yasmin Farm' in Wafra which produces organic products. He is credited by many as the one who introduced the concept of organic food into the Kuwaiti market. Sultan



Jamil Sultan bin Essa Al-Qanaie

graduated from New Mexico University in the United States with a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering. Sultan was at the time of his death the Vice Chairman of National Real Estate Company (NREC), a pioneer in real estate investment and development with presence in the Middle East and Africa.

'SARRAYAT' SEASON BEGINS MID-APRIL

KUWAIT A PLACE FOR WORK, NOT MIGRATION: MP

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Astronomer Khaled Abdullah Al-Jamaan said that Kuwait is currently going through a seasonal transitional period, especially during the coming days till the beginning of April. This period is known as the 'Al-Sabq' season that usually takes place before the annual weather phenomena of Al-Sarrayat starting by mid-April. Jamaan added that both periods are characterized by rain that can sometimes be accompanied by dust, lightning and even hail. Jamaan explained that night and day hours would become equal on March 16 (equinox) before the daylight hours will start to get longer. He also noted that the equinox happens in Kuwait four days earlier than at the equator.

'Public Authority for Electricity'

Minister of Electricity and Water and Minister Oil Essam Al-Marzouq denied plans to merge or change Ministry of Electricity and Water (MEW) sectors until a law is passed on establishing a 'Public Authority for Electricity', especially since the law would allow changing MEW into an economic body making profits for the state instead of remaining a bureaucracy-stricken governmental one. Marzouq also expressed hope that the law would achieve substantial change in various MEW sectors and give the ministry more opportunities to restructure them properly as part of a 25-year privatization plan. Marzouq explained that the aim of privatization was to encourage the growth of the private sector because the government has limited vacancies for new graduates, while demand on employment is annually increasing. Separately, MEW statistics showed that the total sums collected for connecting electricity to new subscribers was KD 35.2 million by the end of the fiscal year 2015-2016 - KD 11.2 million more than the previous year, when only KD 23.9 million was col-

lected, said MEW sources. The sources also pointed out that MEW intends giving the Government Mall in Sabhan more authorities to deal with transactions.

Withdrawn citizenships

Minister of Justice And Minister of State for National Assembly Affairs Faleh Al-Azeb stressed that work on resolving the withdrawn citizenships' issue is on the right track. Speaking to reporters after yesterday's parliamentary session, Azeb said that HH the Amir's instructions are always valued and respected and that forming a committee to follow the citizenship issue is up to HH the Prime Minister and the National Assembly Speaker. Responding to questions about threats made by some lawmakers to grill Cabinet members, Azeb said he refuses using the term 'threat' because interpellations are lawmakers' constitutional rights and he has no problem with them as long as they are constitutional.

Demographic imbalance

Kuwait Urban Observatory organized a seminar titled 'Demographic Imbalances, Effects and Solutions' with the participation of MP Abdulkareem Al-Kandari. Kandari said that Kuwaitis have become a minority in their country. He also stressed that such talk concerning expats was not out of 'racism' or acting like US President Donald Trump. "We are only after regulation," he underlined, noting that expats were the ones who taught and treated everyone when he was young. Kandari emphasized that Kuwait is not a destination for migration like Europe and is a rich country attracting expats for work rather than immigration. Kandari said unlike Europe, which has a majority elderly population and lacks youth, 70 percent of Kuwaitis are young. He noted that demographic problems do not only lie in the number of expats, but also in the inability to control these

numbers and the pressure they are causing on various services. "The fact that 24 percent of jobs in the public sector are occupied by expats is a problem, while 17,000 citizens are unemployed," he noted, adding that expats make up 71 percent of the private sector's workforce. Kandari added that because the state has so far unable to provide decent public transport means, many expats prefer getting driving licenses to drive their own vehicles, and thus the streets are congested.

Data update

The Public Authority for Manpower's public relations and advertising manager and official spokesperson Aseel Al-Mazyad announced that the authority has started receiving employers or those authorized to sign on behalf of them to add mobile numbers of all registered companies in order to facilitate communicating with them. Mazyad explained that companies can download the needed application at the manpower website www.manpower.gov.kw, fill it up, sign it and submit it at the data section, where it would be checked and registered in the system. In other news, the Kuwait Central Statistics Bureau urged the finance ministry to provide it with more funds for the bureau employees' salaries for the fiscal year 2016-2017 because the budget available will not be enough till March 31, 2017.

Direct purchase

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor's (MSAL) cooperation sector has contacted the Union of Consumer Cooperative Societies (UCCS) to circulate a newly-issued directive on purchases made by various co-ops. According to the directive, importers of consumer items must have agencies accredited by the agencies department at the ministry of commerce and that they should directly deal with co-ops without any middlemen.



KUWAIT: Deputy Premier and Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah meets with India's national security advisor and the prime minister's special envoy for fighting extremism and terrorism Sayyed Asif Ibrahim.



Deputy Premier and Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah meets with newly appointed investigator Fatimah Saud Al-Rayes.

INTERIOR MINISTER MEETS INDIAN NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Deputy Premier and Interior Minister Sheikh Khalid Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah received India's national security advisor and the prime minister's special envoy for fighting extremism and terrorism Sayyed Asif Ibrahim in the presence of Assistant Undersecretary for Internal State Security Affairs Maj Gen Essam Al-Naham and Acting Head of Information and Security follow-up at the National Security Department Sheikh Fawaz Mishal Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah.

Meanwhile, Sheikh Khalid Al-Jarrah received investigator Fatimah Saud Al-Rayes on the occasion of her appointment at the investigations general

department. Rayes took the oath of office in front of Sheikh Khalid, who congratulated her on this occasion.

Child protection

Director General of the Investigations Department and head of the team for the preparation for Kuwait's first regional conference for the protection of children from the risks of social media Maj Gen Dr Fahd Al-Dousari held a coordination meeting with the preparation team of the conference that will be held from the 21st to the 23rd of March at Jumairah Hotel. The conference will be held under the patronage of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and presence of Sheikh Khalid Al-Jarrah.



KUWAITI STUDENTS FLOCK TO GULF ROAD FOR MARATHON

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Education joined forces with the Public Authority for Sports (PAS) yesterday for a marathon where students across the nation came out in droves to take part. The event entitled 'Our Children, Our Hope' kicked off at the Swimming Pool Complex located in the Gulf Road

and stretched to the finish line at the Green Island. The marathon aimed to boost awareness on health and physical well-being among the nation's youth, which would prove instrumental in propelling Kuwait to the upper echelons of the world. — KUNA



SOCIETY APPLAUDS GOVT ENERGY EFFICIENCY EFFORTS

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Kuwait Society of Engineers strongly commended the Cabinet's decision to cut the consumption of electricity and water by around 40 percent. The society explained that it had been making proposals to save energy by using smart technology since 2007 and made a successful suggestion to save energy by 60 percent at various mosques. The society's chairman Faisal Dowai Al-Ottol stressed that the Cabinet's response was very hearten-

ing and was the result of many solutions suggested by the society's renewable energy committee headed by Dr Bader Al-Taweel.

Ottol urged the Cabinet to follow in the steps of other GCC states and establish a special authority for energy efficiency. He also pointed out that in collaboration with SMA (one of Germany's largest specialized academies), the society had already started training engineers to deal with smart electricity and water devices. "We have also installed a solar power generation unit," he added.



VIVA PARTICIPATES IN 'ECONOMY AND JOB OPPORTUNITIES CREATORS' JOB FAIR

KUWAIT: VIVA, Kuwait's fastest-growing and most developed telecom operator, announced its participation in the annual 'Economy and Job Opportunities Creators' job fair held at the College of Business Administration at Kuwait University from yesterday to tomorrow, under the patronage of the minister of education and higher education Dr Mohamed Al-Fares and in the presence of the college's dean Dr Mishari Al-Hajiri.

Talal Abdulaziz Al-Mutairi, Remunerations and Organization Design Director at VIVA stated: "VIVA endeavors to offer young Kuwaitis suitable job opportunities that fit their specialties. VIVA's participation in this significant annual fair reflects its continued commitment to support young Kuwaitis in various fields and attract the promising talents." He added: "The fair will focus this year on the latest in the telecom field including VIVA's role with its different sectors and the qualifications that it aims to hire."

Many sectors from labor market participated in the fair such as telecom, banking, investment, auditing and consulting, retail, industry and real estate. This year the fair will feature 'CV Clinic' service to help students restructure their resumes in cooperation with the employers, in addition to the competition 'Best Resume'.

VIVA is keen to continue its ongoing socially responsible role in the community by spreading the spirit of goodness amongst Kuwaiti society. We believe at VIVA in taking a holistic approach to our CSR activities, one that engages our employees, and creates goodwill in our communities with a focus on helping to grow and develop the State of Kuwait.

VIVA's Corporate Social Responsibility 'CSR' activities can be reviewed on the company's website at <https://www.viva.com.kw/csr>. This offers a description of each CSR initiative that VIVA has supported, or taken on since its inception.



ABK SPONSORS TASTE OF Q8 FOR THIRD CONSECUTIVE YEAR

KUWAIT: Joining the fun for the third consecutive year, Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) announced that it will be sponsoring the third round of 'Taste of Q8', one of the most anticipated events of the year. The 'FunTasting' festival is open and free to the public and will be held in the parking lot of the Boulevard Salmiya, on 16, 17 and 18 of March, 2017.

The event celebrates Kuwait's great culinary diversity and offers visitors the opportunity to experience many different cuisines from local restaurants, bakers and gourmet grocers, as well as seeing live cooking demonstrations presented by renowned celebrity chefs. This year, the program features Shelina Permalloo, Tarek Ibrahim, Tim Hollands, Dean Brettschneider, Annabel Karmel, Margarita Sofia Calderon, Adlah al Shirhan, Jenny Morris and many more. The event also features live entertainment, activities for kids and VIP lounges.

ABK will be giving away three ABK Emirates Visa Gold Prepaid Travel cards worth KD 100 each, in a draw which will be held during the event. The Bank is keen to take part and encourage local initiatives that bring the Kuwait community together and present them with new experiences while also supporting local chefs.

KUWAIT: The Commercial Bank of Kuwait announced participating 22nd 'Economy and Job Opportunities Creators' job fair held at the College of Business Administration at Kuwait University.

WARBA BANK PARTICIPATES IN GUST'S JOB FAIR, KU'S EXHIBITION

KUWAIT: Warba Bank participated in the 19th Job Fair organized by Gulf University for Science and Technology (GUST) under the patronage of Minister of Commerce and Industry, Acting Minister of Youth Affairs Khalid Nasser Al-Roudhan. This position reflects Warba Bank's commitment to recruiting Kuwaiti graduates and training them to work in Islamic banking, the bank said in a statement, adding that this helps improve the capabilities of national cadres in this sector, thus reflecting positively on enriching the local market with Kuwaiti manpower; the backbone of solid economic development.

On that regard, Essam Al-Shaya, Head of the Human Resources and Administrative Affairs Group at Warba Bank, said: "Our participation in the exhibition enabled Warba Bank to share its banking experience with new graduates seeking to enter the job market, who interacted with the bank's team that offered full demonstrations regarding the bank's operations and working environment. This also provides added value to staff members in terms of experience and other advantages. Furthermore, they gave students an idea about the skills and other requirements needed to apply for jobs in this field, and offered some advices based on Warba Bank's experience in hiring, training and qualifying national manpower."

Shaya further added: "This is not the first time that Warba Bank participates in career fairs. It participated previously in several other important fairs, and plans to take part in a job fair that Kuwait University is going to organize soon. The bank believes that such exhibitions leave a huge positive impact on the ability to open new horizons for young people in order to enable them to gain advanced professional skills and attain a general idea about their future careers."

Warba Bank's participation reflects its commitment to helping make such activities successful, considering that they contribute in enriching the labor market. These job fairs are considered a great platform in which job seekers and companies can directly meet and have discussions on the nature of work and other issues.



KUWAIT: Gulf Bank's human resources representatives pose for a group photo at the bank's booth.

GULF BANK ANNOUNCES PARTICIPATION IN KUWAIT UNIVERSITY CAREER FAIR

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank is participating in Kuwait University Career Fair which started yesterday at College of Business Administration and will run until tomorrow. Gulf Bank's participation and support of Kuwait University Career Fair comes in line with its commitment to attract young Kuwaiti talent by being the employer of choice.

During the fair, Gulf Bank will be represented by a team from its Human Resources department at its dedicated booth.

The Bank invites students, young profes-

sionals, and fresh graduates to visit and enquire about current vacancies and learn about working at the bank.

Students interested in working in the banking sector will get the chance to receive in-depth knowledge about the Bank's renowned program Ajjal, a graduate development program dedicated to developing a cadre of holistic bankers for the Bank and for Kuwait. They are also invited to have informal open discussions with the Human Resources team regarding banking general-

ly, as well as regarding banking career opportunities. Gulf Bank will be present to liaise with graduates, students, and alumni and to offer them the opportunity to apply for internships, full-time, and volunteer positions on the spot. The Bank will offer its services, market insights, advice, collect CVs, help students apply online for possible job opportunities, and conduct on-site interviews with candidates.

Gulf Bank always places the importance of its human capital at the forefront of its busi-

ness investment. It remains strongly committed to supporting youth events and initiatives to help empower the next generation of Kuwaitis and contribute to the enhancement of the country's economy.

The bank is committed to reaching out to the youth through ongoing programs, which provide encouragement and support during their education, by providing practical, superior services, and attractive promotions which are designed specifically for the younger generation.

Kuwait Digest

RULES FOR THE MOB

By Talal Al-Ghannam

local@kuwaittimes.net

Good morning dear and honorable brothers and sisters. I welcome you back, and wish you a happy week. In this article, I would like to shed some light on rules that must be imposed on some of the irresponsible people (mob) who destroy the society with their capricious actions.

In every country, there are strict rules that are applied on everyone, and there must not be anyone who takes the law into his or her hand. But in Kuwait, the story is different. There is a majority of careless and erratic people who fantasize about hurting feelings of others, not keeping in mind that their actions are hurting their country in the first place.

Rules have been imposed in Kuwait to be respected, not to be broken by such a category of 'heartless mob'. For example, when an expat worker, a domestic helper or a low-wage laborer goes to seek police's help and complains about the delay of his or her salary or a case of abuse committed by the sponsor, the humiliating scenario starts at the entrance of the police station, when the officer starts to inquire about the reason behind the complaint. The officer's reply strikes as thunder: 'Get out, get out!' It is as if police stations are made only for the Kuwaiti nationals who have the right to sue their workers or their domestic helpers.

I have personally seen so many cases where some helpless expats go in the police station and end up waiting for hours, and at the end, they would be told to come back the following day senselessly. Does that mean that the expats in this country have no right to

A Porsche driver was recently caught driving at the speed of 320 kilometers per hour on the highway.

complain about the mistreatment of their sponsors or even complain about not getting paid?

Another issue I would like to point at is the importance of imposing stricter regulations and laws to punish staff members who misuse the authority granted to them by the law, instead of yielding to the wasta (connection) which rips through the fabric of the Kuwaiti society and angers Almighty Allah. Let us be like Dubai and Oman where the law is strictly applied on everyone without discrimination.

Turning to another point, talking about reckless driving is an endless story in Kuwait. Everyone seems to be the master of the road who can control the pace of traffic according to his or her desire. One can drive up to 300 kilometers per hour endangering people's lives. A Porsche driver was recently caught driving at the speed of 320 kilometers per hour on the highway. If that maniac was caught doing this in the United States, he would be severely punished, whereas here, an MP can mediate by saying the famous quote: "He is our son, he did not do anything, please let him go."

Other rules must also be imposed on those using mobile phones or those putting their kids on their laps while driving. There had been so many cases where a toddler would be seen sticking his head out of an open moon roof, exposing the child's life to unwanted dangers. Meanwhile, those who use their mobiles while driving do not pay any attention to the traffic, and think they can do whatever they want; either driving very slow or very fast, while swerving between lanes because they are making an important call and do not want to be interrupted.

I really miss driving in the US where driving is a joy by itself. There is no honking, flashing of bright light, cutting off or staring at you at the traffic light, whereas here in Kuwait, the moment the light turns green, you would hear tens of cars honking at you as if there was a wedding behind you. We ask Almighty Allah to keep bestowing his mercy on us all, and protect us from all evil. Amin.

Till the next article in sha Allah.

ALWAYS A BETTER WAY





TOYOTA AN INVESTMENT FOR PEACE OF MIND



GET FREE SERVICE 2 YEARS/30,000 KM* & **GET FUEL CARDS UP TO KD 100**

Superior performance, high resale value, a reputation for excellence... these are some of the standard features that have made Toyota cars a brilliant investment over the years. This March, an investment in a new Toyota car becomes even more rewarding with our fabulous offers:

LAND CRUISER
Free Service for 2 years / 30,000 km*
+ 1 Year Comprehensive Insurance

PRADO / FORTUNER
Free Service for 2 years / 30,000 km*
+ KD 100 Fuel Card

CAMRY
Free Service for 2 years / 30,000 km*
+ KD 50 Fuel Card

ANY OTHER TOYOTA MODEL
Free Service for 2 years / 30,000 km*
+ KD 30 Fuel Card

FLEET SALES Free Service for 2 years / 30,000 km*

Book your new Toyota today, and invest in peace of mind.

5 YEARS UNLIMITED MILEAGE WARRANTY | T-CONNECT SERVICE FOR 3 YEARS

LIVE EVERY MILE

*Whichever comes first, does not include brakes. Offer is not valid for Tender/Bulk Sales/Coaster. Terms and conditions apply.



Mohamed Naser Al-Sayer & Sons Est. Co. W.L.L.
ONE OF THE AL-SAYER GROUP HOLDING COMPANIES.







1803803
toyota.com.ku

toyotaku

Al-Rai 4th Ring Road • Al-Ahmad Eastem Plaza • Al-Jahra Industrial Area • Shuqrah Al-Tal Showroom • FLEET SALES - AL RAI Est. 2012/1/16/179

ZAIN DIAMOND SPONSOR OF GUST'S 19TH CAREER FAIR

COMPANY SHOWCASED AVAILABLE VACANCIES

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, announced its Diamond Sponsorship of the Gulf University for Science and Technology 19th Career Fair held recently under the patronage and attendance of Minister of Commerce and Industry and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Khalid Al-Roudhan.

Zain's continuous participation in this annual job fair is in line with the company's core belief that educational development is essential for individuals to then go-on to be successful and contributing members of society. This particular event plays a big role in exposing bright and optimistic youth who are looking for job opportunities in the various industries within the local private sector. Through its dedicated booth, Zain showcased its available vacancies as well as its human resources policy, which closely focuses

on attracting national talents that are capable of enriching its internal culture. The company also showcased the available vacancies for undergraduates to work in part-time jobs as part of its Future University Network (FUN) program.

Zain is committed to playing an active role in investment in the human capital of Kuwait. The company seeks to provide young and eager Kuwaitis with suitable job opportunities that allow them to apply their practical skills, achieve their potential, and fully develop their capabilities.

Zain was present at the job fair and its representatives highlighted to visitors the available job vacancies in addition to providing a detailed explanation of the nature of work at various departments and divisions.



KIB SPONSORS 33RD GCC TRAFFIC WEEK

KUWAIT: As part of the Bank's ongoing efforts to support various community awareness initiatives, Kuwait International Bank (KIB) has provided its sponsorship to the GCC Traffic Week, which is taking place between March 12th and March 18th. In its 33rd edition, this year's awareness week is being held under the theme 'Your Life is a Trust.'

Organized annually in all GCC countries, the initiative seeks to spread awareness of safe driving amongst citizens and residents across all Gulf nations. The key aim of the initiative is to reduce the number of traffic accidents, and by extension reduce the number of deaths and injuries caused by these accidents. Several key issues will be highlighted this year, including speeding, the use of mobile phones whilst driving, the importance of seat belts, and the misuse of parking spaces allocated to persons with dis-

abilities. As part of the many activities taking place this week, the General Department of Traffic is organizing two public exhibitions, the first at the Avenues Mall and the second at 360 Mall. Both exhibitions feature the participation of several government entities, including the Department of Medical Emergencies, several traffic departments, the General Department of Information Systems and the General Department of Public Relations and Security Media. In addition to offering theoretical driving tests, the exhibitions will showcase the role and mandate of the General Department of Traffic.

"KIB spares no effort in supporting initiatives and activities which promote a greater sense of safety across the community. That being said, we are proud to take part in this incredible regional initiative, alongside many public and private institutions, as well as a large number of schools

and universities," said Nawaf Najia, Manager of the Corporate Communications Unit at KIB. "Through an extensive program of lectures and other awareness activities, this week seeks to deliver an important social message, educating our communities and road users about proper road safety."

Najia added that as part of its encompassing social responsibility program, KIB constantly strives to participate in national and regional initiatives that contribute to increasing awareness across society regarding key social issues. Through its comprehensive approach to social responsibility, KIB continues to support and sponsor various activities that aim to benefit and enhance the local community. The Bank is also a firm believer in harnessing the combined efforts of public and private institutions, in order to best serve the greater community.



ATO: DRIVING FORCE FOR SUSTAINABLE ARAB DEVELOPMENT

KUWAIT: Since its establishment in 1967, the Arab Towns Organization has preserved identity of Arab towns and pushed for their sustainable development, ATO Secretary General said. Ahmad Al-Sabeeh, in a statement marking ATO's 50th anniversary, said the support of Kuwait and other member countries to the organization contributed to its success and effective role in Arab towns. ATO and its institutions, he said, always have

in their agendas the development of Arab towns and the service of their population.

March 15, which marks the establishment of ATO, said Sabeeh, "reminds us of a long journey of hard work and activities dedicated for the service of the Arab towns." He added that ATO's motto this year would be "50 years in the service of towns towards sustainable development," expressing gratitude for the countries hosting ATO institutions:

Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Jordan, and Tunisia. ATO, he said, sought to achieve aspirations of towns to adapt to modern technology and science in order to provide best municipal services for population. ATO, which has more than 500 Arab capitals and towns as members, has highlighted its vision and objectives through regional and international seminars and conferences. Sabeeh

said ATO was open to new methods of management and sustainable development. "ATO is like an Arab house combining towns and capitals ... in a manner that preserve identity and safety of our Arab towns as well as protect their historic, cultural and civilized heritage," said Sabeeh.

ATO, he went on, has many cooperation agreements and partnerships with many organizations dealing with towns and pop-

ulation, including UN Human Settlements Program (UN-Habitat), Arab League, ESCWA and UN's Economic and Social Council. Kuwait-based ATO is a non-governmental organization (NGO) specialized in municipalities and towns in the Arab countries. ATO's main objectives is to preserve identity of Arab towns, improve services and municipal facilities and achieve sustainable development. — KUNA

TRADE FOREX MY WAY & BECOME SUCCESSFUL IN 2017

FREE FOREX SEMINAR

Kishore
World Renowned
Forex-trader
Best Selling Author
Award Winner
Ex hedge Fund Manager

Kishore has appeared here:

Hurry! 50 Seats Only Left

Introducing a New Concept in Forex Trading

BONUS!
4 Winning Strategies will be shared during this session

Kuwait's Most Profitable Forex Seminar

NEVER SEEN BEFORE

Face To Face Coaching Sessions, Daily Live Help & Market Updates, Best Daily Support.

Know When To Enter And Exit With Accuracy.

Ability To Start & Trade Live From 1st Day Immediately.

Anyone Can Learn To Do This. No Experience Required

Learn How To Grow Your Profit Starting With Only \$100

Become Financially Free Within 1 - 2 Years' Time.

Create 2nd Income From Home Like Our FX Participants

 <small>"After 4 months, I earned a profit of \$11,000"</small> Haril Hasan	 <small>"I started trading with \$2,200 and my profits are showing \$33,000 in 4 months"</small> Zelene Chai	 <small>"I made \$7,000 in 1 day Trading FX"</small> Aye Aye
 <small>"I started with \$k and made 20k in 3 months"</small> Gwek Wong Tang	 <small>"I make \$8,000 - \$10,000 per month Trading Forex"</small> Alida Anas	 <small>"I made \$30,000 in 5 days"</small> Josephine Khaw
 <small>"I started trading with \$5,000 and today I have \$11,000 in my FX account"</small> Rajesh Kudre	 <small>"I made \$65,416.30 in just 1 week Trading Forex"</small> Albert Hoang	

Who Should Attend? It:

- You are working too hard for too little money.
- You are earning too little to ever follow your dreams.
- You are sick & tired of financial insecurity, Market Volatility.
- You want to massively increase your income without quitting your job.
- You want to retire young and nice like our Graduates.

17th March 2017 (Friday) OR 18th March 2017 (Saturday)

RADISSON BLUE HOTEL
Ground Floor,
Salwa, Kuwait

**3.00 PM - 6.00 PM (Friday)
3.00 PM - 6.00 PM (Saturday)**

Reservation Hotline

+965 5177 3055
(Open - 24hrs)

SMS<E-MAIL, NAME & SESSIONS>

www.championtradersacademy.com

galan@championtradersacademy.com

CALL US NOW
to avoid disappointment

Organized by
Concierge Events

Disclaimer: All forms of trading and investment carry risk. Such activities may not be suitable for everyone. Terms & Conditions apply. Rights to Admission Reserved By Management.

Save & Win

Up to

5,555

Kuwaiti Dinars

Savings ACCOUNT

Save now in the account that gives you the highest return rate of 1.53%* and get a chance to enter the monthly draw for every KD 100 invested in your account to win double the value of your investment and other cash prizes.

Terms & conditions apply * The annualized profit rate for the fourth quarter of 2016 in Kuwaiti Dinar

www.kib.com.kw | 1 866 866

ثقمة ويسر

بنك الكويت الدولي
KUWAIT INTERNATIONAL BANK
بنك يعمل وفقاً لاحتياجات العملاء

Crime

Report

FILIPINA DRUG DEALER ARRESTED

KUWAIT: Director General of the Drugs Control General Department Brig Bader Al-Ghadhoury sent a Filipina to the drugs prosecution for drug trafficking. A security source said information was received about the woman, so an undercover agent agreed to buy 10 grams of shabu from her. She was arrested red-handed in Mahboula. Officers found 70 more grams of the drug in her house. The suspect said she is working for a central prison inmate.

Theft

Criminal evidence men went to a stable in Jahra to check for evidence to identify a person a food company claimed stole equipment worth KD 60,000. The company representative said the equipment was kept in the stable and a citizen allegedly stole it.



Mugging

A Filipino told Abu Halifa police he was mugged at knifepoint in Mangaf, when two persons forced him into their car, took his bag which contained two mobile phones, a credit card and KD 150, and beat him. The Filipino escaped with one of the thief's mobile and gave police a medical report. A complaint was lodged at the orders of the prosecutor's deputy.

Swindling

A citizen accused a compatriot of swindling him. He said the suspect works as a chairman of a perfume company and made him believe he can make huge profits. He took KD 2,500 to invest from him, but when the investor discovered the project was a scam, the suspect refused to return the money or the profits.

Forgery

A Sri Lankan woman told Sabahiya police that an unidentified person bought two cell phone plans but registered them with her name and received two smartphones. The complainant said the two lines were registered in a Sabahiya store. Meanwhile, a citizen told Rabiya police that an unidentified person withdrew KD 260 from her bank account, adding that her ATM was with her and she does not know how the money was stolen.

Assault

Adan police are questioning a citizen and his Arab wife for beating his elderly mother, who gave police a medical report. The mother said she was visiting her son and an argument took place, so her son and his wife attacked and beat her. — Translated from the Arabic press



الجريدة Al-Jarida

A SAFE LANDING

By Yousif Al-Jassem

Things recently got very tense and almost reached a point of collision between the legislative and the executive powers over three main issues. We noticed MPs taking different sides about dismissing the Ministry of Health's undersecretary or accepting the health minister's resignation. Others took sides concerning a proposed amendment to grant the Ministry of Interior's undersecretary a minister's rank so that he could remain in office for life, which triggered various threats from all sides. Some lawmakers threatened to grill His Highness the Prime Minister if the minister resigned and his undersecretary remained. Others threatened to do the same if the undersecretary was forced to resign. Further threats were made if the law was amended for the interest of the Ministry of Interior's undersecretary! In the third issue, lawmakers threatened to grill His Highness the Prime Minister over returning the withdrawn citizenships.

Thus, the ground became hotter underneath everybody's feet until a safe landing was made by instructions to have both undersecretaries leave quietly to avoid an inter-power conflict and save Kuwait the evil of instability. This happened by a fatherly attitude from His Highness the Amir, who opened the door wide and gave hope on resolving such barbed issues that have been clouding Kuwait's skies. He pointed to the possibility of finding a legal way out through a report to be submitted by the speaker and His Highness the Prime Minister to him so that he could make the right decision in compliance with the law and protect the state's prestige, in addition to put an end to the sufferings of those whose citizenships had been withdrawn.

Such a generous act is another proof of His Highness the Amir's deeds as the humanitarian leader. In my view, there are two things to learn from this. First, the wisdom of the leadership managed to defuse a problem. The second is the blessing of having public control over government decisions and practices, be that concerning senior positions, sovereignty decisions or tracking down financial and administrative corruption in government bodies with the aim of achieving reform.

There is one more important thing. The corrupt need to be held accountable and punished once investigations with them are over. This caught lawmakers' attention and they formed a special committee to investigate tons of violations at the Ministry of Health, especially concerning the billions squandered money and moral violations related to the 'touristic' overseas treatment that had been used by former and current MPs for profiteering at the expense of public funds, which eventually compromised the principle of equality amongst those who deserved and those who did not deserve being sent abroad for treatment.

We do hope the parliamentary investigations committee would set a deadline to its work and submit a decisive report to the Assembly in order to avoid having the same destiny of previous investigation committees to use time to scatter facts and all those it investigated got off the hook without being held accountable, except maybe for one senior fugitive official or the office boy of a senior government official who was deported! — Translated by Kuwait Times

النباة Al-Anbaa

Al-Anbaa

DEAF EARS!

By Dr Najem Abdulkareem

A friend once asked why I seldom wrote about Kuwait and preferred writing about various other concerns. Well, firstly my articles about Kuwait are not infrequent and you can check my writings over the past year. Secondly, a writer does not necessarily have to focus only on domestic matters and this is a general trend at Al-Jarida daily that opens wide for various writers writing about political, economic, social and cultural issues. In fact they are more like a mosaic of various human concerns.

Thirdly, I find that much of the works written about domestic concerns repetitive, and some columnists writing in over 15 dailies in a country as small as Kuwait are specialized in certain topics. They have been using the same topics to the extent that by omitting the date of issue, one may find those articles identical and using the same lexicon. Naturally enough, there are exceptions by some dailies that do respect readers' minds. In addition to Al-Jarida writers, I read Abdullatif Al-Duaij, Ahmed Al-Sarraf, Suad Al-Mejel and others in the same mould. I also read weekly writers' articles.

Fourthly, the veteran comedian Abdul Hussein Abdul Redha summed up the issue in a small scene he acted with Saad Al-Faraj on inaugurating the opera house, when he said: "I did steal and was sent to jail. But it has been over 30 years now since thefts started and I am the only one sent to jail!" It seems as if all what has been

written about domestic corruption has been falling on deaf ears!

Where, then, is an article similar to that written by Bob Woodward about the violations committed by the world's mightiest and powerful person, US President Nixon, that forced him to resign from office?! Unfortunately, all what is written about corruption has been mere transmission without any form of reception, because everyone has deaf ears! On the other hand, special administrations are in place in most official institutions in civilized countries to follow up the press and investigate the issues it raises.

Fifthly, dear friend, it has become a known and established fact that the division amongst the ruling family members that recently came to the surface has led to other divisions within considerable factions in the Kuwaiti society. They also had an impact on the parliamentary elections, media establishments, general assemblies, sports forums, poets and even journalists. This division, unfortunately, led to very destructive prejudices in a country like Kuwait that already possesses all the elements needed for a peaceful life.

I sadly say that the strings of such prejudices are starting to be controlled from overseas without anyone even realizing it consequences, because those responsible to stop them have deaf ears!

— Translated by Kuwait Times



EQUATE SUPPORTS INDUSTRIAL ADVANCEMENT AT GPCA SUMMIT

Kuwait's First Surfing Experience

Day Use Cabins

22392238
65134134

FLOWHOUSEKUW
Abu Halifa (next to Kuwait Magic Mall)

فلو هاوس كويت
FLOWHOUSE
KUWAIT

KUWAIT: EQUATE Petrochemical Company, a global producer of petrochemicals, sponsored the Gulf Petrochemicals and Chemicals Association's (GPCA) 4th Research and Innovation Summit 2017 held in Bahrain, supporting the industrial, technological and academic development as part of the company's investment in operational innovation and professional development. A founding member of GPCA, EQUATE's support of the Summit for the fourth year in a row came as a continuation to its partnership with the Association, as well as other academic and research institutes such as Kuwait University (KU), in an aim to drive innovation and bring solutions to the challenges of the industry and the markets it serves.

Speaking at the Summit, EQUATE's President and CEO Mohammad Husain said, "Innovation is a necessity to the sustainability of our industry and is deeply founded in the strategies of our Company. As much as operational efficiency, innovation is a core driver of sustainable growth in any organization. It is successfully achieved when facilitated through the organizational processes and integrated across functions in which areas of need are defined. Innovation is in no case limited to the research and development, as it is a continuous cycle through which we adapt new approaches or improve existing methods."

Husain expanded on the importance of collaboration in the industry saying, "Partnerships and knowledge exchange with peers, academic institutions and stakeholders are today a necessity to create a platform of innovation that benefits our industry, and that's what the Summit aims at. Together, we need to be proactive in foreseeing future challenges, and work to fulfill them for a sustained growth."

Last year, EQUATE launched a partnership for innovation with KU. It comprised an Innovation Multiple Intelligence Survey led by Dr Intesar Al-Mudahka, Assistant Professor at KU's College of Sciences, measuring and assessing EQUATE's innovation efforts. The EQUATE Innovation Program aims to further collaborate with KU in the Company's new Innovation Centers. As done during previous GPCA events, the Company invited a number of delegates from KU. The University's representatives at this Summit included Vice President for Planning Dr Adel Abdullah Al-Hussain, Dr Al-Mudahka, as well as a faculty member and two students from KU's College of Engineering and Petroleum to become acquainted with GPCA's Research and Innovation efforts and network with other delegates. Husain concluded: "Our focus in EQUATE is to adopt research knowledge of the petrochemical industry in what would add value to EQUATE and its different partners. Only by being at the forefront of innovative trends and exposing our teams to the leading chemical, petrochemical and regional universities and institutions in the GCC can we continue to grow competitively."



Countdown to start of Brexit after bill passes parliament



RAMALLAH: Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas (right) meets with Jason Greenblatt, the US president's assistant and special representative for international negotiations, at his office in this West Bank city yesterday. — AFP

WHITE HOUSE WADES INTO MIDEAST CONFLICT

TRUMP ADVISOR MEETS ABBAS

RAMALLAH, Palestinian Territories: US President Donald Trump's administration waded into the decades-old Israeli-Palestinian conflict yesterday as one of his top advisers held his first meeting with Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas. After five hours of talks with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Jerusalem on Monday night, Jason Greenblatt met Abbas in Ramallah in the occupied West Bank.

Details of their talks were not yet clear. US officials have described the visit by Greenblatt, Trump's special representative for international negotiations, as a fact-finding mission as the White House seeks a way forward in restarting long-deadlocked peace efforts. But it comes after Trump cast uncertainty over years of international efforts to foster a two-state solution to the conflict when he met Netanyahu at the White House last month.

At that meeting, Trump broke with decades of US policy by saying he was not bound to a two-state solution to the conflict and would be open to one state if it meant peace. He has also sparked concern among Palestinians and others by pledging during his campaign to move the US embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, the status of which is one of the thorniest issues of the conflict.

Trump has since backed away, with US officials saying the decision-making process was in the early stages on the issue. There have been mixed signals over how Trump will approach his efforts to restart negotiations, with the conflict having confounded US leaders for decades. Trump spoke with Abbas in their first phone call on Friday, inviting him to visit the White House soon.

The US president has also asked Netanyahu to "hold back on settlements for a little bit" and there have been warnings that unilateral action by Israel such as moving to annex the West Bank would provoke a crisis with Trump's administration. There has been growing concern that Israeli settlement building is eating away at prospects for a two-state solution, the basis of years of negotiations. Settlements are seen as illegal under international law and a major stumbling block to peace as they are built on land the Palestinians see as part of their future state.

'Possible to advance peace'

In a rare move, former US president Barack Obama, in the waning days of his administration, declined to veto a UN Security Council resolution condemning Israeli settlement building, allowing it to pass. Trump had called on Obama to veto the resolution. After Monday night's meeting, Netanyahu's office and the US embassy issued a joint statement saying he and Greenblatt discussed settlement construction and ways to reach peace.

The two "reaffirmed the joint commitment of both Israel and the United States to advance a genuine and lasting peace between Israel and the Palestinians that strengthens the security of Israel and enhances stability in the region," the statement said. They also "continued discussions relating to settlement construction in the hope of working out an approach that is consistent with the goal of advancing peace and security."

According to the statement, Greenblatt "reaffirmed President Trump's commitment to Israel's security and to the effort to help Israelis and Palestinians achieve a lasting peace through direct negotiations." The statement cited Netanyahu as telling Greenblatt he believed "it is possible to advance peace" while Trump is in the White House.

Greenblatt himself wrote on Twitter that he had a "very positive and productive meeting" with Netanyahu during which they discussed the "regional situation, how progress towards peace with Palestinians can be made & settlements." Netanyahu has found himself caught between maintaining relations with Washington and holding together his rightwing governing coalition, with some pushing for immediate action.

Yesterday, pro-settlement members of the coalition sought to advance a bill to annex a large Israeli settlement east of Jerusalem of some 37,000 people called Maale Adumim. The bill was on the agenda for a ministerial committee meeting on Tuesday, but was put off for another week. Netanyahu has reportedly been seeking to delay the bill due to concerns over how it will affect US relations. —AFP

THE OFFER JUST GOT BIGGER!

0% INTEREST ON CASH PRICE*

Offers from 15 till 18 March

TOSHIBA 506634 32S1700EE 0% Cash Monthly 2 44.9 KD 32 Inch HD ready HDMI x2 USB x1	TOSHIBA 503121 43S2600EE 0% Cash Monthly 4 79.9 KD 43 Inch Full HD 1080 HDMI x2 USB x2
Wansa 506709 WLE55F7762 0% Cash Monthly 6 99.9 KD 55 Inch Full HD 1080 HDMI x3 USB x2	Wansa 507295 WUD49F8856S 0% Cash Monthly 7 119.9 KD 49 Inch 4K SMART TV HDR
PHILIPS 503356 65PUT6800/56 0% Cash Monthly 22 399.9 KD 65 Inch 4K ULTRA HD SMART TV	Wansa 507296 WUD75F8856S 0% Cash Monthly 39 699.9 KD 75 Inch 4K ULTRA HD SMART TV HDR

0% interest on cash price* with **EASY CREDIT**

1803535 | @XciteAlghanim | XcitebyAlghanim | X-cite by Alghanim Electronics

DINEZONE

Join DINEZONE Project

Now Leasing for Cafes and Restaurants

- Fintas (Beside Safir Hotel)
- 26 units with fantastic sea view
- Tranquil beachfront setting

Tel.: +965 22902984, 22902936 Fax: +965 22461929
 Mobile: +965 60635386, 90018330, 60618226, 98009949
 Email: leasing@altijaria.com - Web: www.altijaria.com
 Follow us @ Altijariagroup

SYRIA GOVERNORS HOPE FOR END TO THEIR 'EXILE'

HAMA: "Welcome to Idlib province!" the Syrian governor proclaims, seated in a converted classroom in Hama city some 90 kilometers from his real office, held by rebels since 2015. With opposition fighters led by Syria's former Al-Qaeda affiliate in control of the province he was appointed to lead last year, Ali Jassem instead works from the second floor of a Hama school. And he's not alone. One floor up is Raqa governor Abed Khaled Al-Hamud, 53, seated behind a desk under a photo of President Bashar Al-Assad, flanked by the flags of Syria and the ruling Baath party. His province is even further away than neighboring Idlib, and its provincial capital is still firmly in the grip of the Islamic State group. Despite being installed more than 220 kilometers from Raqa city, Hamud insists he represents "continuity of the state" in his province.

Raqa was the first provincial capital to fall from government control after the country's March 2011 uprising. It was captured by rebels in March 2013, but then taken from them by IS jihadists, who made Raqa city their de facto Syrian capital. But the government has continued to pay the salaries of its employees in the province, which is a key responsibility for Hamud. "Even though the state

doesn't collect any taxes (there), the salaries of 67,000 government employees or retirees are issued each month for those who are still in Raqa or in other provinces," he tells AFP. The money is kept in Hama until either the employees or a trusted proxy can reach the province from Raqa and take it back with them.

'We'll return'

Jassem was appointed the governor of Idlib province just a year ago, long after it was captured by rebels, so he has only ever worked out of his second-floor Hama classroom-turned-office. Idlib city became the second provincial capital to fall from government control when it was captured in March 2015 by the Army of Conquest, an alliance led by former Al-Qaeda affiliate Al-Nusra Front, later known as Fateh Al-Sham.

"We're temporarily in Hama, but we're certain that we'll return to Idlib thanks to the victories of the Syrian army," Jassem says confidently. "All the institutions, the utilities and public administration were transferred here, but it operates independently of the Hama governorate," he adds. The water utilities from Raqa and Idlib have fol-

lowed their governors, installing themselves in offices at Hama's public water company. The state electricity providers from the two provinces have also taken up residence in Hama's electricity company. But at such a remove, there is little real work they can do. "In Idlib, the public administration is shut and for an identity card or a passport, people have to come here," says Jassem. "It is the world war against Syria that has forced this unprecedented situation on us," he adds.

More than 320,000 people have been killed in the nearly six years of Syria's conflict, which has drawn in international players and attracted jihadists like IS. Jassem is also still overseeing the payment of state employee salaries, and says dozens of people a day pass through the offices of his governorate-in-exile.

'State still functioning'

On the same floor, a group of farmers waits for Mohamad Hmashdo, director of planning for Idlib. "We distribute childhood vaccines, medicine for animals and even small generators for water pumps," he says. While residents of Idlib can travel relatively easily to neighbor-

ing Hama, the situation is more complex for Raqa residents. "Daesh doesn't let anyone leave, unless they are seriously ill," says Hamud, using the Arabic acronym for IS. "So they come clandestinely through the desert." "One time a student who wanted to take his exams left from Raqa on horseback until he reached Aleppo and then took a taxi to Hama to take the exams," he adds. Marriage contracts and birth and death certificates are registered sometimes two or three years late.

"Daesh has destroyed all the archives... We must reconstitute them completely. It's a huge job, but it proves that the state is still functioning," Hamud adds. At the end of the corridor, a banner reads "Raqa City Municipal Council." Municipal council head Talal Al-Sheikh, 49, was appointed a year ago, and says he ensures that municipal employees who remain in Raqa, of the 740 who once worked there, keep doing their jobs. Communication with the employees is still possible, but is done secretly for their safety. "They clean the city, they collect garbage, drive municipal vehicles, under the supervision of a Daesh emir (commander), but it is the government that pays their salaries," he says. — AFP

ERDOGAN RILES DUTCH WITH JIBES, THREATENS FURTHER RETALIATION

ANKARA: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan yesterday prompted a fresh outcry in the Netherlands with a jibe about the 1995 Srebrenica massacre, warning of new retaliation in a spiraling diplomatic crisis. Keeping an uncompromising tone, Erdogan said a 'yes' vote in an April 16 referendum on expanding his powers would be the best response to Turkey's "enemies" in a tumultuous dispute that risks wrecking the entire Ankara-Brussels relationship.

He said the Dutch character was "broken" after Netherlands peacekeepers failed to prevent the 1995 Srebrenica massacre of Bosnian Muslims in the break-up of the former Yugoslavia, comments described as "repugnant" by The Hague.

Ankara had a day earlier announced it was suspending high-level relations with the Hague after the Netherlands prevented two Turkish ministers from holding rallies to woo expatriate support ahead of the referendum. The Dutch ambassador to Ankara—currently outside the country—has also been blocked from returning to his post. Erdogan also late Monday sparked a new row with Berlin by lashing out at German Chancellor Angela Merkel for "supporting terrorists".

'We know them from Srebrenica'

EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini and EU Enlargement Commissioner Johannes Hahn urged Erdogan to show moderation, calling on Turkey to "refrain from excessive statements and actions that risk further exacerbating the situation". But far from stepping back, Erdogan accused the Netherlands of "state terror" in preventing Turkish ministers from holding pro-'yes' rallies and said more

sanctions were planned. "We are going to work more" on measures against the Netherlands, said Erdogan.

"These wrongs won't be solved with a sorry, we have more things to do," Erdogan had previously angered the Netherlands by saying the authorities had behaved like the Nazis, who had occupied and bombed the country in the World War II.

But yesterday he touched an arguably even rawer nerve, recalling the 1995 Srebrenica massacre in Bosnia, which Dutch UN peacekeepers failed to prevent in an episode that remains a national trauma to this day. "The Netherlands and the Dutch, we know them from the Srebrenica massacre," he said. "We know how much their morality, their character is broken from the 8,000 Bosnians that were massacred," Erdogan said. "We know this well. No one should give us a lesson in civilisation. Their history is dark but ours is clean." Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte called his claim a "repugnant historical falsehood" and said "Erdogan's tone is getting more and more hysterical." "We won't sink to that level," he said.

'The best answer'

Erdogan's latest broadside against Merkel also infuriated Germany, which had also last week prevented Turkish ministers from holding rallies in the country. Merkel's spokesman described the accusations as "absurd," saying the chancellor had no intention of taking part in a "competition of provocations". Germany's Interior Minister Thomas de Maiziere yesterday said Ankara was playing the role of the victim with its broadsides against NATO allies, as Erdogan seeks to "build solidarity" ahead of the referendum. — AFP



MOSUL: Displaced Iraqis from Mosul arrive at the Hamam Al-Alil camp on March 13, 2017, during the government forces ongoing offensive to retake the western parts of the city from Islamic State (IS) group fighters. — AFP

IRAQ FORCES RETAKE MOSUL TRAIN STATION, ONCE A MAJOR RAIL HUB

'VERY IMPORTANT FROM A TRADE STANDPOINT'

MOSUL: Iraqi forces said yesterday they recaptured Mosul train station, once one of the country's main rail hubs and the latest in a series of key sites retaken from jihadists. Baghdad's forces launched a major drive last month to oust the Islamic State group from west Mosul, a battle that has pushed more than 80,000 people to flee their homes in less than three weeks. Iraqi force have taken back a series of neighborhoods as well as sites including the city's airport, the Mosul museum and the provincial government headquarters since the operation began.

Some, including the museum which was vandalized by IS, have been heavily damaged, and it will likely be a long time before trains are again plying the rails to and from Mosul. But retaking the sites are symbolic victories for Iraqi forces and also bring them closer to fully recapturing west Mosul, though tough fighting remains ahead. Lieutenant General Raed Shakir Jawdat, the commander of the federal police, said his forces have retaken the train station as well as a nearby bus station, both of which are located southwest of Mosul's Old City. The station was the "main corridor from the north to the south and carries goods from Turkey and Syria to Baghdad and Basra", Salam Jabr Saloom,

the director general of Iraq's state-owned railway company, told AFP. Because of its importance, the station was "exposed to many terrorist attacks before the entry of Daesh", Saloom said, using an Arabic acronym for IS. The station was built in the 1940s and was "very important from a trade standpoint" as it was a "launch point for trains carrying goods to Syria and Turkey and back", railway company spokesman Abdulsattar Mohsen said.

"But it stopped after the Daesh attack on Mosul," Mohsen said, referring to an IS offensive that overran the city and swathes of other territory north and west of Baghdad in 2014. Trains once carried passengers to and from Mosul as well, but have not done so since the overthrow of Saddam Hussein's regime by US-led forces in 2003, he said.

'Horrendous conditions' at prisons

Iraqi forces are operating on the edge of the Old City, a warren of narrow streets and closely spaced buildings where hundreds of thousands of people may still reside. The area, in which they will have to advance on foot when armoured vehicles cannot enter the small streets, could see some of the toughest fighting of the Mosul campaign.

Iraqi forces are also battling IS outside the city,

with the Joint Operations Command announcing that soldiers from the 16th Division had recaptured the village of Sheikh Mohammed, northwest of Mosul. More than 80,000 people have fled west Mosul since February 25, according to the International Organization for Migration. And 238,000 people are currently displaced due to fighting in the Mosul area, while more fled but later returned to their homes, the IOM said. Security forces are searching for jihadists trying to sneak out of the city among civilians, and according to Human Rights Watch, are holding more than 1,200 men and boys suspected of IS ties in "horrendous conditions" at sites south of Mosul. "The Iraqi interior ministry is holding at least 1,269 detainees, including boys as young as 13, without charge in horrendous conditions and with limited access to medical care at... makeshift prisons," HRW said in a report.

"At least four prisoners have died, in cases that appear to be linked to lack of proper medical care and poor conditions and two prisoners' legs have been amputated, apparently because of lack of treatment for treatable wounds," the watchdog said. The facilities are located in Qayyarah and Hamam Al-Alil, said HRW, which visited some of them earlier this month. — AFP



ISTANBUL: People walk in central Istanbul's Taksim Square, back dropped by a poster of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. — AP

YEMENI WOMEN RALLY ON WAR OUTSIDE UN OFFICES

SANAA: Dozens of women staged a sit-in outside the United Nations' Yemen offices yesterday, demanding an end to a war that has left millions displaced and at risk of famine. Protestors at the sit-in carried signs calling for the lifting of an air and naval blockade imposed by a Saudi-led Arab coalition on areas controlled by anti-government rebels in Yemen, an AFP journalist in the capital Sanaa said.

Other signs demanded the UN pressure Saudi Arabia and its allies to allow the delivery of food and medical aid into Yemen, which UN aid chief Stephen O'Brien has described as the "largest humanitarian crisis in the world". The sit-in is expected to span three days, according to organizers.

Protestors were seen erecting makeshift tents on Tuesday afternoon as they prepared to spend their first night outside the United Nations' Sanaa offices.

The conflict in Yemen has left more than 7,400 people dead and 40,000 wounded since the Saudi-led coalition intervened on the government's side against Iran-backed rebels in March 2015, according to UN figures. — AFP

IRAN ARRESTS JOURNALIST SHORTLY AFTER RELEASE

TEHRAN: Iran has arrested a reformist journalist after he was released from custody, a prosecutor in Tehran confirmed yesterday. Ehsan Mazandarani, who runs the reformist daily Farhikhtegan, was initially detained in late 2015 and sentenced last April to seven years for "acting against national security". "The arrest of this convict on security charges is in line with the continuation and completion of his previous sentence," Tehran prosecutor Abbas Jafari Dolatabadi told the judiciary-linked Mizan Online website on Tuesday.

Mazandarani was temporarily released in October for health concerns after a hunger strike but was required to return to prison following treatment. His re-arrest on Monday comes after he was reportedly released in February when unofficial sources suggested that his sentence had been reduced to less than two years. Mazandarani's lawyer said he had heard about a reduced sentence but was yet to receive confirmation. — AFP

First Under Water Oxygen Bar in the Middle East

Day Use Cabins

22392238
65134134

FLOWHOUSEKW

Abu Halifa (next to Kuwait Magic Mall)

فلو هاوس كويت
FLOWHOUSE
KUWAIT

DESPITE MOUNTING THREATS, AMERICAN JEWS STAY CALM

NEW YORK: On Coney Island Avenue in Brooklyn, a mixed community where Jews and Muslims interact with ease, sits a Jewish center for the elderly. Last week, the center was the victim of a bomb threat—one of more than 150 targeting American Jewish institutions since the start of the year. Swastikas have appeared on walls: cemeteries have been desecrated. But the recent spike in threats has not shaken the community. Many Jews in the United States—which has been largely spared from anti-Semitic attacks over the past 50 years—say they feel safe.

Stuart Gourdjii, a 25-year-old who runs Yachad Gifts, a shop specializing in Kosher gift baskets, had to evacuate when the bomb threat to the community center was received. "It was

scary," he admitted. He says he has lost count of the reports of threats he has seen on television, but he and his employees are not worried, and Gourdjii would never think of removing his yarmulke in public for safety reasons.

"You have one stupid person probably ring-leading this thing," he said. "He will end up being arrested—it will pass." But not everyone is as calm as Gourdjii. "I have seen an enormous amount of anxiety," especially among the parents of children who attend schools that have been targeted, explains retired rabbi Jack Moline. The 64-year-old Washington resident says he has never seen such a wave of anti-Semitic threats in his life.

"The clear purpose of those acts is to unsettle Jewish life in this country," he said. Like

Gourdjii, Moline says the threats experienced in the United States pale in comparison to those experienced in Europe and especially in France, where there have been deadly attacks—notably on a Jewish school in Toulouse in 2012 or the siege of a Kosher supermarket in Paris in 2015. Both also agree that the threats should serve as a wake-up call to the nearly six million Jews in America. "Anti-Semitism exists," Gourdjii said.

'Thing of the past'

Many had believed that anti-Semitism was a thing of the past because of the "tremendous improvements" made since the end of World War II, said Kenneth Jacobson, the deputy national director of the Anti-Defamation League (ADL).

The group, one of the oldest battling anti-Semitism and discrimination, has been the target of several recent threats. In the period between the world wars, anti-Semitism was not uncommon—and such views were vocally expressed by auto industry baron Henry Ford in his newspaper *The Dearborn Independent*.

Aviation pioneer Charles Lindbergh and controversial priest Charles Coughlin also delivered anti-Semitic screeds to millions of Americans. There also were unofficial quotas at universities and for housing, and even restrictions on Jews getting certain jobs, Jacobson explained.

"All of that is a thing of the past," he said. "In the 2,000 years of the Jewish diaspora, there has never been a Jewish community

that has felt as comfortable and equal citizens as American Jews have felt for the last 50-60 years, and we still believe that to be true." Since 1964, the ADL has regularly gauged the level of anti-Semitic sentiment in the country. Once as high as 29 percent, that figure has dropped to 12 or 13 percent in recent years—a major improvement, though "that still means 30 to 35 million Americans" feel that way, he noted.

For Jacobson, the other major victory for the Jewish community in recent years has been the stigmatization of racist and anti-Semitic speech. "When public figures would engage in hate speech of any kind, they would have their reputation ruined, they would sometimes lose their jobs," he said. — AFP

NORTHEAST US DODGES WORST FROM WINTER STORM STELLA LESS SEVERE THAN INITIALLY FORECAST



NEW YORK: A man plows snow from a street at the Times Square. — AFP

NEW YORK: Winter Storm Stella dumped snow and sleet yesterday across the northeastern United States where thousands of flights were canceled and schools closed, but appeared less severe than initially forecast. Forecast as potentially the most powerful winter storm of the season, it had been set to dump up to two feet of snow in parts of New York and whip the area with winds of up to 60 miles per hour, causing treacherous whiteout conditions.

But after daybreak the National Weather Service (NWS) revised down its predicted snow accumulation for the city of New York, saying that the storm had moved across the coast. A blizzard warning, which went into effect at midnight, was canceled for the city and replaced with an advisory for snow and sleet. Traffic was limited in Midtown Manhattan, with a few pedestrians out walking as workers spread salt and shoveled snow in Times Square, an AFP photographer said.

"We're looking at four to six inches (10 to 15 centimeters) across much of New York City, maybe just over six inches for northern parts of the city, then lower amounts in Long Island," meteorologist Joe Pollina told AFP. "As you head north into Westchester and northeast New Jersey up to a foot is still possible for the north," he added.

A wintry mix would continue to fall through the morning and into the early afternoon, then taper off by mid-to late afternoon, Pollina said. He said it was no longer the worst New York storm of the season. "We are fully deployed," New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo told CNN, with 5,000 plows and 2,000 National Guard called out to help.

Flights canceled

"The airports are basically closed in New York, John F. Kennedy and LaGuardia airports, government is closed, schools are closed, so there's no real reason to be on the roads," he said. The NWS said winter storm warnings were in effect from eastern West Virginia to Maine. "Snowfall amounts in excess of a foot are likely inland along with strong and gusty winds. High winds and tidal flooding are going to be an issue for coastal areas," the agency said.

More than 7,800 flights were canceled Monday through

Wednesday, with airports in New York, Boston, Baltimore, Washington and Philadelphia hit hardest, according to the tracking service FlightAware. The dire forecast also led to the postponement of the first meeting between US President Donald Trump and German Chancellor Angela Merkel in Washington until Friday.

In New York, UN headquarters closed, a disruption for the thousands of delegates expected to attend a women's conference. Many on Wall Street were expected to work from home with low trade volume anticipated, in part as investors waited for Wednesday's decision from the Federal Reserve on whether to raise interest rates. Sleet and ice covered the streets of the Washington area, where the National Park Service warned that the cold could wipe out up to 90 percent of the capital's beloved cherry blossoms.

'Stay ahead'

Trump, facing the first major weather event of his presidency after a mild winter, said that he had spoken to Homeland Security and that the Federal Emergency Management Agency was ready to provide assistance. "Let's hope it's not going to be as bad as some people are predicting. Usually it isn't," he said Monday.

In 2016 New York experienced the biggest snowstorm in the city's history, with a record 27.3 inches falling in Central Park in 24 hours. That storm paralyzed parts of the northeast and left 18 people dead. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, one of the city's biggest tourist attractions, said it would close all three of its locations yesterday. Cuomo, who on Monday instructed residents to have a seven to 10 days' supply of food, conceded Tuesday that the situation was under control.

"Snow plus sleet plus wind is a nasty mix, but because of the light traffic, the light volume we've been able to stay ahead of it," he told CNN, continuing to advise people to stay at home. In the city, the subway was operating, but Cuomo said bus and commuter rail service north of the city could be suspended later yesterday. In the US capital, federal workers were allowed to arrive three hours late, while the city's subway system operated on a weekend schedule. — AFP

FILLON CHARGED OVER 'FAKE JOBS' SCANDAL

PARIS: France's rightwing presidential candidate Francois Fillon was charged yesterday with several offences over a fake jobs scandal, including misuse of public funds, his lawyer said. "He was charged this morning. The hearing was brought forward so that it could take place in a calm manner," lawyer Antonin Levy told AFP.

He was also charged with misuse of corporate assets, Levy said. Fillon, 63, had been expected to go before investigating magistrates today over the scandal, which has undermined his campaign for the presidency only six weeks from the first round of the election. Following revelations in the *Canard Enchaîné* newspaper at the end of January, the conservative candidate admitted to employing his wife Penelope and two of their children as parliamentary assistants, but has denied any wrongdoing.

Penelope was paid hundreds of thousands of euros (dollars) from public funds between 1986 and 2013, but she is accused of doing little work for the salary. From May 2012 to December 2013, while employed at the parliament, Penelope was also paid 3,500 euros (\$3,700) a month by a magazine owned by a friend of Fillon, the tycoon Marc Ladreit de Lacharrière. After initially saying he would withdraw from the presidential race if charged, Fillon has vowed to continue, calling the investigation an attempted "political assassination".

Defies calls to step aside

He has defied calls to step aside from colleagues in his Republicans party and has weathered a flurry of resignations from his campaign team, while the scandal has made an already unpredictable election even harder to call. The disarray appears to have benefited centrist, pro-business candidate Emmanuel Macron in particular, as well as far-right leader Marine Le Pen, who are shown in opinion polls to be the likely top two candidates in the first round of voting on April 23. Polls suggest 39-year-old Macron would beat Le Pen in the decisive second round on May 7 — but after Donald Trump's victory in the United States and Britain's vote to leave the European Union, analysts caution against bold predictions. Fillon, a devout Catholic, was the surprise winner of the Republicans' primary in November after campaigning as a clean and honest candidate who would transform France with a "radical" economic program. — AFP

START PACKING NOW FOR THE NEXT SUMMER!

Book your holiday early to one of our destinations in Far East & enjoy our special fares

Far East Starting From **KD 145**

Round Trip All Inclusive

- Sales Period from 5th - 31st March 2017.
- Travel Period from 5th March to 15th June 2017.
- Terms & conditions apply.

#SamanaKuwaitiya

171
kuwaitairways.com
or contact your travel agent

RAISE YOUR YELLOW FLAG BEFORE IT TURNS RED.

Endometriosis is a painful disease that affects 1 in 5 women in Kuwait, and is still misdiagnosed. **Dr. Salma Kayani**, Head of OBGYN Department at Taiba Hospital, is the only doctor in the region specialized in treating this disease, and she is also the Director of Endometriosis Centre.

Endometriosis Awareness Session
Yarmouk Cultural Centre
Dar Al-Athar Al-Islamiyyah
Saturday 25th March 2017
5:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Register now at
www.taibaendomarch.com

GERMANY PROPOSES HEAVY FINES ON FACEBOOK FOR HATE SPEECH

BERLIN: Germany's justice minister proposed a law yesterday that could see social networks such as Facebook slapped with heavy fines if they fail to wipe illegal hate speech from their sites.

The minister, Heiko Maas, who has been highly critical of Facebook's efforts to clamp down on outlawed racist and xenophobic posts and comments, said the new measures could carry penalties against the offending company of up to 50 million euros (\$53 million).

He noted the draft law, which would still

require the approval of Chancellor Angela Merkel's cabinet and then the parliament, followed several months in which companies had been allowed to take voluntary measures. "These have proved insufficient, and they (the posts) are not being deleted quickly enough," Maas told reporters, citing data provided by internet watchdog jugendschutz.net.

A surge of hate speech on Facebook and other social media in Germany has raised the political heat on the companies ahead of a general election in September.

Facebook and other web giants pledged in 2015 to examine and remove within 24 hours any hateful comments spreading online, in particular over the mass influx of migrants and refugees.

However Maas said yesterday that "networks aren't taking the complaints of their own users seriously enough." He said that of the content reported by users deemed to run afoul of Germany's strict hate speech laws, Twitter only took down one percent and Facebook 39 percent. Google's YouTube video sharing platform fared better, with a

rate of 90 percent according to jugendschutz.net data cited by the minister.

Maas's draft law stipulates that social networks must offer users clear and easily accessible means to file complaints, review them quickly and delete blatantly illegal content within 24 hours. At the latest, offensive posts would have to be taken down within one week after a complaint is submitted.

Companies would also be required to file quarterly reports on their efforts to crack down on hate speech. Maas's hard line,

among the toughest in the European Union, has its critics within the government. This month Economy Minister Brigitte Zypries, like Maas a Social Democrat, warned against a sweeping law, saying responsibility for enforcing hate speech legislation should not be "privatised". However the Central Council of Jews in Germany welcomed Maas's proposal, saying stronger measures against "incitement of racial hatred, glorification of National Socialism and Holocaust denial on social media" were "urgently required". — AFP



LEIDEN: Left-wing GroenLinks leader Jesse Klaver (3rd L) poses for a 'selfie' as he campaigns in Leiden yesterday, a day before legislative elections. — AFP

ALL TO PLAY FOR ON EVE OF DUTCH VOTE

THE HAGUE: Dutch politicians hit the airwaves and the campaign trail yesterday, battling to win over undecided voters in the final countdown to an election overshadowed by an acrimonious row with Turkey. On the eve of today's legislative polls, many of the 12.9 million eligible Dutch voters appear not to have made up their minds which of the record 28 parties in the running to choose.

A final debate between the eight top party leaders was slated for yesterday night, with analysts saying there was still a lot to play for in the race to govern The Netherlands. Outgoing Prime Minister Mark Rutte and his Liberal VVD are topping the latest polls, and poised to win by a whisker with a predicted 24-28 seats in the 150-seat parliament. But he is fighting off a stiff challenge from the Freedom Party (PVV) of his rival far-right anti-Islam MP Geert Wilders, who may scoop up 20 to 24 seats.

In a one-page party manifesto, Wilders has pledged to close the borders to Muslim immigrants, shut mosques and ban sales of the Koran. But he has revealed virtually no details of how he will put such plans into action. Rutte and Wilders clashed Monday in their only televised head-to-head, laying out sharply different visions for the future.

The outgoing premier again hammered out that he would never work with his rival, a stand that could complicate moves to form a coalition government. Bidding for a third term, Rutte pointed to his six years as premier overseeing growth, in one of the leading economies in the eurozone, and the need for stability for the country's 17 million people. But a diplomatic row with Turkey, which has suspended its 400-year old ties with The Netherlands and triggered incendiary accusations from Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, has gate-crashed the polls.

'Fake solutions'

"You are being taken hostage by Erdogan. Close the Dutch borders," Wilders told Rutte, as tempers flared late Monday. "That's a totally fake solution," Rutte shot back, "you want Nexit, you want The Netherlands out of Europe. You know what

it will cost ... don't do it." Rutte said it was time to de-escalate the crisis with Ankara, but Wilders retorted: "We must answer back. We must expel the Turkish ambassador and his staff." "There's the difference between tweeting from the sofa and running a country. If you are in charge of a country you need to take sensible measures," Rutte replied, in a jab at the Dutch MP known for his love of Twitter.

While Wilders's views have won growing support amid Europe's refugee crisis, many of the pragmatic Dutch still find them unpalatable and most of the leading parties, including Rutte, have vowed not to work with him. In the wake of last year's Brexit vote, and Donald Trump's victory in the US presidential polls, the Dutch elections are being keenly watched to measure the strength of far-right and populist polls ahead of other votes in Europe later this year.

Amid such a fragmented political landscape and the possibility the next government will be comprised of an unwieldy four or five-party coalition, a lot of Dutch may well vote strategically. The diplomatic crisis with Turkey, which flared at the weekend after the Dutch government barred Turkish ministers from speaking at a pro-Ankara rally in Rotterdam, appears to have boosted Rutte's image.

Volatile scene

"I think what happened with Turkish incident reinforced his leadership," Monika Sie Dhian Ho, director of the Clingendael Institute, told AFP. She said as many as 60 percent of voters may still be wavering "so this is volatile, many things can happen." Amid the jostling, long-standing Dutch parties such as the Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA) and the Democracy Party (D66) have seen their fortunes rise as the clock ticks down to polling. They could both prove to be key players in future coalition building. Young, charismatic left-wing leader, Jesse Klaver, 30, who heads GroenLinks was out early Tuesday campaigning in the university city of Leiden. He has boosted his party in the polls, and could win between 16 to 18 seats, leaving him in a powerful kingmaker position. — AFP

EU RULES WORKPLACE HEADSCARF BAN LEGAL

LUXEMBOURG: European companies can ban employees from wearing religious or political symbols including the Islamic headscarf, the EU's top court ruled yesterday in a landmark case. The European Court of Justice (ECJ) said it does not constitute "direct discrimination" if a firm has an internal rule banning the wearing of "any political, philosophical or religious sign."

The Luxembourg-based court was ruling on the case of a Muslim woman fired by the security company G4S in Belgium after she insisted on wearing a headscarf. The wearing of religious symbols, and especially Islamic symbols such as the headscarf, has become a hot button issue with the rise of populist sentiment across Europe, with some countries such as Austria considering a complete ban on the full-face veil in public.

Manfred Weber, head of the centre-right European People's Party, the biggest in the European Parliament, welcomed the ruling.

"Important ruling by the European Court of Justice: employers have the right to ban the Islamic veil at work. European values must apply in public life," Weber said in a tweet. The ECJ was ruling on a case dating to 2003 when Samira Achbita, a Muslim, was employed as a receptionist by G4S security services in Belgium. At the time, the company had

an "unwritten rule" that employees should not wear any political, religious or philosophical symbols at work, the ECJ said. In 2006, Achbita told G4S she wanted to wear the Islamic headscarf at work but was told this would not be allowed. Subsequently, the company introduced a formal ban. Achbita was dismissed and she went to court claiming discrimination.

Treat all employees equally

The ECJ said European Union law does bar discrimination on religious grounds, but G4S's actions were based on treating all employees the same, meaning no one person was singled out for application of the ban. "The rule thus treats all employees of the undertaking in the same way, notably by requiring them, generally and without any differentiation, to dress neutrally," the ECJ said. "Accordingly, such an internal rule does not introduce a difference of treatment that is directly based on religion or belief," it said.

However in a related case in France, the ECJ ruled that a customer could not demand that a company employee not wear the Islamic headscarf when conducting business with them on its behalf. Design engineer Asma Bougnaoui was employed full-time by Micropole, a private company, in 2008, having been told that wearing the headscarf might cause problems with clients. — AFP

COUNTDOWN TO START OF BREXIT AFTER BILL PASSES PARLIAMENT

EU LEADERS BRACING FOR IMPENDING ANNOUNCEMENT

LONDON: Prime Minister Theresa May is set to begin the countdown to Brexit after parliament gave her the green light and Scotland wrong-footed her by launching a fresh bid for independence. Downing Street has played down speculation that May could announce yesterday that she is triggering the Article 50 process to leave the European Union, indicating that it would take place later in the month. But coming just hours after lawmakers approved a bill empowering her to begin the divorce, the prime minister's statement in the House of Commons could be an opportunity to set out her plans in more detail.

May appeared to be caught off guard Monday when Scotland's nationalist government announced plans for a second referendum on breaking from the United Kingdom. First Minister Nicola Sturgeon had warned that the prospect was on the cards since the June vote to leave the EU in which a majority of Scots voted to stay-but an announcement had not been expected so soon.

May immediately condemned the plan, saying that less than three years after Scots voted by 55 percent to reject independence, another vote would cause only "uncertainty and division". But it realized one of her biggest fears about Brexit and opened up a second battlefield as she prepares for two years of tough negotiations with the EU. EU leaders were braced for a potential announcement on Article 50 this week, and the European Parliament was ready to hold a special debate and a vote on its plans for the negotiations.

While this is now looking less likely, ministers insist that Brexit will begin by the end of March, putting Britain on course to become the first country to leave the EU by March 2019. The EU is determined to ensure that Brexit will not encourage other countries to follow Britain out the door, and big battles await over budget contributions, immigration and trade ties. Manfred Weber, a German lawmaker who leads the European People's Party, the biggest grouping in the European Parliament, said Scotland's breakaway bid signalled "a deepening of the splits in British society". "People all over Europe can see how risky it is to take the EU into question," he said.

Battle for Britain

After weeks of wrangling, British lawmakers on late Monday granted May the right to trigger Article 50 of the EU's Lisbon Treaty, which would start the two-year divorce process with the bloc.

SCOTLAND SOWS CONFUSION IN MAY'S GRAND BREXIT PLAN

LONDON: Scotland's plans for a second independence referendum have wrong-footed Prime Minister Theresa May, who could now be forced into giving the go-ahead for the vote-but only after Brexit. Scottish First Minister Nicola Sturgeon's bombshell announcement on Monday came at the start of a week in which May had been expected to announce the start of the process for extracting Britain from the EU.

Downing Street then played down talk of an imminent statement on starting Brexit, which it said had always been planned for later in the month-but British newspapers were left in no doubt as to what had happened. "Sturgeon ambushes May," read a front-page headline in The Times, while The Guardian said: "May's Brexit plan upstaged as Sturgeon seizes her moment."

The Metro daily said: "Scots throw a sporan in the works"-a reference to a distinctive leather pouch worn in traditional Scottish Highland dress. Commentators pointed out the irony that May will now be forced to argue at the same time against membership of one union-the European one-but in favour of another-the British one. The referendum call "weakens Theresa May's position because it could mean that if she pursues a hard Brexit that we end up with a constitutional crisis and possibly the break up of the United Kingdom itself," said John Springford, director of research at the Centre for European Reform think-tank.

"She won't want to be the prime minister who led to the UK no longer existing," Springford said. The European Commission said an independence referendum was a domestic matter for Britain but indicated that Scotland would have to reapply to join the European Union if it pulled out of the United Kingdom.

May faces another headache in Northern Ireland as she pushes ahead with what her critics have called "hard Brexit"-departure from Europe's single market. Irish nationalists Sinn Fein gained significant ground in elections in the British province earlier this month and on Monday called for a referendum "as soon as possible" on Northern Ireland leaving the UK and joining the Republic of Ireland.

'Completely unacceptable' timing

May has the power to block a Scottish referendum but experts said she would be unwise to do so since this could push public opinion in favor of independence. But she could object to



LONDON: A protester draped in a European Union flag takes part in a protest in support of an amendment to guarantee legal status of EU citizens, outside the Houses of Parliament. — AFP

The bill still requires the formality of royal assent from Queen Elizabeth II to become law. The government reportedly wants to start the process after a March 25 summit in Rome to mark the EU's 60th birthday.

May has the power to block a second independence vote in Scotland, but this would most likely only energise the Scottish nationalist cause. Polls suggest that a new referendum would be a much closer fight than in 2014, as the Scottish National Party is hoping a newly sovereign Scotland would be able to maintain close ties with the EU. But the European Commission was quick to warn that Scotland would not inherit Britain's EU membership, and would have to reapply as a new nation.

Sturgeon said that she had sought to work with London, but that her concerns about May's plan to leave Europe's single market, in order to cut immigration, had fallen on deaf ears. Several

British newspapers described Scotland's move as an "ambush", with The Daily Telegraph calling it "The new battle for Britain".

The approval of the Brexit bill was a victory for the prime minister, and her minister in charge of overseeing the EU exit, David Davis, greeted peers outside the House of Lords chamber late Monday with a broad smile. But new battles lie ahead, with The Times reporting that parliament will need to pass at least seven bills to prepare for life outside the EU on controversial issues such as immigration, taxes and agriculture. So far May has managed to keep her Conservative MPs in line, but many of them opposed Brexit and could become emboldened as the negotiations progress, particularly if the economy starts to falter. "The unity of the Tory party is shakier than it seems," Tim Bale, professor of politics at Queen Mary University of London said. — AFP



EDINBURGH: Scotland's First Minister Nicola Sturgeon (C) hosts a Scottish Government cabinet meeting at Bute House. — AFP

Sturgeon's preferred timing of holding the vote by early 2019, before Britain actually leaves the European Union.

Sturgeon yesterday warned the British government that there should be no "blocking mechanisms" for her plans. "It should be up to the Scottish parliament to determine the referendum's timing, franchise and the question," she said. But Ruth Davidson, the leader of the Scottish Conservatives, said the timetable "would force people to vote blind" as they would not yet know the terms of the Brexit deal.

A government source was quoted as saying in The Times newspaper: "The prime minister has said this would mean a vote while she was negotiating Brexit and I think that can be taken pretty clearly as a message that this timing is completely unacceptable. "It would be irresponsible to agree to it and we won't," the source said.

Significant chance of independence

May on Monday said a Scottish independ-

ence vote would be "divisive and cause huge economic uncertainty" and would come at the "worst possible time". She is expected to give a more detailed answer next week after Sturgeon receives formal authorization from the semi-autonomous Scottish parliament to apply for permission from the British government.

Scotland voted against independence by 55 percent to 45 percent in a 2014 referendum but Sturgeon argues that circumstances have changed completely since last year's Brexit vote. Some 62 percent of voters in Scotland backed Britain staying in the EU in the June referendum but across the whole UK, 52 percent voted in favour of Brexit. The latest Scottish opinion polls indicate that support for remaining in the UK is going down, although still showing a small majority. "It's wide open," Michael Keating, politics professor at the University of Aberdeen, told AFP. Springford said: "I think there's quite a significant chance of Scottish independence this time." — AFP

LAWYERS TO SUMMON PARK FOR QUESTIONING

SEOUL: South Korean prosecutors will summon former president Park Geun-Hye, whose impeachment was confirmed by the country's highest court last week, for questioning as a criminal suspect, a spokesman said yesterday. Park has been named as an accomplice to the secret confidante at the heart of a corruption and influence-peddling scandal that triggered her dramatic downfall. Confirmation of her impeachment by the nation's top court stripped her of immunity from criminal prosecution.

"We will decide Wednesday when to summon former president Park and inform her," the spokesman of the Seoul Central District Prosecutors Office told AFP. It has not yet been decided whether Park will be called in to the prosecutors' office in private, or publicly before TV cameras and photographers, he added. The country's top court last week fired Park over a corruption scandal.

Her friend and secret confidante, Choi Soon-Sil, is standing trial for using her ties to Park to force local firms to "donate" nearly \$70 million to non-profit foundations Choi allegedly used for personal gain. Park is accused of offering policy favours to businessmen who paid Choi, including the heir to the smartphone giant Samsung, Lee Jae-Yong, who has been indicted for bribery and other offences.

South Korean media and politicians have accused Park of defiance after told supporters on her return to her private residence following staying on in the presidential Blue House complex for several days that "the truth will eventually be revealed". As president, Park refused to make herself available for questioning to special prosecutors investigating the scandal, despite multiple requests.

Similarly the Constitutional Court asked her to appear before it as it held a series of hearings while considering whether to confirm or overturn her impeachment by parliament, but she did not do so. Park has been holed up in her high-walled house in southern Seoul, with hundreds of her diehard supporters staging sit-ins and vowing to "protect our president" from any harm.

Clashes are expected if prosecution authorities try to force their way through the crowd surrounding the building to deliver the summons. A

demonstration by thousands of pro-Park supporters following Friday's court ruling was marred by violence, with some attacking riot police and assaulting journalists. Three of the protestors in their 60s and 70s died and dozens of people were wounded, including police and journalists.

'Witch of the century'

Park's fall gives South Korea an opportunity to draw a line under the scandal, which has been dominating the headlines for months, but plunges the country into a period of uncertainty, with a presidential election to be held no later than May 9. It comes as neighboring North Korea shows increased signs of belligerence launching four missiles last week and describing them as a drill for an attack on US bases in Japan.

Pyongyang has also been widely blamed for the killing of its leader's half-brother Kim Jong-Nam in Kuala Lumpur by two women wielding a banned toxic nerve agent. Park took a hardline stance toward the North over its nuclear and missile programs, shutting down the lucrative Seoul-invested Kaesong industrial park in the North, the last legacy of the previous decade's inter-Korean rapprochement. North Korea's top newspaper Rodong Sinmun rejoiced over her fall Tuesday, calling her "The witch of the 21st century without an equal in the world".

"Whoever perpetrates such sycophancy and treachery as leaving the nation's dignity and interests to the tender mercy of outside forces is bound to be cursed and buried in the grave of history," the daily said in a commentary. "Those who seek to live in luxury and comfort at the cost of sweat and blood shed by the people... are fated to meet their miserable end by resistance of the angry public," it proclaimed.

The current front-runner in South Korean opinion polls is former Democratic Party leader Moon Jae-In, who has advocated engagement with the North. A Korea Research poll for Yonhap news agency and KBS TV released on Sunday put Moon on 29.9 percent, well ahead of his fellow Democratic politician, South Chungcheong governor Ahn Hee-Jung on 17 percent. Acting president Hwang Kyo-Ahn, from Park's conservative Liberty Korea party, fell back to third place with 9.1 percent, it said. —AFP



MANILA: A policeman (back) watches protesters and relatives as they hold a rally outside the office of the anti-graft body in Manila on March 14, 2017, while a woman (not pictured) who asked not to be identified in fear of potential police retribution and using the pseudonym "Sally Antonio" files a complaint against policemen allegedly involved in the killing of her husband and eldest son. — AFP

ENDURING PAIN FOR DRUG WAR WIDOWS

DUTERTE'S CRACKDOWN HAS CLAIMED OVER 7,000 LIVES

MANILA: Sally Antonio is exhausted from working three jobs since police killed her husband and son, a typical Philippine drug war widow enduring a life sentence of impoverished misery. While President Rodrigo Duterte's unprecedented crackdown has claimed the lives of 7,000 people, the impacts on their families are the largely untold stories in what rights groups have called a "war on the poor".

Antonio, 43, lost her 19-year-old son—the main breadwinner in the family as a waiter—and her unemployed husband when police conducted a drug raid on their home six months ago and shot the men. "When they killed my husband and son, they also killed me," Antonio told AFP as she narrated her struggles since their deaths forced her to take on extra work to look after five remaining children and grandson.

Antonio said she sometimes slept for just two hours a day to fit in her work washing laundry, running errands for neighbors and as a community security officer. "Sometimes I am so exhausted and my hands are too painful, I have to stop working for one, two days," said Antonio,

breaking down in tears. "Then I have to borrow money from neighbors and we have to scrimp on food." Antonio said her 18-year-old daughter, a psychology student, had to drop out of university to replace her husband as the main caretaker of the younger children. One of her top concerns is having enough money to buy medicine for her 11-year-old son, who suffers from heart disease. "I'm angry," she said. "Why did they have to kill my husband and son and leave families like ours to sacrifice?"

Begged for life

Antonio acknowledged her husband was a drug user but said he had previously reported to authorities as part of a government monitoring programme, and that he was not a trafficker. She said her son was never into drugs and believed he was shot because he begged police during the raid to spare his father's life. A police report on the deaths seen by AFP stated officers conducted a drug raid and were forced to shoot after being fired upon first.

Antonio, who asked her real name not be

used to avoid potential police retribution, insisted her husband and son did not resist when the officers burst into their home. Police have reported killing more than 2,500 people in self-defence during the eight months of the drug war. Rights groups have accused police of systematically making up self-defence claims after killing drug addicts and traffickers. Amnesty International has warned police may have committed crimes against humanity.

Duterte, 71, won presidential elections last year after promising to eradicate drugs in society by killing tens of thousands of people. Duterte said he would be "happy to slaughter" three million drug addicts, although he and his aides have also insisted police are not being instructed to do anything illegal. Amnesty said in a February report that the killings were overwhelmingly in poor urban areas, with the slain often male breadwinners. "The death often puts families in an even more precarious financial position and leaves many relatives embittered, as they see authorities overwhelmingly target the poor," Amnesty said. —AFP



ISLAMABAD: In this Wednesday, March 23, 2016 file photo, a Pakistani-made Shaheen-III missile is on display during a military parade. — AP

OFFICIALS: PAKISTAN PROMISES NUCLEAR ARMS RESPONSIBILITY

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan vowed yesterday to work to prevent non-nuclear states from gaining the technology that would put them on the path to acquiring nuclear weapons - even though both Islamabad and neighbor New Delhi have defied non-proliferation treaties to become competing nuclear powers. The pledge was delivered by Sartaj Aziz, adviser to Pakistan's prime minister on foreign affairs, at a multi-nation conference on non-proliferation in Islamabad, attended by representatives of South and Central Asia,

as well as China and Russia.

Pakistan is signatory to the 13-year-old United Nations resolution aimed at curbing the spread of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, with a particular emphasis on preventing non-state actors from getting their hands on massively destructive technology as well as materials. But Islamabad has had a sketchy history in this area, with the architect of its nuclear weapons program, Qadeer Khan, accused of clandestinely giving North Korea nuclear weapons technology.

When India started down the nuclear road by launching its program in the early 1970s, Pakistan was quick to follow. The tensions between the two countries - neither of which is a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Agreement - have raised the specter of a nuclear confrontation between the two hostile neighbors. India and Pakistan have fought three wars since 1947 when majority Muslim Pakistan was created from the larger South Asian subcontinent.

Aziz, the prime minister's adviser, told participants at the Islamabad conference that Pakistan has implemented regulatory precautions to avoid siphoning off technology into the wrong hands. The international community has expressed fears militants could lay their hands on nuclear and other destructive materials, particularly as various al-Qaida-linked and other militant groups and the rival Islamic State group are still able to stage large-scale attacks in both Pakistan and neighboring Afghanistan.

Pakistan has come under sanctions in the past because of its nuclear weapons program and as a result has run into shortages of spare parts for its nuclear reactors that provide energy. It has also been critical of US support for India's inclusion in the Nuclear Suppliers Group, which devises guidelines for nuclear exports and nuclear-related exports. The two-day conference also includes representatives of the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and Interpol. — AP

AUSTRALIAN JAILED IN BALI FOR USING HASH

DENPASAR: An Australian businessman was yesterday handed a seven-month jail term for using hashish on the Indonesian resort island of Bali. But Giuseppe Serafino will be released from prison in two months as his sentence was reduced by the amount of time he has already spent in custody since his arrest in October. The 49-year-old, who ran a bar on Bali, was detained for using hashish on the island with British former war correspondent David Fox, 55. Fox was handed the same jail sentence last week, and is also set to be released in May.

The men could have been jailed for several years under Indonesia's tough anti-drugs laws, which include the death penalty for traf-

fickers, but judges ruling on the cases said the pair had admitted their wrongdoing and acted politely. Serafino and Fox were caught with several grams of the drug each. Serafino told his trial that he had been using hashish for nine years to help alleviate the symptoms of mouth cancer.

Handing down the verdict in his case, presiding judge Erwin Djong told the court in the Balinese capital Denpasar he had been found "convincingly guilty of committing the crime of illegally using narcotics". Serafino's lawyer Desi Widyantari said her client would not appeal. Prosecutors had recommended a one-year jail term for both Serafino and Fox. — AFP

Boulevard hosts

MARCHING FOR MORE!

MORE CHEFS. MORE RECIPES. MORE ACTIVITIES. MORE FUN. BUT NOT MORE MONEY! IT'S FREE ENTRY

Awaiting and anticipating is over! For the third consecutive year, the exciting foodie event is here to impress! The Taste of Q8, hosted at the Boulevard, will be bringing you 11 chefs, more restaurants, special area for kids and more parking space. Enjoy Free entry from March 16, 17 & 18, 2017

Taste of Q8...All about food!

APPLY • SPONSOR • VISIT

www.thetasteofq8.com thetasteofq8

CCTV Operator
 GLA Property Management
 Kuwait

You will be responsible for undertaking operation of all equipments and cameras to comply with the CCTV Code of Practice, effectively monitoring, and patrolling, via view screens and taking any immediate action and notification appropriate to events seen, reporting equipment failure to the CCTV supervisor to maximize operation of the system.

Apply Now [JB3627584](#)

Graphic Designer
 Value Plus Business Advisory
 Kuwait

You will be responsible for working with operation managers and team members to provide professional recommendations for concept, design, art direction, production, print, buying and monitoring quality control, defining design criteria, developing concept and direction, proposing, directing, and creating, art and photography.

Apply Now [JB3627268](#)

Office Manager
 Afaq United
 Kuwait

You will be responsible for organizing and coordinating administration duties and office procedures, creating and maintaining a pleasant work environment, ensuring high levels of organizational effectiveness, communication and safety, maintaining office services by organizing, office operations and procedures.

Apply Now [JB3627403](#)

Senior Executive, Product
 Al-Sayer Group
 Kuwait

You will be responsible for generating sales leads, identifying new business opportunities, following-up on the sales agreements with the customers, creating presentations, demos, assessment tests and other sales aids of medical products in order to present the products to the customers and regularly calling & emailing them to keep them updated.

Apply Now [JB3627436](#)

Industrial Engineer
 Resettlement Solution
 Kuwait

You will be responsible for determining the most effective ways to create a product or service, developing ways to increase productivity, maximizing efficiency, managing human capital more effectively, developing the most efficient ways to use machines, materials, information and energy to make a product or service.

Apply Now [JB3627003](#)

Executive Secretary
 The Colony
 Kuwait

You will be responsible for managing appointments, meetings and schedules of the General Manager, supporting high-level management, executives and the entire department, providing administrative support and performing numerous duties, including scheduling, writing correspondence, emailing, handling visitors and routing callers.

Apply Now [JB3626911](#)

Sales Executive - Industrial
 Paints - Al Babtain Group
 Kuwait

You will be responsible for identifying, new customers and selling a new range of industrial products, project identification and selling different paint systems to them, preparing reports on customers, projects and engineers by collecting analyzing and summarizing information etc.

Apply Now [JB3626818](#)

Accountant/Secretary
 Bena Market
 Kuwait

You will be responsible for managing all incoming and outgoing correspondences to ensure all of these are received by the intended addressee, ensuring all incoming and outgoing payments are processed in a timely fashion, setting work priorities and responding to changing priorities that impact daily planned activities

Apply Now [JB3626710](#)

Chief Accountant - Al Wabel
 Trading & Maintenance Co.
 KSA

You will be responsible for managing the accounting activities of Al-Wabel Co. and ensuring that there is accurate and timely reporting in accordance with international and local accounting standards, rules and regulations. You will be the responsible designate for all matters related to DZI, coordinating and managing the response to internal and external audits.

Apply Now [JB3627386](#)

Operations Manager
 Syanah Med
 KSA

You will be responsible for supervising daily operations, coordinating between departments, reporting on a daily basis/weekly basis to the CFO, overseeing IT, HR, Sales and Marketing progress, warehouse and workshop etc.

Apply Now [JB3627116](#)

Senior Application Support
 Basamh Trading Company
 KSA

You will be responsible for providing support for applications on a daily basis, including, but not be limited to, reviewing problems reported, prioritizing and researching about the problems, determining solutions and resolving them, fixing problems related to application support, investigating problems and escalating them to the IT specialist.

Apply Now [JB3627114](#)

Brand Manager - Luxury
 Fashion & Dept Stores
 Al Futtaim Group - KSA

You will be responsible for analyzing how the brand is positioned in the market and target consumer's insights, taking brand ownership and providing the vision, mission, goals and strategies to match and turn brand strategies into brand plans, brand positioning and go to market strategies.

Apply Now [JB3626969](#)

Reservations Consultant
 Travel Matrix
 UAE

You will be responsible for handling reservation enquiries over the phone and through emails and send quotations to customers efficiently, creating cruise bookings using the online booking system and work towards maximizing conversion of bookings.

Apply Now [JB3626917](#)

Recruitment Officer
 Premier Technology
 UAE

You will be responsible for making sure you select the most appropriate method of recruitment for each vacancy, finding suitable candidates by screening, job applications, conducting initial interviews (by phone or face to face) before suggesting the applicants for the next step, scheduling and coordinating interviews and other selection methods.

Apply Now [JB3626850](#)

Document Controller -
 Commercial Management
 Al Futtaim Group - UAE

You will be responsible for the provision of quality services and ensuring that the document management system is adhered to in accordance with the approved guidelines and project procedures, ensuring and making sure all information in the system is always up to date and can be easily retrieved as and when required.

Apply Now [JB3625015](#)

BMS Operator
 Emaar
 UAE

You will be responsible for operating and monitoring the BMS System and integrated systems, preparing reports, making recommendations and implementing manual alteration to settings for optimizing environmental performance and energy consumption

Apply Now [JB3626974](#)

Construction Manager
 Muhibbah Engineering Middle
 East L.L.C. - Qatar

You will be responsible for monitoring and controlling construction work activities to ensure that the project is managed in a safe and professional manner, undertaking in compliance with all contractual requirements and executed at the required performance level.

Apply Now [JB3627281](#)

Commercial Manager
 (Contracts) ATKINS
 Qatar

You will be responsible for supporting all existing operations within a private sector organization, through all the project phases, particularly those related to Commercial Management (procurement, cost, contractual, etc.), assessing both the strengths and weaknesses and compiling comprehensive reports for presentation to the client

Apply Now [JB3609355](#)

Head of Maintenance Unit
 Qatar Museums
 Qatar

You will be responsible for leading, directing and controlling the operations and maintenance of specific museums of QM assigned with the objective of maximizing resources and ensuring work conducted is in line with specifications, budgeting and in adherence to local laws, regulations and QM's strategic business objectives

Apply Now [JB3604821](#)

Public Relations Officer - HR
 Services M.H. Alshaya Co.
 Qatar

You will be responsible for working within the Government Relations Department. You will be responsible for collecting, processing and submitting of legal documents, assisting with paperwork and supporting the team with administration and public relations tasks.

Apply Now [JB3626645](#)

www.bayt.com

Register > Upload your CV > Apply



Senior citizens play a game of boules on the riverbank of Lake Constance in Unteruhldingen, Germany, yesterday. — AP

DUBAI NABS MAN BEHIND VIDEO OF CAT FED TO DOGS

Continued from Page 1

Several UAE newspapers said yesterday that the man who posted the video was arrested. It was not clear if he was the same man heard in the footage. The National daily cited Major General Khalil Al-Mansouri of the Dubai police's criminal investigation department as saying that anybody convicted of ani-

mal abuse would face jail and heavy fines. Dr Susan Aylott, a volunteer at Animal Welfare Abu Dhabi, told the newspaper that this attack was not a rare act of cruelty against animals in the United Arab Emirates. "We have had several recent incidents like this, including that of a dog whose hind legs were tied and then skinned alive. The abuse has not stopped," she said. — AFP

PRISON SUICIDE UNDER PROBE, 3 SENIOR...

Continued from Page 1

Several MPs however demanded that the price of oil of KPC's budget should be raised to \$50 a barrel and not \$35. The government said the raise came to match the increase in oil prices in recent months. A number of lawmakers also called on the government to present a true picture of state finances and to stop providing inflated figures about the budget deficit to prevent rises in prices of commodities and services. The Assembly comfortably approved the agreement

Kuwait signed with NATO to allow easy access for the movement of troops and other cooperation. Several lawmakers protested that under the agreement, Kuwait is obliged to pay billions of dollars, but Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah denied that Kuwait is required to pay money under the accord. The minister said the agreement with NATO is very important for the security of the country and the entire region. The Assembly also approved a law to increase from KD 50 million to KD 150 million a portfolio run by the industrial bank to provide soft loans to small enterprises by young citizens.

PIRATES HIJACK FREIGHTER OFF SOMALIA COAST

Continued from Page 1

Its crew sent a distress signal on Monday afternoon, said Steed, who helped secure the release of 26 hostages in Oct 2016. "Yesterday afternoon, the ship reported that it was followed by two skiffs. After that, it went silent and the owner of the ship was not able to get into contact," he said. "There has not been an attack of a commercial ship by Somali pirates since 2012," he added.

The 1,800 deadweight tonne Aris 13 is owned by Panama company Armi Shipping and managed by Aurora Ship Management in the United Arab Emirates, according to the Equasis shipping data website, managed by the French transport ministry. Australian government records from 2014 list the ship's owner as Flair Shipping Trading FZE in the UAE. Argyrios Karagiannis, the managing director of Flair Shipping, declined to comment.

Graeme Gibbon-Brooks, the head of private maritime security company Dryad Maritime Intelligence, said the vessel was an easy target because it was low, slow and close to the coast. Crews were beginning to relax their vigilance after a period of relative security for shipping, he said. Now that the ship was captured, Somali authori-

ties must ensure it was contained and not used as a mothership, he said, referring to a hijacked vessel used to launch attacks. "The way that the authorities react now is crucial," he said.

The Aris 13 was reported forced to dock near the town of Alula on the Somali coast. "Armed men are holding the boat and its crew near Alula," Muse Mohamed, a coast guard official in northeastern Somalia's semi-autonomous region of Puntland, told AFP yesterday. A traditional chief in the region, Abdihakim Mohamed Jama, contacted by phone said more than 20 men, heavily armed, were on board the tanker and that the suspected pirates "are claiming to be fishermen".

Somali pirates began staging waves of attacks in 2005, seriously disrupting a major international shipping route. The epidemic, which in 2012 cost the global economy \$5.7 billion to \$6.1 billion, prompted interventions by the United Nations, the European Union and NATO. Many commercial shippers began hiring private armed guards for their vessels. At the peak of the piracy crisis in January 2011, 736 hostages and 32 boats were held. Though anti-piracy measures ended attacks on commercial vessels, fishing boats have continued to face assaults. — Agencies

Kuwait Times Premier Brands

To see your ad here, call: +965 248 35 616 / 617

E MAIL: info@kuwaittimes.net ads@kuwaittimes.net Website: www.kuwaittimes.net

HOT BUNDLE OFFERS

SHARP

SJ-SC53V-SL3 Double Door Ref. 17.3 Cubic Feet. Silver Color. 492 L.R. 159 185 26

EC-DS22-R Vacuum Cleaners. 2200 21

SHARP SJ-K425E-SS3 Double Door Ref. 13 Cubic Feet. Silver. 385 L.R. 139 160 21

R-20MT(S) Microwave. 800 20

best AL-YOUSIFI

Credit: Start from 5KD • Up to 48 month • Interest approval

Shop Online: www.best.com.kw Free Delivery

1809 809

• Kuwait 1 (the New str.) • Kuwait 2 (Panasonic Tower) • Hawalli 1 (Tunis str.) • Hawalli 2 (Bin Khaldon str.) • Shuwaikh (4th Ring road) • Al-Rai (4th Ring road) • Salmiya (Salem Al-Mubarak str.) • Farwaniya (Behind police Station) • Fahaheel (Opp. General Parking) • Jahra (Opp. Main Co-op.) • Alrport (Departure Hall)

OUR DEALS ARE THE BEST .. STARTING KD 35 MONTHLY !

Mazda CX-9 2012 Model

Mazda6 Ultra 2012 Model

Mazda2 2012 Model

Peugeot 301 2014 Model

Emgrand EC7 2013 Model

AS GOOD ... AS NEW

• 1 Year or 20,000 km Warranty • Low Installments • No Down Payment* • Company Serviced as per Manufacturer Recommendation

الشركة الكويتية لاستيراد السيارات ذ.م.م.م. Kuwait Automotive Imports Co. W.L.L.

97390909 - 69011429 - 66884163

KAICO App. ios & Android. Install it for free & use it!

*Subject to Credit Approval

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

Founder and Publisher
YOUSUF S. AL-ALYAN

Editor-in-Chief
ABD AL-RAHMAN AL-ALYAN

EDITORIAL : 24833199-24833358-24833432
 ADVERTISING : 24835616/7
 FAX : 24835620/1
 CIRCULATION : 24833199 Extn. 163
 ACCOUNTS : 24835619
 COMMERCIAL : 24835618

P.O.Box 1301 Safat, 13014 Kuwait.
 E MAIL: info@kuwaittimes.net
 Website: www.kuwaittimes.net



Focus

MAY FACES FRESH BREXIT HURDLES

British Prime Minister Theresa May prepares to open negotiations to leave the EU having finally overcome opposition in parliament, but she now faces the monumental task of thrashing out details of the divorce. And with Scotland on the brink of making a new bid for independence and warning signs that the Brexit vote is beginning to hit the economy, political analysts warned that May still faces plenty of obstacles.

Warnings from EU leaders that Britain will have to pay a hefty exit bill and face tough conditions for leaving the bloc have added to the uncertainty. "Things could turn pretty sticky pretty quickly," said Tim Bale, professor of politics at Queen Mary University of London. On the domestic front, May has moved deftly at the start of a two-year process filled with inevitable compromises and risks.

Parliament gave final approval on Monday to a bill empowering the prime minister to begin Brexit, clearing her path to embark on the delicate task at any time. Earlier, a threatened rebellion in the lower House of Commons over parliament's say on the final Brexit deal failed to materialise, as none of May's Conservative Party MPs voted against her, although a handful abstained. The vote made clear how, eight months after taking office, May is enjoying an extended honeymoon, boosted by a weak opposition, relatively economic stability and an aggressively eurosceptic press.

'No opposition'

Despite having campaigned to stay in the EU in last June's referendum, May has promised a clean break with Brussels, leaving the European single market in order to control mass migration from the bloc. She has support from right-wing Conservatives and most critics of Brexit have fallen silent for fear of being accused of trying to undo referendum result. "The thing historians will think quite strange is that, given that there's no majority in the country and no majority in parliament for a hard Brexit, how are we getting a hard Brexit?" said Charles Grant, director of the Centre for European Reform. "The answer is there's no opposition and the Tory party, although a lot of it is quite soft, they are very scared of the eurosceptic newspaper groups."

The Conservatives are 18 or 19 points ahead of the opposition Labour party, which is deeply divided under leftist leader Jeremy Corbyn and struggling to articulate a clear message on Brexit. Last month the Conservatives won a by-election in a Brexit-backing, Labour working-class seat in northern England - the first such victory for 35 years. May's majority in the Commons is slim, however, and some senior Tories have urged her to call a snap election to bolster her support.

"As British law needs to be amended countless times to take account of leaving the EU treaties, the government could face many close votes, concessions or defeats as it tries to implement Brexit," said former leader William Hague. Decades-old splits in the Conservatives over Europe may also resurface - the eurosceptics are in charge now, but most Tories wanted to stay in the EU. "The unity of the Tory party is shakier than it seems," Bale told AFP.

'Early days'

May has promised to listen to ordinary voters buffeted by the winds of globalization and her personal popularity has been riding high in polls. But she will be sitting across the table from EU leaders who face nationalist movements in their own countries and fear Britain's exit may only be the first. May has taken pains in recent weeks to show goodwill, stressing that she does not want Brexit to damage the EU, and her decision in January to set out her negotiating goals was welcomed for providing clarity.

She plans to take just two years to agree the divorce and a new trade deal and faces the possibility of leaving without an agreement - a scenario that business leaders have compared to falling off a cliff. The resilience of the economy has so far helped May, as pre-referendum warnings that a Brexit vote would spark a recession have so far failed to materialize. But deep uncertainty lies ahead as Britain prepares to renegotiate ties with its biggest trading partner, the single European market of 500 million consumers. "Nothing has gone wrong yet. But it's early days. If the economy turns sour, then she may get worried," Grant said. —AFP

All articles appearing on these pages are the personal opinion of the writers. Kuwait Times takes no responsibility for views expressed therein. Kuwait Times invites readers to voice their opinions. Please send submissions via email to: opinion@kuwaittimes.net or via snail mail to PO Box 1301 Safat, Kuwait. The editor reserves the right to edit any submission as necessary.

NEW DUTCH PARTY SEEKS TO ROOT OUT RACISM

The Dutch have long had a reputation for being tolerant, open and laid-back. But the leader of the country's newest political party Sylvania Simons believes if you scratch the surface, you'll expose deep-seated racism. After being bombarded with death threats and hate mail for calling out a TV show guest for a racist remark, the well-known former TV presenter decided the country needed a new kind of political tone and message - one of inclusiveness and equality.



Monica Utsey

In a little over three months since its launch in December she has garnered enough support to field 20 candidates in Wednesday's elections with her new party - Artikel 1. It's named after the first article of the Dutch constitution which states "that all persons in The Netherlands shall be treated equally" and that there shall be no discrimination based on race, religion, and sexual orientation. "We feel the first article of our constitution is under pressure. It's in danger and it needs to be defended and rightfully executed," Simons told AFP.

Leaving behind a two-decade successful TV and radio career was a tough decision, she acknowledged, particularly to

couldn't let it go any more," she said. But she was still surprised by the intensity of the backlash once she started questioning some of the country's most cherished traditions - such as a Christmas blackface character.

For the Dutch, Black Pete is just a jolly person who accompanies Saint Nicolas to hand out sweets to the children. But foreigners are often surprised to see dozens of Black Petes, men and women, walking the streets in early December, faces blacked up, bright red lips, black curly wigs and garish, gaudy clothing. And the image

is everywhere, from special chocolates to cakes, and food labels. Artikel 1 wants to abolish Black Pete and establish July 1 as a day to mark the abolition of Dutch involvement with the slave trade. It also wants people not to have to state their gender when they register with the authorities.

Image of lynching

But Simons came under virulent attack on social media - images of her face superimposed on that of a slave being lynched, or as the butt of a racist song. Prosecutors are now investigating whether to bring charges. The Netherlands has long been a multicultural society, welcoming people not just from former and current Dutch territories such as Indonesia, Suriname, Curacao and Aruba, but also refugees from Eritrea, Somalia as well as the Middle East. Some 3.6 million people out of a population of 17 million are counted officially as having at least one parent born outside The Netherlands. Among them just over two million are classified as non-Westerners - primarily coming from Turkey, Morocco and Suriname. Amid Europe's worst refugee crisis since World War II, far-right anti-Islam MP Geert Wilders and his

Freedom Party (PVV) have seen his popularity rise. He could now land as the second-largest party in parliament.

"I think we've come to realize that tolerance is not the same as acceptance. Tolerance just means that you don't really care, but OK, you tolerate. And I think that we've now reached a stage where it needs to be about acceptance, it needs to be about equality," said Simons. Polls suggest her fledgling party could win at least one seat in the new parliament. The youngest of the party's 20 candidates is just 18, the oldest is 82. The top three candidates on their party list are women, including Simons, and they also have a Muslim, a Jew, a Christian and an atheist among their ranks.

Sixty percent of the candidates are also from the LGBT community. "We think emancipation starts with representation, so it was very important to us that our list reflected society," Simons said, adding "what brings us together is a different way of looking at people, looking at society." "For us one seat is a big, big win. The mere fact that we exist and we are uniting people, and mobilizing people and activating people is already a big win." — AFP

HOMESCHOOLING GAINS STEAM IN US

As her eldest son conjugates French verbs with a tutor, Emily Bradley coaches her three-year-old in speech, while her daughter tackles math drills in the kitchen using colored rods that represent numbers. None of Bradley's four children - the eldest of whom is nine - have ever attended school. She plans to keep it that way as she seeks both to personalize their education and lay a Christian foundation for them. The Bradleys are among the roughly 1.8 million US students who are homeschooled - a fast-growing community whose approach may find a champion under Donald Trump's controversial new education secretary, Betsy DeVos.

Their 36-year-old mother is no fan of the incoming president, but she is all "in favor of alternatives to education" - which DeVos strongly supports. "I don't think that the American education system is very good," she said. "I can do it better." Bradley's kids join some 20 other homeschooling families in the capital Washington for weekly enrichment courses with "a biblical worldview". After opening the day with a psalm and the pledge to the American flag, kids disperse for parent-taught lessons in subjects including math, literacy and the arts. In nearby Northern Virginia, some 350 families take a similar, albeit secular, approach, supplementing their homemade diet with weekly classes at Compass Homeschool Enrichment.

Minimal oversight

While many early homeschoolers cited religious reasons for their choice, today they comprise a wide range of demographics - some three quarters of whom cite their dissatisfaction with the other school options available to them. Individual US states govern homeschooling families with a patchwork of policies that generally include minimal oversight, and there are concerns from some critics who fear children could lose out on a rounded education, or even be exposed to neglect or abuse. Less than half of states mandate testing for homeschoolers, according to investigative website ProPublica. Approximately one-third do not require teaching specific subjects, and most of those that do have no means to ensure parental compliance. Christopher Lubienski, an education policy analyst at Indiana University, has described the level of deregulation as "concerning". "There is a larger societal responsibility to all children. I don't think that precludes homeschooling as an option, but we have a responsibility to make sure that parents are doing right by their kids," he told AFP.

The classes at the Compass homeschool program are a way for families to address two oft-voiced concerns about homeschooling: that it limits children's socialization, and that older kids need input from specialized teachers, especially in science and technology. Kids ages four to 18 choose from an array of courses - taught by hired experts - including foreign language, chemistry, chess and acting.

Kristin Yashko, 47, brings her three children here, and homeschools the rest of the week. "The benefits are off the charts," said Yashko, who worked as a speech therapist in public schools for several years. "I encourage the teachers -

I support them - but I just thought that we would be able to provide a better experience."

'Outside the box'

Yashko's 13-year-old daughter Aldrin said she "wouldn't have thrived as much" at a traditional school. Gripping a book of short stories, Aldrin described her typical day as "pretty lax" - she works on math, peruses the newspaper, studies several languages and sometimes watches a documentary. She does plan to attend college: "a little bit of exposure to the school structure would be good." Yashko is confident about her children's higher education prospects. "Colleges are looking more for kids who can kind of think outside the box," she said. "Instead of just memorizing facts and spitting them out for a test, we want our kids to actually be ready for the work world."

About 3.4 percent of US students are homeschooled, according to the latest 2012 estimates from the National Center for Education Statistics - a population that has more than doubled since 1999. Trump's newly minted education secretary is a forceful advocate of school choice, a movement that calls for US government funds to be diverted to families who leave the public school system. DeVos has also voiced broad support for teaching kids at home in a welcome boost for the movement - although no financial help for home-

schoolers is currently on the cards. "To the extent that homeschooling puts parents back in charge of their kids' education, more power to them," she said in a 2013 interview.

'Freedom'

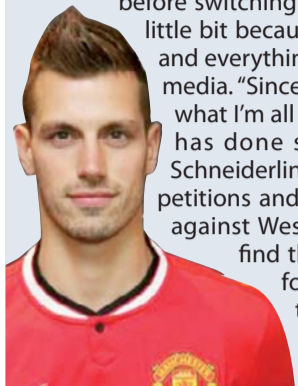
Homeschooling families still pay property taxes that help fund public schools in their local districts. That is a point of contention for some, but Yashko says she is "happy to contribute" because "we want to have an educated population". "I don't believe that homeschooling is the right choice for every person," she adds. Bradley - who dropped a law career to assume responsibility for her children's education, while her husband works in international development - agrees that may not be a viable option for every family: "I recognize we're probably in a privileged, smaller group of people." The vast majority of homeschoolers are white and live above the poverty line, though recent years have seen a rise in black families homeschooling. Bradley acknowledged another frequent criticism - that taking her kids out of school does little to improve an education system she believes is "failing" - but she said ultimately "freedom is a big deal in our country". "I don't know that it's right for anyone, including the government, to ask families to sacrifice what they think would be best for their child to make a failing system better." — AFP



Monica Utsey, 49, is seen on Feb 24, 2017 with her children Zion, 17, and Ayinde, 10, who she homeschools at her apartment in Washington. — AFP

SCHNEIDERLIN LOST 'JOY OF FOOTBALL' AT MAN UNITED

LONDON: Everton midfielder Morgan Schneiderlin has admitted he nearly fell out of love with the game at former club Manchester United due to his lack of opportunities under manager Jose Mourinho. Schneiderlin, who joined the Manchester club in 2015, was a regular under former United boss Louis van Gaal but was limited to three substitute league appearances under Mourinho before switching to Everton in January. "I did lose my joy of football a little bit because when you don't play, you don't play with freedom and everything is very hard," the 27-year old Frenchman told British media. "Since I've come here the manager (Ronald Koeman) knows what I'm all about. He placed confidence in me in the past and he has done so again. It's a joy to work with him every day." Schneiderlin has made seven appearances for Everton in all competitions and scored his first goal for the club during the 3-0 win against West Bromwich Albion on Saturday. "I'm very happy to find this joy of football again and hopefully it will carry on for me," he added. Everton are seventh in the league, two points behind Manchester United, and host third-from-bottom Hull City on Saturday. —Reuters



UEFA TO ORGANIZE ELECTION FOR VACANT FIFA COUNCIL SEAT

NYON: UEFA is planning to organize a special election for a FIFA Council place after being left with only three candidates for the four vacant seats available. European soccer's governing body originally had five contenders for the vacant positions - which currently earn \$300,000 annual payments from FIFA - but now has only three. Last week, Russian deputy prime minister Vitaly Mutko was ruled out because of conflict with his government duties, and former Icelandic soccer association president Geir Thorsteinsson withdrew. Three candidates will now be elected unopposed on April 5 at the UEFA Congress in Helsinki, Finland, and formally join the FIFA Council in Bahrain in May. The three, all federation presidents who will join the ruling panel through 2021, are: Sandor Csanyi (Hungary), Dejan Savicevic (Montenegro), and Costakis Koutsokounnis (Cyprus). Savicevic was a Champions League-winning player with AC Milan. UEFA must now find a new date to elect the final official who will complete Europe's quota of eight seats on the 37-member FIFA Council. —AP

RECORD-BREAKING MARATHONER DEAD

TORONTO: Ed Whitlock, an English-born Canadian runner who became the first septuagenarian to run a marathon in under three hours, died on Monday aged 86. Whitlock, an accomplished British club runner who grew up in London before moving to Canada after university, died of prostate cancer in a Toronto hospital a week after his 86th birthday, his family said in a statement. Whitlock, at 72, became the first septuagenarian to crack the three-hour mark with a world marathon record of two hours 59 minutes 10 seconds at the 2003 Toronto Waterfront Marathon. He then set world master's marathon records for ages 75-plus, 80-plus and, most recently, 85-plus with a time of 3:56.38 in Toronto last October. "This is an enormous loss to Canada and the global running community," Alan Brookes, race director of the Toronto Waterfront Marathon said in a statement. "Somehow we thought Ed would just go on setting records forever. We are especially saddened at Canada Running Series." After university, Whitlock put the sport on hold while he embarked on an engineering career in Canada and only returned to running in his 40s.—Reuters



HORSE RACING

MIREB CROWNED CHAMPION OF AMIR CUP

KUWAIT: The horse Mireb from Al-Nashama stable was crowned champion of HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad cup during the race that took place Monday at the Hunting and Equestrian club. The race of 2,400 meters saw 12 horses compete for the cup in the presence of Lt General (Rt) Thabet Al-Muhanna, the capital governor who handed the cup to Sheikh Ali Al-Humoud Al-Sabah. Sheikh Ali Al-Humoud handed a memento to Sheikh Nasser

Fahad Jaber Al-Ahmad, as the festival was held under the patronage of HH the Amir, who asked Lt Gen Thabet Al-Muhanna to represent him. Al-Nashama stable succeeded in keeping the cup as competition has been lately limited to Al-Nashama, Al-Osaimi and Al-Abraq. Director General of the race Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salman said he was happy with the strong competition specially during the final run. He said the large number of fans

despite the bad weather is a clear evidence on the popularity of the sports. Meanwhile Sheikh Ali Al-Humoud said the event was highly successful due to the strong competition by the participating stables. He said the sport today is different than before, as there are specialists now that lead this noble sport and he thanked the public authority for sport. Sheikh Jaber Ali Al-Humoud said it is a great honor for all to compete for the most

precious cup, and thanked HH the Amir for his sponsorship of the equestrian sport adding that Al-Nashama stable entered the race with strong competition and had great determination to keep the title. The first race of 1,600 meters for the local production was won by Dasman stable which one all first four places. In the second race for Murooj company cup for 1,600 meters for the third grade horses was won by Traq from Abu Shaiba stable, followed

by Salmani from Al-Nashama stable. In the third race over 2,000 meters, for all grades Ajad Al-Ajwad from Al-Nashama stable won first place followed by Mayas from Al-Fanar stable. In the fourth race for the cup of Sheikh Fahad Jaber Al-Ahmad, designated for the original Arab horses for 2,000 meters the horse Bahis from Al-Zamanan stable won first place followed by Nujood for Mishal Al-Otaibi stable and third was Dair Zaki for Munahi Al-Mutairi.

GOLF

HISTORIC MUIRFIELD CLUB TO ALLOW WOMEN MEMBERS

LONDON: Scottish golf course Muirfield voted yesterday to admit female members, which immediately allows the historic links to regain its status as a British Open venue.

The Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers, which dates back to 1744, voted in favour of admitting women members for the first time by 498 to 123, club captain Henry Fairweather announced.

The Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews (R&A), the sport's joint-ruling body with the United States Golf Association, said Muirfield could now become a venue for the British Open once again.

"This is a significant decision for a club which was founded in 1744 and retains many of the values and aspirations of its founding members," Fairweather said. "We look forward to welcoming women as members who will enjoy, and benefit from, the great traditions and friendly spirit of this remarkable club." R&A chief executive Martin Slumbers said: "In the light of today's decision by the Honourable Company we can confirm that Muirfield will become a venue for The Open once again. "Muirfield has a long and important history of hosting The Open and with today's announcement that will continue.

"It is extremely important for us in staging one of the world's great sporting events that women can become members at all of our host clubs. "Muirfield is a truly outstanding Open venue and we very much look forward to taking the Championship back there in future." In a statement, the club said the current waiting list suggested that new candidates for membership could expect to wait two to three years, or longer, to join the club. Muirfield has staged the Open on 16 occasions since 1892 and most recently in 2013, when America's Phil Mickelson won. It was due to host the Open again in 2023.

But the R&A announced it was dropping Muirfield from its 10-course Open venue roster after a vote in 2016 failed to permit women members, falling short of the two-thirds majority required to change the rules. The British Open is the oldest of golf's four annual majors, dating back to 1860. Women have played golf at Muirfield, east of Edinburgh, since 1904. They were admitted as guests but not as members. Women's and men's single-sex golf clubs, although reducing in number, have been a feature of golf provision in Great Britain and Ireland and comply with equality legislation.

In 2014, St Andrews chose to admit female members for the first time after 260 years, with Royal St George's in Kent following suit in 2015. Royal Troon, which hosted the 2016 British Open, voted in July last year to admit women members, in the wake of the R&A's decision over Muirfield. Troon had previously considered itself a special case because it shares facilities with the Ladies Golf Club, Troon. Scottish First Minister Nicola Sturgeon said: "Well done, Muirfield-decision to admit women members emphatic and the right one. Look forward to seeing you host the Open again in future." —AFP



GULLANE: Club captain Henry Fairweather announces that women will be admitted as members of Muirfield Golf Club after a membership ballot was held by The Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers, in Gullane, Scotland yesterday. Muirfield Golf Club voted yesterday to admit female members for the first time in its 273-year history, paving the way for the Scottish golf club to again host the British Open. — AP



KUWAIT: Ahmad Abul from Hunting and Equestrian Club and Loulwa Al-Ayoubi of Borgan Bank.

BURGAN BANK ANNOUNCES SPONSORSHIP FOR ITS FIRST 100KM ENDURANCE RACE

KUWAIT: Borgan Bank, the second largest commercial Bank in terms of assets, has announced a sponsorship agreement with Kuwait's Hunting and Equestrian Club, as part of its ongoing commitment to developing Kuwait's sports scene and promoting an active and healthy lifestyle. Borgan Bank will be sponsoring a prestigious horse endurance race which extends to 100 kilometers.

This highly anticipated endurance race, which constitutes a world-standard horse sporting event, will take place on 18th of March. The aim of the sponsorship is to promote the club as a host for such prestigious races and to promote Kuwait as a hub for world-standard sporting events. The bank is proud to sponsor the club in its aspiration to host this first-time race, as it is a key establishment that hosts some of the most stimulating spectator sports such as horse racing; an intrinsic part of the Arabian heritage. The sponsorship of this first-time race and of the highly regarded Kuwait Hunting and Equestrian Club is one of

the several initiatives Borgan Bank is committing to spearhead, with the aim of encouraging athletic activities and inspiring more young people to take-up active living and engage in value-adding activities that help their skills-building and enhance their quality of living.

Borgan Bank has a long-established tradition of continuously looking to empower sportsmanship in every discipline, based on its strong-held belief that promoting healthy, active and quality living is a shared responsibility of the private and public sector.

The sponsorship falls under Borgan Bank's full-fledged community program entitled 'ENGAGE' - Together to be the change. This program sheds light on important aspects affecting every segment of the society by promoting social welfare through educational, cultural, social and health initiatives. Borgan Bank's approach to 'ENGAGE' begins with a vital principle that as a Kuwaiti financial institution, its conduct and policies should be aligned with the needs and interests of the Kuwaiti society.

S AFRICA 'DISAPPOINTED' AS DURBAN DUMPED AS HOST

DURBAN: South Africa voiced disappointment yesterday that Durban had been stripped of the 2022 Commonwealth Games, blaming financial disagreements but vowing to host major tournaments in the future.

Commonwealth Games chiefs confirmed on Monday they were looking for a new venue after Durban failed to meet "key obligations" during its preparations.

"(The government) wishes to express its disappointment at the announcement... despite all the efforts and the positive responses," sports minister Fikile Mbalula said at a press conference in Durban.

"Clauses in the agreement were seriously going to compromise South Africa and government was not prepared to sign an open-ended guarantee." Mbalula insisted that South Africa was ready to host other global sporting events, and said that 2023 rugby

World Cup officials were in the country on an inspection visit. "South Africa remains a premier destination for such mega sporting events and our solid infrastructure holds the country in good stead," he said.

Following the meeting in London, the Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) said it was "actively exploring alternative options" but gave no further details. Durban 2022 — which had adopted the slogan "Ready to inspire"—would have been the first Commonwealth Games to be held in Africa. The city on South Africa's east coast was named as host in 2015, but Mbalula said last month that the government and the CGF had not reached agreement over costs. Both the 1995 rugby World Cup and the 2010 football World Cup in South Africa are seen as milestones in the country's efforts to promote national unity since the apartheid era.—AFP

BASEBALL

VENEZUELA RALLIES PAST ITALY 4-3 TO REACH 2ND ROUND OF WBC

GUADALAJARA: Miguel Cabrera hit a tying homer and Rowned Odor delivered a go-ahead single during a three-run rally in the ninth inning that carried Venezuela past Italy 4-3 on Monday night and into the second round of the World Baseball Classic.

RBI single after thinking the ball had cleared the wall.

Odor later scored on a nicely executed suicide squeeze by Alcides Escobar. Francisco Rodriguez gave up Alex Liddi's leadoff homer in the bottom half before getting three straight groundouts for the save, eliminating Italy.

One night after getting a late reprieve from WBC officials, Venezuela moved on to face the United States in the Pool F opener for both teams Wednesday in San Diego, Puerto Rico, which went 3-0 to win Venezuela's first-round pool, and the defending champion Dominican Republic are the other teams in Pool F. Two will advance to the single-elimination semifinals at Dodger Stadium next week. The Venezuelans lost to Mexico on Sunday night, leaving Italy, Venezuela and Mexico all at 1-2 after round-robin play was completed in Pool D. The host team was eliminated on a close tiebreaker - runs allowed per inning played - but the correct announcement did not come until long after the game was over.

Initially, the WBC Twitter account declared that Monday night's tiebreaker game would be between Mexico and Italy. Officials then informed Venezuela of the proper calculation. "We qualified here basically because of an out that (Mexico) did not get (against Italy)," Venezuela manager Omar Vizquel said. "I remember when I was a player and before a Game 7 of the World Series was very stressful, and I haven't felt like that until last night. We were in limbo until we got word that we were going to play and tonight we were shut down for six innings, but we kept on fighting."

"I'm really proud of my team," he added. "Now moving forward, I don't want to say too much. I just want a good night's sleep." Venezuela, with a bevy of major league stars on its roster, advanced despite allowing 35 runs in the first round - the third-highest mark in tournament history. South Africa and China gave up 38 each in 2006.

"The pitching has not been up to the challenge so far. We have been punished badly but the team made it to the second round," Vizquel said. "Sometimes it's not easy to get where you want to go. Sometimes destiny makes it difficult, and that happened to us. Hopefully we can use that to play better baseball." —AP

ALPINE SKIING

SHIFFRIN POISED FOR W CUP CORONATION

ASPEN: Mikaela Shiffrin is poised to confirm her meteoric rise to become queen of women's Alpine skiing at the season-ending World Cup finals that start here today. Only a freak set of results can stop the American prodigy, who turned 22 on Monday, clinching overall victory following her slalom triumph in Squaw Valley, California.

That triumph on Saturday left Shiffrin a whopping 378 points clear of nearest rival Ilka Stuhec of Slovenia in the overall stand-



Mikaela Shiffrin

what should be a routine coronation before her family, friends and fans in her home state of Colorado.

"It's not a done deal, it's not on paper yet, but it's looking very good for me even if I wasn't able to finish any of the races I'm going to compete in," Shiffrin said.

"At the same time I would really want to finish with a strong performance, especially in front of my home crowd and my home state. That would be amazing to have two more really strong performances," added Shiffrin, who is targeting the slalom and giant slalom.

Shiffrin could even become the youngest winner of the prestigious crystal globe since Croatia's Janica Kostelic in 2003 before even making a run, if Stuhec has a problem in the downhill or Super G on Wednesday and Thursday. The procession to the title will be the crowning achievement of one of the most dazzling careers in the history of the sport. Since arriving on the circuit in 2013, Shiffrin has ruled slalom with three world crowns in 2013, 2015 and 2017 as well as an Olympic gold medal from the 2014 Sochi Games.

She was victorious in the Crans-Montana combined last month and is increasingly venturing into Super-G, as evidenced by her fourth place at Cortina d'Ampezzo in January.

After only five seasons in the World Cup she has already done enough to be mentioned in the same breath as the legends of her specialist discipline such as Alberto Tomba and Marcel Hirscher. In Aspen, she can pass another milestone by overtaking Vonn's record of 12 victories in a single season. Shiffrin admits she could never have envisaged her success when she first started on the circuit five years ago. "I remember looking at all these girls thinking, 'I wonder if I'm ever going to be as good as they are,'" she recalled this week. — APF



NEW YORK: Jeff Skinner #53 of the Carolina Hurricanes skates against the New York Islanders during their game at the Barclays Center on Monday in New York City.— AFP

NHL

VERSTEEG HITS SHOOTOUT WINNER FLAMES GET 10TH STRAIGHT WIN

CALGARY: Kris Versteeg scored the shootout winner and the Calgary Flames beat the Pittsburgh Penguins 4-3 to tie a club record with their 10th straight victory Monday night. Calgary's first shooter, Versteeg moved in slowly and made a nifty deke before zipping a shot high past Marc-Andre Fleury. Brian Elliott stopped Evgeni Malkin, Sidney Crosby and Phil Kessel to clinch the win. Before the franchise moved to Calgary, the Atlanta Flames won 10 games in a row from Oct. 14 to Nov. 3, 1978. Pittsburgh had a chance to win in overtime when Mark Giordano was sent off for slashing Nick Bonino, but the Flames killed off the 4-on-3. Johnny Gaudreau, Deryk Engelland and Dennis Wideman scored in regulation for Calgary, which moved back into second place in the Pacific Division. The Flames are even in points with Anaheim, but have more regulation/overtime wins. Malkin, Crosby and Conor Sheary scored for Pittsburgh. The Penguins had their five-game winning streak snapped, but still moved into a tie in points with Washington atop the Metropolitan Division. The Capitals are ahead on the tiebreaker.

BLUE JACKETS 5, FLYERS 3

Cam Atkinson scored twice and Brandon Dubinsky had the go-ahead goal in the third period to help Columbus set franchise records for wins and points in a season with a victory over Philadelphia. Zach Werenski and Sam Gagner also scored for the Blue Jackets, who have 44 wins and 94 points. Travis Konecny had a pair of goals and Brayden Schenn also scored for sagging Philadelphia, which has lost 10 of 15 to hurt its fading playoff chances. The Flyers began play six points out of a postseason spot with 15 games remaining. Dubinsky's power-play goal with 11:14 left snapped a 3-all tie and followed a roughing minor on Konecny. Atkinson got his 32nd of the season with 20.9 seconds remaining on an empty-netter.

BLUES 3, KINGS 1

Magnus Paajarvi scored a power-play goal, Jake Allen made 38 saves and St. Louis extended its winning streak to five games by beating Los Angeles. David Perron scored late in the second period and Alexander Steen added an empty-net goal with 6.5 seconds left for the Blues, who lead the Kings by five points for the second wild card in the Western Conference. Dustin Brown scored with 2:55 remaining and Jonathan Quick stopped 23 shots, but the Kings failed to earn a point for the first time in Quick's six starts since returning from a groin injury. It was Paajarvi's first power-play goal since April 6, 2013, for Edmonton.

BRUINS 6, CANUCKS 3

Brad Marchand had a hat trick in the third period, including the winning goal with under eight minutes to go as Boston defeated Vancouver. Marchand, who also had an assist, has 35 goals to tie Sidney Crosby for tops in the NHL. David Backes, Zdeno Chara and David Krejci had the other goals for the Bruins. Tuukka Rask made 26 saves and earned his 200th career

win. Patrice Bergeron and David Pastrnak each added two assists. Markus Granlund had two goals and Alexander Edler also scored for Vancouver. Henrik Sedin and Daniel Sedin each picked up two assists. Ryan Miller made 37 saves in his 700th NHL game. The Bruins, who are 11-3-0 since interim coach Bruce Cassidy took over for the fired Claude Julien on Feb. 7, are four points up on Toronto for third place in the Atlantic Division after beginning a four-game road trip on a winning note.

LIGHTNING 3, RANGERS 2

Brayden Point scored twice, including the tiebreaking goal with 6:39 remaining to lift Tampa Bay over New York. Peter Budaj made 26 saves for his first win since Tampa Bay acquired him from the Los Angeles Kings in a trade for fellow goalie Ben Bishop. Gabriel Dumont also scored and Nikita Kucherov had two assists for the Lightning, who extended their winning streak to three games. They have picked up at least one point in eight of their last nine on the road. Steven Kampfer and Michael Grabner had the goals for the Rangers, who won 4-1 on Sunday night in Detroit. They still hold a comfortable lead for the first wild card in the Eastern Conference. Tampa Bay is in a tight race with Toronto and the New York Islanders for the final playoff spot in the East.

HURRICANES 8, ISLANDERS 4

Jacob Slavin had a hat trick, Jeff Skinner and Justin Faulk each scored twice and Carolina ruined New York's return from a long road trip. The Islanders capped a nine-game swing Saturday at St. Louis and returned to Barclays Center with an 11-game home point streak, their longest since 1982. But the Hurricanes broke this one open with four straight goals in the second period. Joakim Nordstrom also scored for the Hurricanes, and Cam Ward made 23 stops.

Slavin's third goal came late in the third period on a shot that sneaked through the legs of Thomas Greiss. Ryan Strome, Stephen Gionta, Calvin de Haan and Joshua Ho-Sang scored for the Islanders. Jean-Francois Berube made nine saves on 13 shots before being pulled in the second. The Islanders led 3-2 before Carolina's four-goal burst, which began when Faulk tied it 6:51 into the period.

PREDATORS 5, JETS 4, OT

James Neal scored a power-play goal at 2:11 of overtime to give Nashville a victory over slumping Winnipeg. Neal's goal was his 20th of the season. He has scored in consecutive games for the first time since Jan. 22-24. Just 12 seconds before Winnipeg's Dustin Byfuglien was whistled for hooking at 1:37 to set up Nashville's game-winner, Predators goaltender Pekka Rinne denied Finnish countryman Patrik Laine on a breakaway from just outside the crease after Laine stickhandled through all three Predators skaters on the ice. Rinne finished with 30 saves. Austin Watson, Mike Fisher, Filip Forsberg and Ryan Johansen also scored for Nashville in its second consecutive win. Blake Wheeler, Byfuglien, Laine and Joel Armia scored for Winnipeg, which has lost four straight. Connor Hellebuyck made 37 saves.

COYOTES 1, AVALANCHE 0

Mike Smith set a franchise record with his 22nd shutout, making 22 saves to help Arizona edge Colorado. Brendan Perlini scored early in the second period and Smith made it stand up, even through a flurry of activity in front of his own net in the final minute. Calvin Pickard stopped 34 shots for Colorado, but the Avalanche were shut out for the 12th time this season. Smith got his third shutout this season and the 33rd of his career, including five with Dallas and six with Tampa Bay. —AP

CRICKET

PAKISTAN SUSPENDS MOHAMMAD IRFAN IN SPOT-FIXING CASE

KARACHI: Pakistan yesterday charged and suspended giant fast bowler Mohammad Irfan over allegations of spot-fixing during a recent Twenty20 league, in a case that has so far ensnared three other current or former national stars.

The widening scandal threatens to take some of the sheen off the recently completed Pakistan Super League (PSL), which was hailed as a step towards restoring international cricket in the terror-hit country after the final in Lahore passed without incident.

A guilty verdict for the players would prove disastrous for Pakistan cricket, which was last rocked by a match-fixing scandal in 2010 that deprived it of three top players including paceman Mohammad Amir, who has since made a comeback.

"The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) in furtherance to its investigation issued a Notice of Charge and provisionally suspended Irfan under the PCB Anti-Corruption Code," the body said in a statement. It added: "Irfan has been charged with two violations of the anti-corruption code and now has 14 days to respond to the Notice of Charge," without giving further details.

"He has also been provisionally suspended with immediate effect from participating in all forms of cricket," Sharjeel Khan and Khalid Latif, fellow members of the Islamabad United team that took part in the tournament, were also provisionally suspended and charged last month over meeting a man suspected of being linked to an international betting syndicate.

Former Pakistan opener Nasir Jamshed was also provisionally suspended on charges of being a "go between" in the spot-fixing incident. Jamshed and another unnamed person were arrested in Britain last month but were bailed until April.

The PCB, which has formed a three-member tribunal under retired judge Asghar Haider to probe the allegations, said the investigation would continue. Irfan, 34, appeared before the anti-corruption unit of the PCB on Monday and confessed to being approached by a bookmaker about fixing matches in the past six months. He admitted he failed to report the incidents because of the death of his father in September followed by his mother's passing in January.

RAGS TO RICHES

Irfan made headlines for his extraordi-

nary height-seven feet and one inch or 216 centimetres-when he made his international debut in 2010 and stands as the tallest-ever player to feature in world cricket. He has so far played four Tests and 20 Twenty20 internationals, but has achieved most success in his 60 one-day internationals where he has taken 83 wickets at an average of 30.71.

His stature makes him a dangerous bowler as each ball is released from a height rarely experienced by batsmen.

Born a farmer's son in the small village of Gaggi Mandi, he told AFP that in his younger days he was mocked by classmates and strangers because of his height.

Unable to make a breakthrough in the sport, he once made ends meet by working in a pipe factory, earning just 300 rupees (\$3) a week, before being spotted by former first-class cricketer Nadeem Iqbal in a club match, and went on to make his first-class debut in 2009. —APF



LAHORE: Pakistan's fast bowler Mohammad Irfan arrives at the Pakistan Cricket Board headquarters in Lahore, Pakistan, yesterday. The Pakistan Cricket Board provisionally suspended Irfan for violating the anti-corruption code during the Pakistan Super League. — AP

NHL results/standings

Boston 6, Vancouver 3; Arizona 1, Colorado 0; St. Louis 3, Los Angeles 1; Calgary 4, Pittsburgh 3 (SO); Nashville 5, Winnipeg 4 (OT); Carolina 8, NY Islanders 4; Tampa Bay 3, NY Rangers 2; Columbus 5, Philadelphia 3.

Western Conference						Central Division		Ottawa	39	22	6	182	173	84						
W	L	OTL	GF	GA	PTS	Boston	37	26	6	196	179	80	Toronto	31	22	14	204	199	76	
Minnesota	43	18	6	223	163	92	Tampa Bay	33	26	9	189	186	75	Florida	29	27	11	168	193	69
Chicago	43	20	5	204	171	91	Buffalo	28	29	12	177	203	68	St. Louis	36	27	5	189	190	77
Nashville	34	24	11	205	196	79	Detroit	26	30	11	166	202	63	Winnipeg	30	33	7	208	224	67
St. Louis	36	27	5	189	190	77	Dallas	27	31	10	189	221	64	Detroit	27	31	10	189	221	64
Winnipeg	30	33	7	208	224	67	Colorado	19	46	3	131	222	41							
Dallas	27	31	10	189	221	64														
Colorado	19	46	3	131	222	41														
Pacific Division						Eastern Conference		Metropolitan Division												
San Jose	41	20	7	190	158	89	Montreal	39	22	8	189	172	86	Washington	44	17	7	218	152	95
Calgary	39	26	4	191	185	82								Pittsburgh	43	16	9	239	190	95
Anaheim	36	23	10	181	174	82								Columbus	44	18	6	219	160	94
Edmonton	35	24	9	191	181	79								NY Rangers	44	24	2	225	183	90
Los Angeles	33	29	6	169	171	72								NY Islanders	32	25	11	203	209	75
Vancouver	28	32	9	159	201	65								Philadelphia	31	29	8	176	204	70
Arizona	25	35	8	165	217	58								Carolina	28	27	11	170	193	67
														New Jersey	25	31	12	153	197	62

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

SOCCER

ENGLAND PLANS SALARY CAP, PLAYER QUOTAS FOR WOMEN'S SOCCER

LONDON: England's soccer leaders want to restrict the number of foreign players in their top women's league and introduce salary caps to tackle the growing financial gulf between clubs.

The English Football Association's concerns reflect those it has been confronting in the men's game, with the same target: Turning the national teams into world champions while retaining strong domestic competitions and boosting grassroots participation.

Manchester City's signing of FIFA

world player of the year Carli Lloyd is embraced by a governing body keen to raise the standards in its league, as is the club's decision to divert funding from the men's team to the loss-making women's setup.

But only City, Arsenal, Chelsea and Liverpool have the financial strength to give their women's teams full-time contracts and pay significant transfer fees. Those clubs have surpassed the smaller teams who were once the foundation of the women's league but who lack the

resources to compete with the new elite. "There are always going to be those tensions to manage," Sue Campbell, the FA's head of women's soccer, said at Wembley Stadium on Monday. "So a team like Manchester City's ambition is to win the women's Champions League. To do that they want, not just a good 11 players on the pitch, they want some great substitutes. Because of the fact we haven't got enough talent through at this point they are looking overseas to

bring people in." Rather than imposing quotas and financial curbs, FA technical director Dan Ashworth is in talks with clubs to build a consensus to ensure there's a competitive balance in the competitions.

"We have met with those clubs and talked about putting a quota for English players," Campbell said. "We are still in that discussion. We are talking about moving to a hard salary cap ... where you can have your marquee players but you have a salary cap that holds the

game in balance."

Lloyd has only joined Manchester City from the Houston Dash for a curtailed April to June Women's Super League spring series. The American is set to return home before the WSL shifts to mirror the men's season by playing from September to May. Two London clubs have turned to the United States for 2017 signings, with Crystal Dunn joining Chelsea from the Washington Spirit and Heather O'Reilly arriving at Arsenal from Kansas City.—AP

BASKETBALL

SPURS BEAT HAWKS TO JOIN WARRIORS WITH NBA'S RECORD

SAN ANTONIO: Kawhi Leonard scored 31 points in his return from a concussion and the San Antonio Spurs equaled Golden State for the NBA's best record with a 107-99 victory over the Atlanta Hawks on Monday night. San Antonio made a season-high 16 3-pointers in its 19th straight home victory over Atlanta. The Spurs and Warriors are 52-14 with 16 games remaining, including the final regular-season matchup between them on March 29. Atlanta point guard Dennis Schroder had 22 points and 10 assists, shooting 10 for 22 from the field. Tim Hardaway Jr. added 17 points, but the Hawks had their three-game winning streak snapped. San Antonio's Patty Mills had 15 points and Danny Green added 14. The starting guards combined to shoot 7 for 12 on 3-pointers and the team finished 16 for 34 on 3s.

RAPTORS 100, MAVERICKS 78

DeMar DeRozan scored 25 points, Norman Powell added 19 and Toronto beat Dallas for the third straight time. Jonas Valanciunas had 14 points and 12 rebounds as the Raptors beat Dallas for the sixth time in their last eight meetings. Toronto swept the season series last year. Harrison Barnes had 18 points and Dirk Nowitzki scored 17 for Dallas, which lost starting forward Wesley Matthews to a strained right calf. Matthews, who was averaging 14.7 points coming into the game, was removed with 1:07 to play in the first half and did not return. The Raptors led by 13 entering the fourth quarter, then opened the period with a 10-2 run that extended the lead to 21 in the opener of the Mavericks' four-game road swing.

NUGGETS 129, LAKERS 101

Will Barton and Jamal Murray scored 22 points apiece and Denver beat Los Angeles for its third win in a row, matching a season high. Danilo Gallinari and Nikola Jokic each added 18 points for the Nuggets, who have a two-game lead over Portland for the No. 8 playoff seed in the Western Conference with 15 games to play. Ivica Zubac had 25 points and 11 rebounds for the Lakers, who have lost 10 of their last 11. Jordan Clarkson, who got the start ahead of D'Angelo Russell, added 19 points and Brandon Ingram had 14.

KINGS 120, MAGIC 115

Darren Collison had 19 points and 13 assists, reserve Anthony Tolliver also scored 19 points and Sacramento beat Orlando to snap an eight-game losing streak. Tolliver scored five straight points in the closing minutes as the Kings improved to 2-8 since trading DeMarcus Cousins during the All-Star break. The eight-game losing streak was the longest for the Kings since the 2014-15 season. Nikola Vucevic had 23 points and nine rebounds for the Magic. Evan Fournier made four 3-pointers and scored 21 points, and Aaron Gordon had 17. Elfrid Payton had 13 points, 13 assists and 10 rebounds for his third triple-double of the season, but Orlando dropped its third straight. Willie Cauley-Stein had 18 points for the Kings and rookie Buddy Hield had 17.—AP

JAZZ 114, CLIPPERS 108

Gordon Hayward scored 27 points and Utah broke a nine-game home losing streak to Los Angeles. The victory gave the Jazz a two-game lead over the Clippers in the race for the No. 4 playoff seed in the Western Conference and home-court advantage in the first round. Utah scored 40 points in the third quarter, a season-high for any quarter, after trailing much of the first half. George Hill was much more aggressive on the offensive end after a sluggish first half and the Jazz missed just four of 17 shots in the period while hitting all six 3-point attempts. The ball movement was outstanding on offense and nearly everyone got in the mix. Chris Paul had 33 points, six rebounds and six assists for the Clippers.

TIMBERWOLVES 119, WIZARDS 104

Karl-Anthony Towns had 39 points and 13 rebounds while Ricky Rubio scored 22 points and broke his own franchise record with 19 assists as Minnesota beat Washington. Nemanja Bjelica added 16 points and 10 boards off the bench for the Timberwolves, who entered the game 31 1/2 games behind Denver for the eighth seed in the Western Conference. Minnesota shot 52 percent and Rubio topped 20 points in back-to-back games for the second time in his six-year career. John Wall scored 27 points for the Wizards, who fell 2 1/2 games back of Cleveland for the top seed in the Eastern Conference. Bradley Beal added 20 points, but Washington lost for the first time in six games.

GRIZZLIES 113, BUCKS 93

Vince Carter made all eight of his shots, including six from beyond the arc, to score a season-high 24 points and lead Memphis past Milwaukee. The 40-year-old Carter set a season high for 3-point makes in his first start of the season. Memphis shot 52 percent for the game, including 14 of 27 from deep. Memphis stopped a five-game skid by ending the Bucks' six-game winning streak. Mike Conley had 20 points and 10 assists for Memphis, while Tony Allen scored 15 points. Zach Randolph finished with 14 points. Giannis Antetokounmpo led the Bucks with 18 points, while Malcolm Brogdon contributed 15 off the bench. Greg Monroe and Matthew Dellavedova finished with 13 points each for Milwaukee, which started a six-game trip against Western Conference teams.

BULLS 115, HORNETS 109

Nikola Mirotic scored 24 points, Rajon Rondo had a season-high 20 in his return to the starting lineup and Chicago beat Charlotte to snap a season-high, five-game losing streak. Dwyane Wade and Jimmy Butler each had 23 points for the Bulls (32-35), who got a needed win to boost their hopes of earning the eighth playoff spot in the Eastern Conference. Mirotic, who didn't play in Chicago's loss to Boston on Sunday, had five 3-pointers, while Rondo provided the spark for the Bulls in his first start since Dec. 30. Along with hitting a season-high three 3-pointers, he had six assists and seven rebounds. Jeremy Lamb scored 26 points filling in for Nic Batum (migraine), while Michael Kidd-Gilchrist had 22 and Kemba Walker 21 for the struggling Hornets. Marvin Williams had 13 points and tied a career high with 18 rebounds.



SAN ANTONIO: Atlanta Hawks forward Kent Bazemore (24) drives to the basket past San Antonio Spurs forward Kawhi Leonard (2) during the second half of an NBA basketball game, Monday, in San Antonio. San Antonio won 107-99. — AP



INDIAN WELLS: Angelique Kerber of Germany plays a backhand against Pauline Parmentier of France in their third round match during day eight of the BNP Paribas Open at Indian Wells Tennis Garden on Monday in Indian Wells, California. — AFP

TENNIS

KERBER SURVIVES THREE-SET MARATHON AT INDIAN WELLS

INDIAN WELLS: Poised to return to the top spot in next week's world rankings, Angelique Kerber narrowly avoided an upset at the BNP Paribas Open on Monday. Kerber outlasted Pauline Parmentier of France 7-5, 3-6, 7-5 in the third round when temperatures soared to the upper 90s (36 C) under cloudless skies in the Southern California desert. That's nearly 20 degrees higher than the seasonal average of 78 (25 C).

One of their games lasted 11 minutes and another went on for 91/2 minutes. Kerber rallied from a 1-4 deficit in the third set. "I was starting to believe in myself again," she said.

The second-seeded German arrived early this year to better prepare for an event whose slow courts and extreme temperatures have bedeviled her in the past. In nine previous appearances, Kerber's best results were semifinal berths in 2012 and '13. She had lost in the second round for the past three years. "The conditions are also very tough here. When you play day session, it's really, really hot. You play night session, it's a little bit cooler and could be really cold," she said. "The balls are flying a little bit different, as well." Regardless of Kerber's results, she is assured of regaining the No. 1 ranking from Serena Williams, who withdrew before the tournament began because of what she said was a left knee injury. Kerber dropped to No. 2 after the Australian Open in January.

Simona Halep, the 2015 champion, lost to 28th-seeded Kristina Mladenovic of France 6-3, 6-3. Madison Keys defeated Naomi Osaka 6-1, 6-4 in just under an hour in front of her coach Lindsay Davenport. Osaka failed to convert any of her four break points.

Venus Williams beat Lucie Safarova 6-4, 6-2, winning 75 percent of her first-serve points and all eight of her net points as the temperature climbed to near 100 degrees (37 C). Williams' mother Oracene and sister Isha Price used white towels to shield themselves in the stands.

"That sun is strong," Williams said. "Thankfully, I live in Florida, so I think it prepares you for a lot. I got pretty comfortable pretty fast." Safarova had 27 unforced errors to just nine for Williams.

"I felt like I was being able to string points together, which of course puts pressure on my opponents if I'm not making as many errors," Williams said. Williams is back in the desert for the second straight year after boycotting the tournament since 2001. That's when she and her father were jeered and said they heard racial taunts after she withdrew from her semifinal against younger sister Serena because of an injury. Other women's winners were No. 13 Caroline Wozniacki, No. 14 Elena Vesnina and American Lauren Davis. On the men's side, No. 3 Stan Wawrinka beat 28th-seeded Philipp Kohlschreiber 7-5, 6-3. Vasek Pospisil's run ended with a 6-7 (4), 6-3, 7-5 loss to fellow qualifier Dusan Lajovic. Pospisil upset No. 1 Andy Murray in the second round.

No. 10 Gael Monfils defeated John Isner 6-2, 6-4 to set up a fourth-round match against No. 8 Dominic Thiem, who beat No. 29 Mischa Zverev 6-1, 6-4. No. 13 Tomas Berdych was beaten by lucky loser Yoshihito Nishioka 1-6, 7-6 (5), 6-4.

No. 21 Pablo Carreno Busta advanced via walkover when 16th-seeded Roberto Bautista Agut withdrew because of an abdominal muscle injury.—AP

RONALDINHO TO VISIT PAKISTAN

KARACHI: Brazilian football legend Ronaldinho is set to visit Pakistan as part of a goodwill mission to promote the game in the cricket-mad country. The recently retired 36-year-old, who won the World Player of the Year twice and was part of the 2002 World Cup winning team, issued a short video message on Twitter saying simply "Pakistan, I am coming" as he unfurled a Pakistani flag.



Ronaldinho

News of Ronaldinho's visit has generated excitement among fans, and comes as the South Asian nation seeks to revive international sports fixtures that were disrupted by a militant attack on Sri Lanka's cricket team in 2009. Those efforts were given a boost when the country successfully staged the final of its Pakistan Super League cricket tournament in Lahore earlier this month, a rare match featuring prominent international sports stars. Ronaldinho is being brought to the country by UK-based Leisure Leagues-organisers of 5, 6 and 7-a-side tournaments which recently announced plans to expand to Pakistan.

Shahrukh Sohail, a Pakistan representative for the company confirmed the visit Tuesday, adding the company would be launching tournaments next month in Pakistan's major cities Karachi, Islamabad and Lahore. He declined to say whether the Brazilian would arrive in time to make an appearance.

Cricket-obsessed Pakistan has a strong base of football fans and players, particularly

in southwestern Balochistan and the southern city of Karachi. But its national team has struggled in recent decades and has fallen to a lowly 198th place in the FIFA rankings.

Pakistan Football Federation (PFF) officials were involved in court wranglings against each other for the last two years, forcing the men's and women's teams out of international competitions. The Lahore High Court last month decided in favour of recognising Faisal Saleh Hayat as the federation's chief, a post he has held on-and-off since 2003 without being able to turn around the team's fortunes. Earlier this month, Spanish giants Barcelona announced their former star would return to act as an ambassador for the club.—AFP

RUGBY

FRENCH CLUB MERGER HATCHED IN SECRET

MARCOUSSIS: A plan to merge top French clubs Racing 92 and Stade Francais was hatched in secret behind the back of the players, French international Jonathan Danty said yesterday.

"It's hard to swallow," said Danty, 24, the Stade Francais centre who is training with the French team for the Six Nations match against Wales in Paris on Saturday.

"We were always told we were the future of the club and that if we left, the club would be in danger. And now we find out they did this behind our backs," he said. Danty, who has four international caps, was speaking a day after Racing's billionaire owner Jacky Lorenzetti and Stade Francais counterpart Thomas Savare made the bombshell announcement.

Rival clubs expressed fears over the creation of a new super club while the French Rugby Federation and the Paris government complained they had been kept in the dark about the move. Lorenzetti paved the way for a cull of players, saying half the combined roster of professionals could be axed.

"They've got 45 players, we've got 45 players,

45 + 45 = 45," he said. "Merit will be the criteria, probably youth and the factor of being selectable" for France, Lorenzetti said.

Danty, along with teammate Djibril Camara, also in the squad for the Wales game, took part in a protest by more than a dozen players and a crowd of more the 100 fans against the proposed merger at the club's Jean-Bouin stadium in Paris on Monday.

Both players left the Marcoussis French national training centre in the southern suburbs of the city without asking permission from coach Guy Noves to travel to the protest but said they would take the consequences for taking a stand against the merger plan.

"I take full responsibility for going there. I don't know if Guy was in agreement or not but I doubt it, said Camara. "If I am punished, so be it." Camara, who plays fullback, said his future was up in the air. "Maybe next year I will be somewhere else, maybe in Federal 1 (third division)," he said. He said he had had no contact with Stade owner Savare. "Who? Don't ask me about that after he just screwed me over." —AFP

NBA results/standings

Sacramento 120, Orlando 115; Denver 129, LA Lakers 101; Utah 114, LA Clippers 108; Memphis 113, Milwaukee 93; San Antonio 107, Atlanta 99; Minnesota 119, Washington 104; Toronto 100, Dallas 78; Chicago 115, Charlotte 109.

	Eastern Conference				Western Conference			
	W	L	PCT	GB				
Atlantic Division								
Boston	42	25	.627	-	Utah	42	25	.627
Toronto	39	28	.582	3	Oklahoma City	37	29	.561
NY Knicks	26	41	.388	16	Denver	32	35	.478
Philadelphia	24	42	.364	17.5	Portland	29	36	.446
Brooklyn	12	53	.185	29	Minnesota	28	38	.424
Central Division								
Cleveland	43	22	.662	-	Golden State	52	14	.788
Indiana	34	32	.515	9.5	LA Clippers	40	27	.597
Detroit	33	33	.500	10.5	Sacramento	26	41	.388
Milwaukee	32	34	.485	11.5	Phoenix	22	45	.328
Chicago	32	35	.478	12	LA Lakers	20	47	.299
Southwest Division								
Washington	41	25	.621	-	San Antonio	52	14	.788
Atlanta	37	30	.552	4.5	Houston	46	21	.687
Miami	32	35	.478	9.5	Memphis	37	30	.552
Charlotte	29	38	.433	12.5	Dallas	28	38	.424
Orlando	24	44	.353	18	New Orleans	26	40	.394

KOBAYASHI ON THE SPOT TO PEG BACK GUANGZHOU

GUANGZHOU: Kawasaki Frontale captain Yu Kobayashi coolly chipped home a penalty in the fifth minute of stoppage time to secure a richly deserved AFC Champions League draw against Guangzhou Evergrande yesterday.

The Japanese side laid siege to the two-time Asian champions goalmouth after the prolific Brazilian striker Alan put the home side ahead in the 26th minute with his third goal in three Champions League outings.

Frontal were denied time and again after half-time by a series of saves using hands, feet and body by goalkeeper Zeng Cheng.

And Kobayashi must have thought it was destined not to be his night when he finally beat Zeng with a 71st-minute snap-shot across goal after a sweet turn, only to see the ball cannon back off the foot of the post.

But deep into injury time Frontale's persistence paid off when Evergrande's Yu Hanchao made a hash of a clearance near the edge of his penalty area resulting in the ball striking first his left and then his right arm.

Qatari referee Abdulrahman Al Jassim had no choice but to point to the spot, despite the protests of the Evergrande players and coach Luiz

Felipe Scolari who believed that the contact had occurred outside the box.

Kobayashi's last-gasp leveller leaves Group G wide open with Kawasaki closing to two points behind Guangzhou and Suwon Bluewings, who both have five points after the South Korean side beat Hong Kong minnow Eastern 1-0.

Suwon left it late against the Hong Kong side who are in their first Champions League campaign. Brazilian Johnathan popping up with the headed winner from Yeom Ki-Hun's cross 12 minutes from time at the Mongkok Stadium. Another Japanese side, Kashima Antlers, took pole position at

the top of AFC Champions League Group E with a comfortable 3-0 home win over Brisbane Roar. South Korean side Ulsan Hyundai's lacklustre 0-0 draw with Muangthong United allowed the reigning J-League champions to leapfrog the undefeated Thai side in the Group E standings with six points from three matches, with Brisbane rock bottom having only managed a draw and two defeats.

The Japan side dominated and broke the deadlock when right-back Yukitoshi Ito's cross in the 43rd minute was met by Yuma Suzuki, who powered home a volley on the turn into the bottom cor-

ner of Jamie Young's goal.

The Brisbane goalkeeper was then cruelly credited with an own goal in the 76th minute despite Naomichi Ueda seemingly kicking the ball from the keeper's grasp during a near-post scramble following a corner.

Iranian referee Alireza Faghani waved away the protests of the Brisbane players who claimed Young had been fouled by Ueda. Three minutes later Young was powerless to stop Kashima sealing the three points when Yasushi Endo cut inside from the right and fired home an unstoppable left-footed finish into the far corner. —AFP

BRAZIL CLUB SIGNS GOALIE CONVICTED IN MURDER

VARGINHA: A Brazilian football club brushed aside a storm of criticism yesterday to sign a goalkeeper convicted in the murder of his girlfriend, whose body was fed to the dogs.

Bruno Fernandes, 32, was brought before reporters at a hastily arranged press conference in the southeastern city of Varginha, where he pulled on Boa Esporte club's black and red shirt, before going to a medical checkup. Bruno, as he is commonly known, said he would now "concentrate on (his) work."

"The important thing for me is to get started," he was quoted as saying by the UOL news website. However, the talented goalie—who used to play for top Brazilian club Flamengo and had been touted as a recruit for Italian giants AC Milan—faces a bitter welcome.

Sponsors have fled second division Boa Esporte, including chief backer Gois and Silva, which withdrew Monday. Its logo was still emblazoned on the shirt initially worn by Bruno yesterday.

The reaction on social media has been fierce. "Well done Boa Esporte! You're now the most hated club in the world!" was a typical comment on the club's Facebook page. The club website was hacked by protesters.

Bruno had been incarcerated since 2010 for his role in the kidnapping, imprisonment and killing of model Eliza Samudio, who sued him for child support after he got her pregnant.

Samudio's body has never been found and Bruno admitted in court that he had conspired with friends to kill her and that

her body had been fed in pieces to dogs.

He has never admitted to taking direct part in the grisly murder and subsequent disposal of the body, but he was convicted all the same.

In 2013, he was sentenced to 22 years behind bars. Bruno was released from prison last month after a ruling by the Supreme Court, which freed him pending an appeal.

The club pointed out that Bruno had been ruled as having done time for his crimes and said he should be allowed to rebuild his life. "Today we are presenting Bruno so that Bruno can restart his career as a football player, which is what he knows how to do," club president Rome Moraes da Costa told journalists.

"It's also to give an opportunity to a human being who made a mistake in the past and who has been freed by the courts, to give him a chance to continue his life."

At his press conference, Bruno said: "Sincerely, I'm not worried by what people say," according to UOL. A street protest was planned for later in the day in Varginha. — AFP



UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE	
AS Monaco v Man City	22:45
beIN SPORTS	
Atletico v Bayer 04	22:45
beIN SPORTS	

FAST-RISING MBAPPE PUTS EUROPE ON ALERT

PARIS: At just a tender 18 years of age, Monaco's Kylian Mbappe is already turning heads around Europe after tormenting defences throughout France and scoring against Pep Guardiola's Manchester City in the Champions League.

With 16 goals in 30 appearances for the French league leaders this season, including nine in his past eight games, the teenage prodigy is drawing plenty of comparisons to former France star Thierry Henry. "We didn't expect such a rapid and sudden explosion," Alessandro Grandesso, a Paris-based journalist with *Gazzetta dello Sport*, told AFP. The Italian sports daily recently ranked Mbappe fifth in a list of Europe's 30 most promising talents.

And while playing down a potential move to Italy, Grandesso highlighted the resemblance between Henry and his heir apparent, both of whom broke into the professional ranks with Monaco.

"It's true that he is gaining visibility and benefitting from the comparison with Thierry Henry, thanks to his quite similar style," Grandesso explained.

The connection with the 1998 World Cup winner is particularly prevalent in England, where Henry flourished as part of Arsenal's great 'Invincibles' side. Few men are as qualified as Arsene Wenger, who launched a bid for Mbappe last summer, to discuss the likeness of the two players.

"He reminds me of a young Thierry Henry with the same clever look about him," Wenger said last week. "They have the same qualities of intelligence in his movement and cat-like finishing."

The Arsenal manager added: "I approached him last year because I really believe that he has an exceptional future ahead of him."



MONACO: Monaco's French forward Kylian Mbappe Lottin controls the ball during a training session on the eve of their UEFA Champions League football match Monaco against Manchester City yesterday at the "Louis II Stadium" in Monaco. — AFP

BIDDING WAR AWAITS

But Mbappe, who broke Henry's long-standing record as Monaco's youngest goalscorer, would be well-served to carefully take stock of his options in the summer when Europe's leading clubs will undoubtedly seek to wrest him away from the Stade Louis II. Anthony Martial, another former Monaco starlet, celebrated his big-money arrival at Manchester United in style with a debut goal against Liverpool but has struggled to fully impose himself at Old Trafford following a bright start.

On the contrary, Grandesso believes there is also a danger attached to staying at Monaco should the team be dismantled next season.

"He must properly understand what the club wants to do. If it's to stay in a team that starts over from scratch, I don't really see the appeal," he said.

But rather than signing for one of Europe's heavyweights, Grandesso suggested joining a club slightly below the top rung in England or Germany, using it as a stepping stone where he would be guaranteed playing time.

There are also surplus rumours of a move to the Bundesliga, with Bayern Munich unsurprisingly top of the list, but so far there is little evidence to substantiate such claims. Dortmund are in the picture too, their nurturing of another France youngster, Ousmane Dembele, mapping out a possible future path were Mbappe to land in the Ruhr valley.

But he remains under contract with Monaco until June 2019 and Mbappe's immediate focus is helping the attractive principality outfit overturn a 5-3 deficit against Manchester City in Wednesday's last 16 second leg. — AFP



LONDON: Manchester United's French midfielder Paul Pogba (R) vies with Chelsea's Brazilian defender David Luiz during the English FA Cup quarter final football match between Chelsea and Manchester United at Stamford Bridge in London on Monday. — AFP

SOCCER

CHELSEA BEAT UNITED, SETS UP FA CUP SEMIFINAL WITH SPURS

LONDON: Chelsea prevailed over Jose Mourinho's forceful, spoiling tactics to end Manchester United's FA Cup defense and set up a semifinal derby with Tottenham.

On another gloomy return to Stamford Bridge for Mourinho, United's aggressive attempts to neutralize Eden Hazard backfired when Ander Herrera was booked twice for fouling the winger and dismissed 35 minutes into Monday's quarterfinal.

"We were complaining," Chelsea defender Gary Cahill said after the 1-0 victory. "We felt Eden was getting harassed."

Chelsea's trip to Wembley Stadium was secured six minutes into the second half when N'Golo Kante switched from midfield enforcer to match-winner. Paul Pogba failed to close down France teammate Kante, who found the space to score from 20 yards (meters) and keep the Premier League leaders on course for a domestic double. It's rare for Kante to be in the scoring spotlight, although his only other goal since joining Chelsea last year came on United's last visit to west London. Even with 10 men, Mourinho avoided the humiliation of October's 4-0 league loss but only through an ultra-defensive display that saw United's possession drop to a season-low of 28 percent.

And also, according to Chelsea, by targeting Hazard. "For Hazard, (for) 20, 25 minutes it was impossible to play football, because he received only kicks," Chelsea manager Antonio Conte said. "A tactic to play and go to kick an opponent? It's not football for me... Sometimes when you play against players with great talent, you try to intimidate those players."

Chelsea's fans sought to intimidate through chants, and they pained Mourinho, the most successful manager in the London club's history before being fired for a second time in 2015.

"You're not special anymore," sang Chelsea fans, directing three fingers at the fans who once adored him to signal the trio of Premier League titles he won across two spells in charge at Chelsea. He waited until after the quarterfinal to deliver another riposte to fans with short memories. "They can call me what they want," Mourinho said. "Until the moment they have a manager that wins four Premier Leagues for them I am the No. 1... Judas is No. 1."

But maybe not No. 1 come May. Mourinho is left with only one route to silverware - the Europa League - in his first season in charge of Manchester United.

Chelsea is No. 1 in the Premier League with a 10-point lead, while United has sunk to sixth. If Chelsea can beat London rival Tottenham, it will play either Manchester City or Arsenal in the FA Cup final in May to complete Conte's first season in charge.

The revival of a club in discord after Mourinho's December 2015 exit is in large part due to the revival of a player reviled toward the end of the Portuguese coach's tenure.

Hazard was a constant danger again against United, barreling through an ineffective resist-

ance with his fleet-footed runs even when it was 11 vs. 11. It was Hazard who was the first to test goalkeeper David De Gea after breaking away from Chris Smalling around the halfway and beating two more United players before his 16th-minute strike. From the resulting corner it took De Gea low at full stretch to keep out Cahill's close-range effort.

Hazard was becoming a target for persistent fouling. Herrera, though, seemed to be harshly penalized for the first time after Hazard ran into

him. There seemed little to dispute the yellow card shown to Phil Jones for pushing Hazard.

But on the touchline, tensions were erupting between Conte and Mourinho. Conte was angered when Hazard was fouled again by Herrera right in front of referee Michael Oliver, and the trip saw the midfielder banished.

Mourinho was furious that Cahill escaped any form of punishment for a foul on Marcus Rashford, who overcame illness to fill the void left by Ibrahimovic's suspension. — AP

TORRES RETURNS AS ATHLETICO EYE QUARTERS ONCE MORE

MADRID: Fernando Torres is expected to return just two weeks after losing consciousness in a sickening head clash as Atletico Madrid look to seal their place in the Champions League quarter-finals yesterday. Atletico are strong favourites to reach the last eight for a fourth straight year as Torres was on target in a 4-2 first leg win against Bayer Leverkusen in Germany three weeks ago to give the Spanish side a commanding lead.

Torres returned to full training for the first time on Monday since losing consciousness in a challenge with Deportivo la Coruna's Alex Bergantinos that provoked consternation among those on the field and watching around the world.

However, thankfully the 32-year-old was released from hospital less than 24 hours later having suffered no serious injuries. "We imagine that for yesterday he will be available," said Atletico boss Diego Simeone. Whether Torres starts depends on Kevin Gameiro's fitness as the French international missed Saturday's 1-0 win at Granada with an abdominal injury.

Atletico will definitely be without captain Gabi and left-back Filipe Luis as they picked up yellow cards towards the end of the first leg to ensure they will be free to play in the quarter-

finals. However, despite that apparent show of Atletico's confidence that they already have one foot in the quarters, midfielder Koke warned against complacency.

"We have a great result from the first leg, but we can't be complacent. We need to give our all again on Wednesday," said the Spanish international. Leverkusen travel to Spain under new management as Tayfun Korkut replaced the sacked Roger Schmidt after the Germans first leg defeat was followed up by a 6-2 thrashing at Borussia Dortmund. Atletico have only lost one of 20 Champions League games at home under Simeone. However, Leverkusen are hoping for a comeback of Barcelona proportions after the Spanish champions fought back from a 4-0 first leg defeat to beat Paris Saint-Germain 6-1 last week.

"We know it's going to be difficult and it's hardly possible, but we will give it our all and try to make the impossible possible," said centre-back Omer Toprak.

Leverkusen, though, will be depleted by injury and suspension themselves. Benjamin Henrichs and influential midfielder Hakan Calhanoglu are banned, whilst Toprak, Jonathan Tah, Stefan Kiessling and captain Lars Bender are out injured. — AFP



MAJADAHONDA: Atletico Madrid players take part in a training session at the Cerro del Espino Stadium in Majadahonda yesterday, on the eve of the UEFA Champions League round of 16 second leg football match Atletico de Madrid vs Bayer 04 Leverkusen. — AFP

Sports

**Kerber survives
three-set marathon
at Indian Wells**



**Fast-rising
Mbappe puts
Europe on alert**



WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15, 2016

HISTORIC MUIRFIELD CLUB TO ALLOW WOMEN MEMBERS Page 15



LEICESTER: Leicester's Jamie Vardy, left, competes for the ball with Sevilla's Adil Rami during the Champions League round of 16 second leg soccer match between Leicester City and Sevilla at the King Power Stadium in Leicester, England, yesterday. — AP

LEICESTER THROUGH TO CHAMPIONS LEAGUE QUARTERS

LEICESTER: Kasper Schmeichel pulled off a dramatic late penalty save as Leicester City sank Sevilla 2-0 yesterday to reach the Champions League quarter-finals for the first time. Trailing 2-1 from the first leg, after which Claudio Ranieri was sacked as manager, Leicester scored through Wes Morgan and Marc Albrighton before Schmeichel repelled Steven N'Zonzi's spot-kick.

It gave them a 3-2 aggregate win and continued a remarkable turnaround under new manager Craig Shakespeare, who has won three games in a row since stepping up from his role as Ranieri's assistant.

Unrecognisable in the defence of their miraculous Premier League title, Leicester have found solace in the Champions League and have now won all four of their home

matches in the competition. They also chose a good time to rediscover a bit of defensive solidity and good fortune having previously gone 12 matches without keeping a clean sheet in all competitions. Sevilla, winners of the last three Europa Leagues, saw Samir Nasri sent off late on after he was shown an extraordinary second yellow card for aiming a headbutt at Jamie Vardy.

N'Zonzi might yet have taken the game to extra time after Schmeichel was penalised for catching Vitolo after the forward had dinked a shot past him.

But the Dane redeemed himself with a save low to his left, thwarting Sevilla's hopes of reaching the last eight for the first time since 1958. The back-to-back 3-1 wins against Liverpool and Hull City overseen by

Shakespeare had restored Leicester's self-belief and the stadium crackled with anticipation prior to kick-off.

A carpet of blue and white flags greeted the teams, while Leicester's fans unveiled a giant banner of Shakespeare, accompanied by the rousing William Shakespeare quote: "Let slip the dogs of war." For all the sound and fury generated by the home support, it was Sevilla who procured the first two sights of goal.

ESCUADERO MISSILE

Nasri, one of eight changes made by Jorge Sampaoli, was denied by a one-handed save from Schmeichel in the fourth minute, while Pablo Sarabia dragged wide with his left foot. But in the 27th minute Leicester took con-

trol of the tie, Riyad Mahrez swinging a free-kick into the box after Vicente Iborra had felled Vardy and Morgan bundling home with his right knee.

The King Power Stadium erupted with a noise that recalled the triumphs of last year and short of a mishit Gabriel Mercado cross that Schmeichel had to palm over, Leicester reached the break without alarm.

Sampaoli made two changes at half-time, sending on Mariano Ferreira and Stevan Jovetic for Mercado and Sarabia, and eight minutes in his side came within millimetres of restoring their advantage.

Sergio Escudero let fly with a fluttering effort from 35 yards that crashed against the bar before bouncing down and out, with Jovetic hoisting the rebound over. Barely a

minute later Leicester took the lead in the tie outright. Mahrez's cross from the right was tamed headed away by Adil Rami, allowing Albrighton to chest the ball down and arrow a left-foot drive past a statuesque Sergio Rico.

Nasri's moment of madness arrived shortly after Schmeichel had parried from substitute Joaquin Correa.

With play ongoing, the Frenchman, taking exception to a push from Vardy, squared up to the England striker and lowered his head, prompting a second yellow card from referee Daniele Orsato.

Orsato was not prepared to abandon centre-stage and after awarding Sevilla's penalty, he pompounded the visitors' frustrations by sending the protesting Sampaoli to the stands. —AFP

DYBALA FIRES JUVENTUS PAST DEPLETED PORTO

TURIN: A first-half penalty from Paulo Dybala helped fire Juventus into the Champions League quarter-finals yesterday after a 1-0 win sent the Serie A champions through 3-0 on aggregate. Porto coach Nuno Espirito Santo had hailed Juve's 20-game unbeaten home run in Europe as he played down the Portuguese side's chances of overturning a 2-0 first leg defeat at the Estadio do Dragao.

And the 43-year-old was right not to talk up their chances. Despite enjoying plenty of possession in a first half that saw the hosts squander a number of chances, their bid ended when right-back Maxi Pereira saw red after handling Gonzalo Higuain's goal-bound shot five minutes before the break.

Romanian referee Ovidiu Hategan immediately pointed to the spot and Argentinian playmaker Dybala stepped up in confident fashion to drill his effort into the bottom right corner as Iker Casillas dived the other way. Juventus stretched their unbeaten home record in Europe to 21 games, although that could come under threat depending on who the 2015 finalists are paired with in

tomorrow's quarter-final draw.

The last time Juventus suffered a home defeat in Europe was a 2-0 Champions League loss to Bayern Munich, in the quarter-finals, in April 2013. Allegri deployed an attack-minded 4-2-3-1 formation that saw Higuain lead the Turin giants' attack at Juventus Stadium.

But it was Dybala, whose only previous Champions League goal this campaign came in a 4-0 win at Dinamo Zagreb last September, who had the majority of the chances.

The Argentinian had spoken on Monday of his desire to add to his tally in Europe, but fired twice in the opening stages as Juventus set the tone. At the other end, Brazilian Francisco Soares curled directly into Gianluigi Buffon's arms, but it was one of too few opportunities for the visitors. Mario Mandzukic's header was smothered by Spanish goalkeeper Casillas, who was making a record 175th appearance in European competition and overtook AC Milan great Paolo Maldini (174).

Dybala then failed to make contact with Higuain's delivery on the edge of the box and after turning provider, Ivan Marcano did well to

intercept Dybala's cross as Mandzukic hovered. The imposing Croatian forward went closer with a header whistling wide of the far post from a corner, before Pereira threw himself in spectacular fashion to block Higuain's shot with his hand after Alex Sandro's header was parried by Casillas.

That left the visitors a man down and Dybala made no mistake from the spot to claim his third goal in the competition.

Juve could have had a second goal just after the restart but Casillas produced a fine reflex save at his near post to stop a wayward header by Porto midfielder Danilo.

Minutes later Buffon rushed out to close down Soares after he escaped Sandro to fire an angled shot wide of the 'keeper's far post. Allegri replaced Juan Cuadrado with Marko Pjaca for the start of the second half and the Croatian starlet saw an angled effort spin past Casillas's far post after he controlled well under pressure on the edge of the area. Higuain, on 66 minutes, then fired just wide after holding off two markers in the area in what was Juve's last real chance to add to their tally. — AFP



TURIN: Juventus' forward from Argentina Gonzalo Higuain (R) jumps for the ball during the UEFA Champions League football match Juventus vs FC Porto yesterday at the Juventus stadium in Turin. — AFP

Strategic Partner



Sponsored By

Canon



Organized By

Kuwait Times

Shoot & Win KUWAIT SCENERY & NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION



March 12th, 2017 Till April 6th, 2017

Rules & Conditions

First prize

- Canon Camera EOS 5D MARK II BODY 651 + free Bag.
- One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Dubai - Kuwait by Jazeera Airways*.

Second prize

- Canon Camera EOS 80D +18-55MM IS STM + free Bag.
- One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Dubai - Kuwait by Jazeera Airways*.

Third prize

- Canon Camera EOS 750D 18-135 IS STM + free Bag.
- One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Dubai - Kuwait by Jazeera Airways*.

Fourth prize

- EOS 750D 18-55 IS STM +Free Bag.
- One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Dubai - Kuwait by Jazeera Airways*.

Fifth prize

- EOS 750D 18-55 IS STM + Free Bag.
- One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Dubai - Kuwait by Jazeera Airways*.

Sixth prize

- Canon Camera Dsc Ixus 310 HS + Free Bag.
- One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Dubai - Kuwait by Jazeera Airways*.

Seventh prize

- Canon Camera PSD 30 BLUE + free Bag.
- One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Dubai - Kuwait by Jazeera Airways*.

Eighth prize

- Canon Camera PSD 30 BLUE + Camera Bag.
- One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Dubai - Kuwait by Jazeera Airways*.

Ninth prize

- Canon Camera IXUS 180 BLACK + free Camera Bag.
- One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Dubai - Kuwait by Jazeera Airways*.

Tenth prize

- Canon Camera IXUS 180 BLACK 2085 + free Camera Bag.
- One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Dubai - Kuwait by Jazeera Airways*.

The photo contest begins on March 12, 2017 and ends on April 6, 2017.

To ensure eligibility for the contest, please submit files in high resolution:

- **Photographic Camera:** Please submit original files (entries should include metadata if possible) in jpg format on CD or flash memory with hard copy on photo paper (size 300 x 400 millimeters or 11.81 x 15.75 inches)
- **Mobile phone or tablet Camera:** Please submit original files in jpg format on CD or flash memory with hard copy on photo paper (A4 size – 210 x 297 millimeters or 8.27 x 11.69 inches).

• **All photographs** should accurately reflect the subject matter and the scene as it appears. 'High Dynamic Range' images are acceptable. Photos that have been digitally altered beyond standard optimization (removal of dust, cropping, reasonable adjustments to exposure, color, contrast, etc.) will be disqualified.

Caption information should include:

- Location - Detailed caption of subject matter
- If you choose to include people in your submission, you are responsible for obtaining the necessary permissions from the individuals depicted, and must be able to provide copies of these to Kuwait Times upon request.

• **Kuwait Times & Jazeera Airways** has all rights to use the photograph in internal and external communications materials including but not limited to websites and web publications, fact sheets, fundraising publications, advertising, multimedia, presentation and membership services, annual reports and Kuwait Times' magazines, or by other individuals and organizations for Kuwait Times' use in news stories, newsletters, reports, displays, web pages, videos, membership premiums and the like.

- Winners will be chosen by a panel of independent judges.
- Original coupon should be stuck on the back of each photo with complete information of the participant.

KUWAIT SCENERY & NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

2017

Participation Form

If you are interested in participating fill in the form and send it to Kuwait Times.

- Name:
- Tel:
- Civil ID:
- e.mail:
- DSLR Camera • Mobile phone or tablet camera
- Caption information:



* For all Jazeera Airways tickets terms and conditions are applied



For a Limited Time Only All Participants Can Get A Special Discount Of 15% For A High Denition Prints, Including Delivery To Their Door Step . Act Now And Use Discount Code (SHOOTWIN) During Checkout. Download Our Free App For Mac and Pc at www.albumij.com. For More Information Contact Albumij At (69302526)

For more information contact Kuwait Times Tel: 24835616/7 Fax 24835620/1 or send an email to: ads@kuwaittimes.net



**Charlotte Hogg
 quits as BoE's
 deputy governor**

ECONOMIC SOLUTIONS (1/5): NATURAL RESOURCES



WOLFSBURG: German carmaker Volkswagen's cars are seen at the storage facility auto tower at the company headquarters in Wolfsburg yesterday. — AFP

**VOLKSWAGEN LEAVES DOOR OPEN ON M&A
 FIAT CHRYSLER SHARES CLIMB 2 PERCENT, VW STEADY**

WOLFSBURG: Volkswagen left the door open to a potential tie-up with Fiat Chrysler or another rival yesterday, as a drop in operating profit at its biggest car brand showed the challenges it still faces 18 months on from its emissions scandal.

The German company is likely to see heightened competition in Europe after Peugeot maker PSA Group agreed this month to buy General Motors' Opel business to create a stronger second player in the region behind VW. Fiat Chrysler Automobiles (FCA) boss Sergio Marchionne said last week that the deal might eventually persuade VW to seek a tie-up with his own company, a suggestion that was swiftly rejected by VW.

But in an apparent change of tone, VW CEO Matthias Mueller signalled yesterday he might

be interested in partnerships. "We are more open on that account than we used to be previously," he said as VW presented its detailed 2016 results, adding this had "nothing to do with FCA specifically."

"It would be very helpful if Mr. Marchionne were to communicate his considerations to me too and not just to you," he told reporters. FCA shares rose more than 2 percent following the comments, while VW's were little changed. A combination of VW and FCA could in theory create a European market giant with a share of around 30 percent, give VW a strong foothold in North America through FCA's Chrysler operations and fix FCA's lack of scale in Asia.

But any tie-up would also likely mean thousands of job losses that unions and politicians in Italy and Germany would strongly oppose.

VW brand struggles

VW said last month it made a record group operating profit in 2016, excluding one-off items, helped by a strong performance from its Porsche sports cars and a turnaround at its Scania trucks business. Breaking down the figures for the first time, the company said yesterday underlying operating profit at its VW brand fell 10 percent to 1.9 billion euros (\$2 billion), with the profit margin slipping to 1.8 percent from 2 percent in 2015.

The group said a dip in revenues and higher marketing costs as a result of the September 2015 admission that it cheated US emissions tests on diesel engines were factors in the declines. Although the group as a whole has bounced back from the scandal, and overtook Japan's Toyota last year to become the world's

biggest selling carmaker, analysts view a turnaround at the VW brand as key to its prospects.

The brand accounted for almost half of 2016 group revenue, but only just over 10 percent of underlying operating profit. The brand struck a deal with unions in November to cut jobs and target 3.7 billion euros of annual savings by 2020 in an effort to lift the profit margin to 4 percent that year - still below many major rivals. But squabbles over implementation have sowed doubts among some analysts about whether the targets will be achieved.

"Don't waste time"

"In times where most other car companies are improving efficiency and shaping the industry, VW needs to be very mindful not to waste any more time with internal power struggles," Evercore ISI analysts said in a

research note to clients. Mueller said VW was "back on track" after agreeing to spend up to \$25 billion in the United States to address claims from owners, environmental regulators, states and dealers over its emissions scandal.

"You can rest assured that we will do everything in our power to make 2017 an even better year than 2016," he said at the 12-brand group's annual news conference. He reiterated forecasts for a rise of up to 4 percent in sales revenues this year and a group profit margin of 6-7 percent versus 6.7 percent in 2016, and said the group was capable of shouldering its emissions scandal costs.

The company's annual report showed VW brand boss Herbert Diess saw his total remuneration for 2016 drop to 3.93 million euros from 7.13 million in 2015. — Reuters

STERLING FALLS TO 8-WEEK LOW OVER BREXIT

LONDON: Sterling fell to an eight-week low against the dollar and the basket of currencies measuring its broader strength yesterday, hit by fears of a prolonged bout of political jousting over the terms of Britain's exit from the European Union.

British Prime Minister Theresa May on Monday won the right to start the Brexit process on Monday, beginning two years of talks that will shape the future of Britain and Europe.

After a spokesman dismissed as "speculation" media reports that she would launch the talks yesterday, May said she would notify parliament this month when she has triggered Article 50 of the EU's Lisbon Treaty to begin the formal process. Banks reported selling of the pound from the moment traders arrived at their desks in Europe yesterday, driving sterling almost a full cent lower.

"The triggering of Article 50 has been well telegraphed and is unlikely to cause a major stir for sterling in itself," UBS, head of UK Rates Strategy & Economics, John Wraith, said.

"It does however increase headline risk, particularly as the opening negotiating positions of the two sides are far apart. This may shift attention back to the UK's large current account deficit ... (and) does not bode well for sterling." Having ridden out the latest political headlines on Monday while the dollar was weak, sterling traded as low as \$1.2110 before recovering to \$1.2145 by 1330 GMT.

It fell as much as 0.7 percent against the euro to 87.85 pence. Dealers and analysts were still picking through the consequences of Scottish First Minister Nicola Sturgeon's demand for the right to hold a second Scottish independence referendum around the end of next year. A call also made on Monday. Sterling initially climbed after that announcement, with analysts citing relief among investors that the vote would not be held this year. But Bank of New York Mellon currency strategist, Neil Mellor, said the Scottish news was playing into the pound's weakness yesterday. "The (market) focus for quite some time has been very short term and very headline driven," he said. "Today was a classic example of European markets catching up with yesterday's news."

Several of the currency world's top 10 banks, who were more cautious on the pound at the end of last year, have been aggressive in the past fortnight in advocating more declines.

Of major currencies, only the Turkish lira has performed worse against the dollar this year than the pound and market measures of positioning still show room for investors to bet more heavily against the UK currency. If the US Federal Reserve raises interest rates as expected today, and expectations for more rate rises grow, more losses against the greenback seem inevitable. "As US real yields edge higher and the prospect of further Bank of England/Fed de-coupling looms large, it seems inconceivable that sterling can avoid falling below \$1.20," Societe Generale strategist, Kit Jukes, said. — Reuters

OPEC SEES 'HIGH COMPLIANCE' WITH OIL CUT DEAL, OIL DROPS

PARIS: OPEC said yesterday oil producers have kept their promises to cut output, but the oil price plunged as traders doubted that they are doing enough to offset a global supply glut.

Prices rose in February after a landmark deal between OPEC members and some non-members gained traction, the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries said in its monthly oil report. The oil price recovery was, however, under threat from fresh supply as high-cost producers in the United States started drilling again, encouraged by the price upswing, as well as from rising Canadian production. An OPEC oil price reference basket rose by about two percent to an average of \$53.37 in February, the organisation said.

"High compliance with supply adjustments by OPEC and some non-OPEC producers supported gains," it said. In December, OPEC agreed with 11 non-members, including Russia, to cut output in the first half of this year to push prices higher.

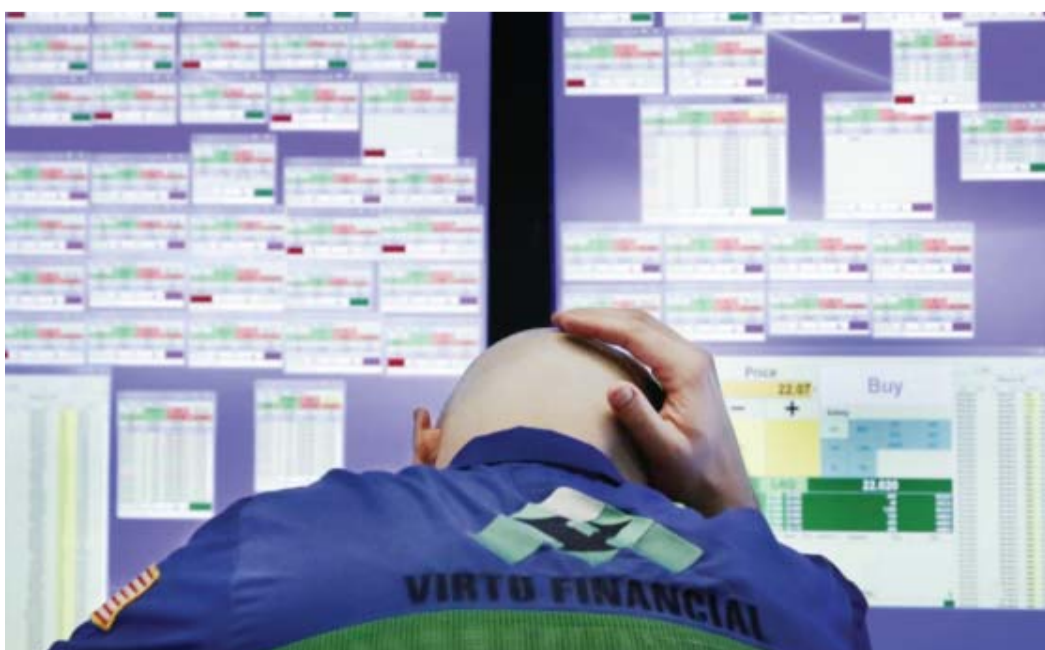
Placing bets

Looking at the oil futures market, a key gauge of pent-up demand, OPEC said a record number of investors were placing wagers on price increases. "Bets on crude oil prices rising have hit a new record high for the third month in a row, giving additional support to oil prices," OPEC said. "Investor optimism over the

effectiveness of the production adjustments encouraged record bets on a sustained rally," it said, adding however that "growing US output and stubbornly high stockpiles kept price gains in check and contained prices within a tight range."

The oil price has seen a strong recovery from 2016 lows and is currently close to 30 percent up from levels a year ago. But the rally has been stuttering in recent weeks as a cocktail of threats to the recovery has emerged. Investors are nervous because of a surprisingly big jump in US stockpiles reported last week, increased US shale production and concerns about implementation of the OPEC-led deal to cut output. And following the OPEC's report Tuesday, oil prices went into a "mini free fall", as Forex.com analyst Fawad Razaqzada put it. In the European afternoon, WTI oil stood at \$47.63 per barrel, down 1.6 percent on the day, and Brent at \$50.60, down 1.4 percent. Both contracts are now trading more than six percent lower than three months ago.

Razaqzada said traders were blaming a higher OPEC forecast for oil supply from outside the cartel for yesterday's price downturn. "In the US, shale producers have ramped up drilling activity and increased oil output in response to higher prices," he said. "This has put serious question marks over the OPEC's attempts to balance the oil market." — AFP



NEW YORK: Specialist Jarret Johnson works at his post on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange yesterday. Sterling fell to an eight-week low against the dollar yesterday. — AP

On Economics

ECONOMIC SOLUTIONS (1/5): NATURAL RESOURCES

By Khaled Al-Mutawa

Although Kuwait is highly dependant on producing and consuming oil as a source of energy, it is not the only option. The State of Kuwait is located in the north-eastern part of the Arabian Peninsula, and it borders with Iraq and Saudi Arabia. Despite its small size, Kuwait is one of the richest countries in the world. The reason for this is simple. Namely, the natural resources of Kuwait have strongly influenced the state's economic development.

Kuwait is well-known for its massive reserves of oil. Specifically, Kuwait is ranked fifth in the oil reserves, and the country is the third-largest oil producer in the world with ninety-three percent of exports. The country has six percent of the world's oil reserves. Therefore, it may be stated that the main natural resource of Kuwait is petrole-

um. The country entirely oil-based and oil-dependent. In 2011, 83 percent of Kuwait's revenues total was received from extractive industries. Remarkably, the state has a dry climate with extremely hot summers and short winters. Owing to the climate conditions, Kuwait has poor plant resource but lots of sunlight, another crucial natural resource.

The country should start developing solar energy since petroleum is an exhausting resource and the new sources of energy will be required. Further, Kuwait has access to the Gulf. This fact means that the country has valuable marine resources. From this,



Khaled Al-Mutawa

sea can be used to generate power and develop fishery, including shrimp production. Particularly, the Sun and the sea could be used to substitute oil and provide Kuwait with the necessary amount of energy. The Sun has been known as a source of energy for a long time already, and some of the households, cities, and countries are taking advantage of its low cost. For Kuwait, the production of solar energy is a promising direction of development due to the state's geographical location close to the equator. In fact, the country has already started implementing this idea and has

already opened the first plant of this type (Hagagy). Moreover, over the next two decades, it plans to increase the production of energy using renewable resources by 15 percent. Potentially, such production might increase diversity Kuwaiti economic specialization and allow it export solar energy to other states.

However, solar energy is not the only way for Kuwait to decrease its dependence on oil. Since it is situated on the Persian Gulf, the country could take advantage of another natural resource, the seawater, and its energy. Currently, there are special technologies that allow to install the special equipment in the water and collect the kinetic energy from the movements of water, such as tides. However, the potential amount of such energy source is lower compared to the solar energy, and it is still capable of providing a percentage of the state's needs for energy.



DUBLIN: The harp-shaped Beckett Bridge provides an architectural focal point for Dublin's rapidly expanding financial services district in this image. Britain's definitive exit from the EU may be at least two years away, but Dublin is doubling down on its commercial building revival. —AP

DUBLIN SEES FUTURE AS HUB FOR FIRMS FLEEING BREXIT

CITY DOUBLING DOWN ON ITS COMMERCIAL BUILDING REVIVAL

DUBLIN: Britain's plans to leave the European Union threaten to cause Ireland all kinds of economic and security headaches. But a silver lining is expanding daily along the crane-filled banks of the River Liffey, a likely post-Brexit refuge for British banking operations.

Dublin's financial district barely existed three decades ago but today stretches for nearly a mile on both banks of the river. More than 60 construction cranes are erecting future high-rise offices, hotels and apartments along the riverfront. Britain's definitive exit from the EU may be at least two years away, but Dublin is doubling down on its commercial building revival, confident that thousands of financial services jobs are poised to migrate 290 miles (465 kilometers) northwest in search of a new EU home that's not too legally, linguistically or culturally different from London. While similar sales pitches are being proffered from Luxembourg, France, Germany and other EU countries, Ireland considers itself best positioned. In Dublin, the dominant concern is whether there will be enough offices, homes and school space.

Market access

"Every one of these construction sites already has tenants booked through 2019. We'll need to build faster and higher if there's a hard Brexit as we now expect," said Shane Dempsey, spokesman for the Construction Industry Federation of Ireland, while observing the river-side panorama from Dublin's glass-fronted convention center.

Under a "hard" Brexit, Britain would leave the

EU without retaining privileged access to the bloc's single market. Financial houses based in London that currently manage assets and investments throughout the union would need to transfer some operations, and potentially a sizable chunk of their work force, to retain business. Dempsey says authorities planning Ireland's infrastructure needs through 2040 estimate that the country, even without a single Brexit-related job, already requires more than 110,000 construction workers on top of the 140,000 employed today building projects valued at 19 billion euros (\$20 billion).

Those targets will have to be raised if London-based jobs come to Dublin. Among the companies already signaling their interest are Britain's second-largest bank, Barclays, and US asset manager Legg Mason. The Central Bank says it's been fielding dozens of such overseas inquiries monthly, particularly from insurance companies. Gesturing to swaths of decades-old industrial waste ground north of the convention center, Dempsey says the challenge will be create living and working space in time.

Officials representing London's financial district, by many measures the world's biggest surpassing Wall Street, stress that their world is so vast and powerful that it can shrug off any job defections.

"London is a unique financial and regulatory professional services ecosystem. There is nothing like it anywhere else in Europe," said Miles Celic, chief executive of TheCityUK, a lobbying group that represents Britain's financial services industry. Celic expressed confidence that the

vast majority of 2.2 million British financial jobs, a third of which are in London, would adapt to whatever UK-EU relationship emerges.

Underestimating losses

Independent experts say London might be grossly underestimating losses. A Brussels-based think tank, Bruegel, estimates that 35 percent of London's wholesale banking involves clients in other EU nations involving 1.8 trillion euros (\$1.9 trillion) in euro-denominated assets - some 17 percent of the UK total under management - that might be obliged on regulatory grounds to exit Britain whenever an EU exit becomes reality. Traveling with them, Bruegel has calculated, could be 10 percent to 15 percent of British-based account managers and traders. Financial services proponents in France and Germany, the nations at the core of EU power, are gearing up their own capacity to shelter City of London migrants. At the La Defense financial center in Paris, construction is underway for seven more skyscrapers by 2021. Its boosters have placed subway ads in London suggesting that Paris might offer a nicer personal environment. "Tired of the fog? Try the frogs," reads one of them. France has claimed an early scalp with news that HSBC, Britain's biggest bank, plans to relocate around 1,000 jobs from London to Paris by 2019. Arnaud de Bresson, managing director of Paris Europlace, the group promoting France's financial center, says he expects more firms to follow because Paris is "a city of big companies, both French and global, with a lot of activity on the markets." — AP

ICELAND LIFTS CAPITAL CONTROLS, ENDING ECONOMIC ISOLATION

REYKJAVIK: Iceland lifted its remaining capital curbs yesterday, ending more than eight years of controls on businesses and citizens put in place after its banks collapsed during the financial crisis. Icelandic lenders buckled under the weight of huge debts amassed over years of overseas expansion, spreading instability through other European nations and making the country a symbol of the excesses that helped to trigger the financial crash.

The government started dismantling capital controls last year by easing restrictions for local residents in a nation of only around 330,000 people. The end of the last controls, first announced on Sunday, came into force at midnight. Iceland hopes the move will open the way for investment by Icelandic pension funds abroad and improve prospects for foreign investment in the country.

A small and volatile currency has exacerbated Iceland's economic troubles and will need to be carefully managed. The Icelandic crown remains at historically strong levels but posted its biggest one-day decline in eight years on Monday as the end of controls was expected to trigger initial outflows of pent-up foreign and domestic money.

The currency continued to weaken yesterday, dropping about 1 percent against both the dollar and the euro. Iceland's central bank declined to comment on the currency movements ahead of its interest rate decision tomorrow. Sedlabanki kept its key deposit rate unchanged at 5.0 percent in February, but with capital controls lifted, Finance Minister Benedikt Johannesson hoped interest rates could be cut. "I have no idea what they will do, but at least we are trying to create the conditions for them to make it easier to reduce the interest rate," he said yesterday. Authorities have

been preparing for the scrapping of restrictions, with the central bank amassing 815 billion Icelandic crowns (\$7.4 billion) of currency reserves at the end of last year to ease the transition.

"We have a foreign currency reserve much bigger than we have ever had before," Johannesson said in a telephone interview with Reuters. "That of course makes it easier to stabilize the currency rate."

Overheating risk

Jon Sigurdsson, CEO of Icelandic prosthetics maker Ossur which has more than 2,500 employees worldwide, said the removal of the controls was a positive step for the local business community. "The only thing I hope will not happen is that this will lead back to the same as before the crisis," he said.

"Even though history shows us people rarely learn from mistakes, I hope in this case we do." The government has created a task force to review monetary and currency policies in order to create a more stable exchange rate. The task force will report at the end of 2017 and could, for instance, recommend a currency peg.

The economy is also at risk of overheating-it expanded 11.3 percent in the final quarter of 2016 — but finance minister Johannesson said that would be managed by running a budget surplus rather than spending the money on reforms. "It is clearly a risk that they again come into the same problems as before the financial crisis—that the economy overheats and they build up external liabilities," said Danske Bank chief analyst Jakob Christensen, adding that a small country could easily be overwhelmed by capital flows. "But I think the financial supervisors of Iceland are very well aware of these risks, so I think they would be more strict with these vulnerabilities this time around." — Reuters

NIGERIAN INFLATION SLOWS FOR FIRST TIME IN 15 MONTHS

ABUJA: Nigerian inflation slowed for the first time in 15 months to 17.78 percent in February, driven by lower energy and utility prices, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) said yesterday. The cost of living in Africa's most populous nation began rising in November 2015, when inflation increased slightly to 9.37 percent from 9.3 percent a month earlier. It had risen steadily since then, peaking at 18.7 percent in January this year.

"This represents the first time in 15 months that the headline CPI (consumer price index) has declined on year-on-year basis representing the effects of slower rises in already high food and non-food prices and favorable base effects over 2016 prices," the NBS said. Food prices, however, were up 18.5 percent year-on-year in February, a 0.74 points increase on the previous month because of increased costs of bread, cereals, meat, fish, yam and potatoes.

Analysts said inflation would continue to fall because of the decision of the central bank to make available more US dollars to the foreign exchange market. "Recent currency appreciation will proba-

bly cut inflation in March," the Capital Economics consultancy said in an email after the announcement.

"The Central Bank of Nigeria began intervening in the FX market in late February by selling over \$1.5 billion worth of foreign currency. "This intervention has caused the naira to strengthen sharply on the widely-used parallel market, on which it jumped from about N500/US\$ to around N450/US\$ where it remains today. "Indeed, we expect that inflation will continue to slow over the coming months as the effects of last year's depreciation wash out of the annual comparison. "Even if the currency is devalued this year, which remains our key view, we expect that this will happen in steps and that the falls will not be as significant as they were last year."

Oil-dependent Nigeria plunged into recession in August last year after months of being battered by low global crude prices and militant attacks on energy infrastructure in the oil-rich south. That slashed government revenue from oil export sales and sent inflation soaring. —AFP

EXCHANGE RATES

AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

ASIAN COUNTRIES	
Japanese Yen	2.671
Indian Rupees	4.602
Pakistani Rupees	2.919
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.021
Nepali Rupees	2.875
Singapore Dollar	217.660
Hongkong Dollar	39.443
Bangladesh Taka	3.821
Philippine Peso	6.091
Thai Baht	8.689

GCC COUNTRIES	
Saudi Riyal	81.721
Qatari Riyal	84.169
Omani Riyal	795.868
Bahraini Dinar	813.740
UAE Dirham	83.435

ARAB COUNTRIES	
Egyptian Pound - Cash	21.500
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	17.266
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.230
Tunisian Dinar	134.200
Jordanian Dinar	431.430
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.042
Syrian Lira	2.184
Morocco Dirham	30.934

EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES	
US Dollar Transfer	306.250
Euro	329.070
Sterling Pound	375.620
Canadian dollar	228.630
Turkish lira	82.160

Swiss Franc	304.570
Australian Dollar	233.520
US Dollar Buysing	305.050

GOLD

20 Gram	248.010
10 Gram	126.930
5 Gram	64.310

DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

Rate for Transfr	Selling Rate
US Dollar	305.900
Canadian Dolla	227.830
Sterling Pound	373.640
Euro	328.120
Swiss Frank	310.845
Bahrain Dinar	810.915
UAE Dirhams	83.680
Qatari Riyals	84.900
Saudi Riyals	82.500
Jordanian Dinar	432.620
Egyptian Pound	17.477
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.022
Indian Rupees	4.615
Pakistani Rupees	2.917
Bangladesh Taka	3.845
Philippines Peso	6.083
Cyprus pound	167.990
Japanese Yen	3.665
Syrian Pound	2.425
Nepalese Rupees	3.870
Malaysian Ringgit	69.655

Chinese Yuan Renminbi	44.650
Thai Bhat	9.640
Turkish Lira	82.405

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
Europe		
British Pound	0.366221	0.376221
Czech Korune	0.004103	0.016103
Danish Krone	0.039990	0.044990
Euro	0.321908	0.330908
Norwegian Krone	0.031618	0.036818
Romanian Leu	0.084875	0.084875
Slovakia	0.009185	0.019185
Swedish Krona	0.030026	0.035026
Swiss Franc	0.297035	0.308035
Turkish Lira	0.077230	0.087530
Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.223210	0.235210
New Zealand Dollar	0.206082	0.215582
America		
Canadian Dollar	0.222158	0.231158
Georgina Lari	0.138321	0.138321
US Dollars	0.302150	0.306550
US Dollars Mint	0.302650	0.306550
Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003503	0.004087
Chinese Yuan	0.042911	0.046411
Hong Kong Dollar	0.037400	0.040150
Indian Rupee	0.002637	0.004734

Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002586	0.002766
Kenyan Shilling	0.003073	0.003073
Korean Won	0.000257	0.000272
Malaysian Ringgit	0.064895	0.070895
Nepalese Rupee	0.002265	0.003135
Pakistan Rupee	0.002673	0.002963
Philippine Peso	0.005995	0.006295
Sierra Leone	0.000068	0.000074
Singapore Dollar	0.211764	0.221764
South African Rand	0.017282	0.025782
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001659	0.002239
Taiwan	0.009820	0.010000
Thai Baht	0.008346	0.008896

Arab		
Bahraini Dinar	0.805763	0.814263
Egyptian Pound	0.012603	0.021856
Iranian Riyal	0.000085	0.000086
Iraqi Dinar	0.000196	0.000256
Jordanian Dinar	0.426284	0.435284
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000158	0.000258
Moroccan Dirhams	0.020163	0.044163
Nigerian Naira	0.001270	0.001905
Omani Riyal	0.789033	0.794713
Qatar Riyal	0.083308	0.084758
Saudi Riyal	0.080580	0.081880
Syrian Pound	0.001299	0.001519
Tunisian Dinar	0.130199	0.138199
Turkish Lira	0.077230	0.087530
UAE Dirhams	0.081956	0.083656
Yemeni Riyal	0.000996	0.001076

US FED BEGINS MEET WITH RATE HIKE ON THE CARDS

WASHINGTON: The US Federal Reserve began a two-day meeting yesterday, having signalled it is likely to raise the benchmark interest rate as the world's largest economy gains steam. Any increase in the key federal funds rate would come a bit earlier than had been expected at the start of the year, with central bankers prodded by continued strong job creation and accelerating inflation.

The Fed move would come just as President Donald Trump lays the groundwork

for expansionary economic policies, having pledged to return the United States to four percent annual growth by cutting taxes and regulation and boosting spending on infrastructure. The policy details, however, have been scarce. The Federal Open Market Committee, which sets the federal funds rate, last moved in December but stood pat last month, adopting a wait-and-see approach as the new administration entered office. The FOMC is due to announce its next decision

today afternoon. The target interest rate now stands at a range of 0.5 to 0.75 percent. Even after a quarter-point increase, it would still be low by historical standards.

"I think the Fed will say it was entirely prudent to take one more step right now," Jon Faust, a former advisor to the Federal Reserve Board, told AFP recently. "If things clearly continue in the same direction, we'll take more. But that will depend on us seeing what happens in the data." The unemployment rate fell

below five percent in May and the US economy has been adding jobs at an average of more than 200,000 net new positions over the last three months.

January also saw the Fed's favored inflation measure hit its fastest 12-month pace in four years. The Fed will get one more piece of inflation data today, with the release of the latest consumer price index for February. The question for Fed watchers now will be how many times it may act during the rest of

2017, with the next meeting set to occur in June. The Fed previously forecast a total of three rate increases this year, but that figure could change. Randall Kroszner, a former Federal Reserve Board governor, told AFP that with the economy beginning to hum, Fed Chair Janet Yellen was "certainly open" to the possibility of raising rates more quickly.

"They do want things to be gradual but they may need to move at a slightly faster pace," Kroszner said. — AFP

CHARLOTTE HOGG QUILTS AS BOE'S DEPUTY GOVERNOR

BANKER FAILED TO DECLARE POTENTIAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST

LONDON: The Bank of England's new deputy governor Charlotte Hogg has resigned for failing to declare a potential conflict of interest about her brother's role at Barclays Bank which had prompted an unprecedented rebuke from parliament.

Hogg, one of Governor Mark Carney's most trusted lieutenants, stepped down following the criticism by lawmakers who said the episode raised "wider concerns" about accountability at the British central bank. Hogg admitted last week that she only revealed her brother's job guiding the response of Barclays - which is overseen by the BoE - to bank regulation when she prepared information for lawmakers who were reviewing her appointment as deputy governor.

Carney, who has said the Bank should employ more women in senior roles, had opted to give Hogg a verbal warning. Yesterday, he stressed he felt she could have stayed. "While I fully respect her decision taken in accordance with her view of what was the best for this institution, I deeply regret that Charlotte Hogg has chosen to resign from the Bank of England," Carney said in a statement.

Hogg was promoted to deputy governor and a seat on the BoE's Monetary Policy Committee this month, just as the central bank is preparing to steer Britain's economy through its divorce with the

European Union. Hogg would have been in charge of the Bank's massive bond-buying stimulus program. Hogg will still be present for this week's MPC decision, to be announced on Thursday, a Bank spokesman said.

Earlier yesterday, a committee of lawmakers said Hogg could no longer be considered suitable for her role. One committee member, John Mann, said the strength of criticism was without precedent.

Treasury Committee chairman Andrew Tyrie said: "This is a regrettable business with no winners. Ms Hogg has acted in the best interest of the institution for which she has been working. This is welcome." Last week the Treasury Committee seized on comments from Hogg that she was compliant with the Bank's codes of conduct because "I helped to write them" as evidence of a culture of complacency inside the Bank. Hogg said she had not shared confidential information or misused it in any way. "However, I recognize that being sorry is not enough," she said in a letter to Carney and Anthony Habgood, the chair of the Bank's court, an oversight body. A spokesman for Prime Minister Theresa May said the government respected Hogg's decision to step down. Hogg, whose earlier career was in retail banking, became the BoE's first chief operating officer at the time of Carney's



LONDON: The Bank of England's newly-appointed deputy governor Charlotte Hogg. Hogg resigned yesterday following a conflict of interest allegation. — AP

arrival at the central bank in 2013. She had a brief to modernize the BoE's management as it took on wide-ranging responsibilities for financial services.

Her family has played a prominent role in British public life, producing several generations of senior politicians and lawyers. Her brother Quintin Hogg works on the Barclays Group strategy team.

Barclays declined to comment. Hogg's appointment drew concerns from some lawmakers that it would do little to broaden the BoE's thinking. Some critics of the Bank have

questioned why the BoE was not aware that Hogg's brother was employed by Barclays.

The BoE said yesterday its governing court would conduct a review of the Bank's adherence to its code of conduct, examining the lessons from Hogg's case. The bank said senior management responsibility for risk management would shift to Sam Woods, deputy governor for prudential regulation. It also announced some other changes to the reporting lines for compliance and code of conduct issues. — Reuters



CYPRIOT: This file photo taken on August 28, 2014 shows a Cyprus Airways' plane taking off at Larnaca airport in the Cypriot southern port city. — AFP

CYPRUS AIRWAYS PREPARING TO TAKE TO THE SKIES AGAIN

NICOSIA: Reborn carrier Cyprus Airways is preparing to take to the skies again after having obtained a certificate from the civil aviation department, two years after it closed, the company said yesterday.

"The Air Operator Certificate is a huge step forward for us, as it acknowledges that all our processes meet the requirements of European aviation authorities," said Natalia Popova, Cyprus Airways chief commercial officer. On March 4, the airline conducted a test flight from Larnaca to Heraklion in Greece with an Airbus A319, as part of the procedure to obtain the certificate.

"Our next step," said Popova, "is to get the licence for commercial flights, for which we have already submitted our application. At the same time, we are at the final stage of preparations for the commencement of our flights." The airline is reluctant to give a timeline for the launch

of commercial flights but said it was finalizing a schedule and would "soon" post a website for tickets and routes. The new Larnaca-based Cyprus Airways is expected to operate flights to Russia, Britain and other European destinations.

In July 2016, Charlie Airlines, which is owned 40 percent by the Russian S7 group and the rest by local investors, paid 2.04 million euros for the right to use the trademark and logo of Cyprus Airways for a decade. A first Charlie Airlines plane landed on the island in December with the new livery. The original state-owned Cyprus Airways shut down in January 2015 after the European Commission ruled it had received tens of millions of euros in illegal government support which had to be repaid. The national carrier could not afford to return the money and operations were shut down. — AFP

IRAN'S BIGGEST CARGO LINE LOOKS AT LONDON IPO

LONDON/ANKARA: Iran's top cargo shipping company has held meetings in London to discuss a possible listing on the London Stock Exchange, but has so far been thwarted by US sanctions that still scare banks off Iranian business, four Iranian and two Western sources said.

Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines (IRISL) was removed from international sanctions blacklists last year and after years of isolation aims to raise funds to modernize its fleet. It has already placed an order for new ships estimated to be worth \$626 million.

A flotation on the LSE would make it the first Iranian company to list on Britain's main exchange since the Islamic revolution in 1979. But the difficulty in achieving such a landmark shows how far Tehran still remains from its goal of integrating fully with the global economic mainstream, since its 2015 deal with world powers to lift international sanctions in return for curbs on its nuclear program.

President Hassan Rouhani, who faces a campaign for re-election in May, has struggled so far to demonstrate to voters real economic benefits from the deal. He won office in a landslide in 2013 on a promise to reduce Iran's isolation, and the nuclear deal is his crowning achievement.

Most international sanctions on Iran were lifted last year as a result of the nuclear deal. But the United States still has separate sanctions in place over Iran's missile program and the administration of new President Donald Trump has sig-

nalled it would take a tough line. The four Iranian officials and two Western financial sources told Reuters the Iranian company had expressed interest in an LSE listing. Two of the Iranian sources, both senior officials in Tehran, said meetings had already been held with the LSE in London about a possible float for IRISL.

In an email to Reuters, a source at IRISL denied any measures had been taken for a possible listing on the London Stock Exchange. The LSE declined to comment. All six Western and Iranian sources spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss an initiative that has not officially been made public.

US sanctions

Experts on sanctions say any Iranian IPO in London would run up against the impact of the remaining US measures, which have deterred British-based banks from clearing payments or facilitating transactions for Iranian companies.

Even the UK subsidiaries of Iranian banks with British licenses have yet to offer payment clearing services in sterling. "In the current climate, I believe it is wholly unrealistic for IRISL to expect to pull off a listing in London," said Nigel Kushner, a leading London-based sanctions lawyer. "In circumstances where no UK clearing bank is willing to become involved and when Iranian banks that may legitimately trade in London are still not able to clear their transactions in London, how on earth is a listing going

to happen?" The sources did not say how much capital IRISL was seeking to raise in a potential initial public offering.

During the height of sanctions, the United States and European Union blacklisted the shipping firm, accusing it of involvement in nuclear proliferation efforts, which it denied. A European Union court ruled in 2015 that the EU had not given valid reasons for the allegations against IRISL. IRISL's ambitions to become a big global cargo carrier are constrained by the age of its fleet. It operates 26 ships, worth just \$166 million, according to ship valuation company VesselsValue. IRISL placed an order in December for 10 ships with South Korean shipbuilder Hyundai Heavy Industries Co Ltd. Those ships would be worth \$626 million, according to VesselsValue. If it is still too difficult to hold an IPO in London, Iranian companies, including from the telecommunications sector, could turn instead to Italy's stock exchange for a potential listing, Iranian sources said. The Italian stock exchange, Milan's Borsa Italiana, is part of LSE Group. Borsa Italiana declined to comment.

For Iran, pressures to show more progress are mounting ahead of the country's presidential election in May. Hardline opponents say Rouhani has failed to win an economic windfall from his nuclear deal, and some voters are losing patience. "Despite Rouhani's and his government's efforts, almost all banking transactions are blocked," said one senior Iranian banking official. — Reuters



MADRID: Secretary General of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Angel Gurría (left) and the Spanish Finance Minister Luis de Guindos (right) give a press conference to present an economic report elaborated by this institution on the Spanish economy in Madrid yesterday. — AFP

FEAR OF POLITICAL UPSETS MUTES GERMAN INVESTORS' MOOD

FRANKFURT AM MAIN: Confidence among German investors recovered slightly in March from a sharp fall in February, a closely watched survey showed yesterday, but remains below expectations as political uncertainty persists. The ZEW institute's monthly barometer climbed 2.4 points to reach 12.8 points, making up some of the 6.2 points lost in February.

Analysts surveyed by Factsset had predicted a faster rebound, to 13.2 points in March. "Risks from the upcoming elections in several EU countries are holding uncertainty for the German economy at a relatively high level," ZEW chief Achim Wambach said in a statement. Germany, Europe's largest economy, currently enjoys strong industrial production and exports as well as low levels of unemployment, meaning people have money to spend.

That was reflected in investors' assess-

ment of the current situation at home, which brightened slightly over the reading in February.

And the financial market experts surveyed by ZEW saw strong improvements in both present economic performance and the future outlook in Germany's eurozone neighbors. "Good news about the German economy appears to have outweighed concerns about politics elsewhere" in March, Capital Economics analyst Jennifer McKeown commented. But a drumbeat of fear over possible gains for anti-Europe, anti-globalization parties in Dutch, French, and German elections spread over the coming months kept investors' mood muted.

Business is also concerned about the impact of protectionist policies from US President Donald Trump, elected on an "America First" platform promising to slash trade deficits. — AFP

GERMAN GOVT AGREES NEW BOSS FOR DEUTSCHE BAHN

BERLIN: Ministers in Berlin have found a new boss for German state-owned rail operator Deutsche Bahn, a government source told AFP Tuesday, weeks after the surprise departure of the firm's chief.

"Finance director Richard Lutz is to be the new head of Deutsche Bahn," the anonymous source said, confirming media reports. Lutz, 52, had taken the helm on a temporary basis since chief executive Ruediger Grube shocked the publicly owned firm by walking out after a battle over extending his contract. Deutsche Bahn refused to comment on the new chief executive when contacted by AFP.

The board is expected to confirm Lutz in the CEO chair and add two new executives responsible for digitization and for its

struggling cargo division at a meeting on March 22, the source said. Grube had led Deutsche Bahn since May 2009 and was looking forward to an extension on his contract. But the supervisory board refused to offer him a hoped-for three-year extension to the end of 2020 that would have seen his tenure last longer than a decade. With around 300,000 employees and revenues of some 40 billion euros (\$43 billion) per year, Deutsche Bahn is a political and business institution in Germany-and the perennial butt of jokes about trains failing to arrive on time. The firm reported its first loss in 12 years in 2015, largely down to its cargo arm, but returned to profit last year. It will present detailed financial results on March 23. — AFP



BERLIN: This file photo taken on March 31, 2011 shows then CEO of German rail giant Deutsche Bahn (DB) Ruediger Grube (R) talking with Deutsche Bahn CFO Richard Lutz during an annual results press conference in Berlin. — AFP

For Rent

In a Luxurious and Privileged Compound at
Abou Halifa Region Facing the National
Park and the Sea

Duplex & Triplex
Villas +Big Salon + Separate pool
Private swimming pool for each villa
All Master Bedrooms is Marble

Volleyball Court / Basketball Court / Hotel Lobby
Pool + Jacuzzi / Billiard / 213 Car Parking Areas

66804222 - 69996992

US STOCKS FALL AHEAD OF FED, OIL SHARES HIT

NEW YORK: Wall Street stocks dropped early yesterday ahead of a Federal Reserve monetary policy decision as oil prices fell again, hitting petroleum-linked shares. The Fed is expected to raise interest rates at the conclusion of the two-day monetary policy meeting today. Higher interest rates typically weigh on stocks. Analysts also have pointed to the retreat in oil prices as a source of unease in equity markets. The US benchmark slipped further below \$50 a barrel yesterday on worries about higher supplies. About 15 minutes into trading, the Dow Jones Industrial Average stood at 20,869.71, down 0.1 percent. The broad-based S&P 500 shed 0.2 percent to 2,367.70, while the tech-rich

Nasdaq Composite Index dropped 0.3 percent to 5,857.85. Petroleum-linked shares fell, with Chevron losing 1.2 percent and Halliburton 3.2 percent. Valeant Pharmaceuticals International plunged 9.8 percent after activist investor Bill Ackman's fund, Pershing Square Capital Management, announced it was exiting the investment. Pershing Square said it took a "large tax loss" on the investment, which consumed a "disproportionately large" portion of the hedge fund's "time and resources." Global stock markets drifted in slow trading yesterday as investors awaited the outcome of the Federal Reserve's meeting, and a batch of

economic and political events later this week. Britain's FTSE 100 added 0.1 percent to 7,373.68 while France's CAC 40 fell 0.3 percent to 4,984.99. Germany's DAX lost 0.1 percent to 11,973.58. Futures augured a tepid start on Wall Street. Dow futures fell 0.1 percent while S&P futures shed 0.2 percent. Japan's Nikkei 225 fell 0.1 percent to 19,609.50 but South Korea's Kospi rose 0.8 percent to 2,133.78. India's Sensex gained 1.6 percent to 29,401.19. Hong Kong's Hang Seng closed flat at 23,827.95. The Shanghai Composite Index added 0.1 percent to 3,239.33. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 also was steady at 5,759.10. Stocks in Taiwan were higher and in

Southeast Asia, markets were mixed. Most investors expect it to raise rates for only the third time since they went to nearly zero during the financial crisis in 2008. With strong economic reports in recent weeks, expectations that the Fed may stand pat this month have changed. "On the one hand, the market ponders a surprise hold, in which massive unwinding of positions could take place with the hike already priced in," said Jingyi Pan, a market strategist at IG in Singapore. On the other hand, the Fed could raise interest rates from record lows at a pace faster than expected. The Bank of England, Bank of Japan and other central banks are also holding meetings this week. Many economists expect the Bank of England to hold steady. The

British government meanwhile could formally begin the process of exiting the European Union. Margaret Yang, a market analyst at CMC Markets in Singapore, said the so-called Brexit process could begin as early as the last week of March. The Netherlands has its own election this week, where politicians have also railed against the European Union and immigrants. The dollar rose to 115.09 yen from 114.884 yen while the euro slipped to \$1.0642 from \$1.0653. Benchmark US crude oil added 7 cents to \$48.47 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract fell 9 cents to close at \$48.40 a barrel on Monday. Brent crude, which is used to price international oils, rose 21 cents to \$51.56 a barrel. — Agencies

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report. Table with columns: Index, Change, Closing, Last Closing, High, Low, Volume, Value (KWD), Number of Trades. Includes sections for Oil & Gas, Consumer Goods, Health Care, and Banks.



SEOUL: Currency traders work at the foreign exchange dealing room of the KEB Hana Bank headquarters in Seoul yesterday. — AP

POLITICS: MARKETS DON'T CARE; IT'S ABOUT GROWTH

LONDON: One of the biggest mysteries in global markets so far in the Trump era is the historically low level of volatility that has prevailed despite all the turmoil and uncertainty that analysts warned his victory would unleash. The best explanation may be the most mundane: the global economy's growth is at its most steady and predictable for decades, since recovering from the financial crisis, trumping any short-term political surprise, even in the White House. Crucially, the economic recovery and consequent stability hasn't been built on a borrowing binge, suggesting the low volatility climate can continue - with episodic spikes - even should there be more political shocks in store, such as in Dutch, French or German elections this year. As a result, investors are likely to feel encouraged to continue seeking out riskier assets that offer relatively high returns, thereby supporting the rally that has broadly prevailed since 2009 in markets such as stocks and corporate bonds. Volatility in global growth is the biggest single driver of financial market volatility, according to JP Morgan. And since recovering from the 2007-09 crisis, growth has been steady and predictable almost to the point of boring. The recovery has been built on the foundations of steps taken by policymakers since the crash, not least the trillions of dollars of central bank stimulus and the rebuilding of the shattered banking system. "This is a very stable world economy. It's never been so stable, and this is why the market is so stable and risk premia so low," said Jan Loey, head of global asset allocation at JP Morgan. "Markets reflect fundamentals, and if the fundamentals are stable, asset prices will become less volatile," he said. According to the World Bank, annual global growth since 2011 has hovered in a fairly narrow 2.3 to 3 percent range. The International Monetary Fund's measure pegs it in an even tighter 3.1 to 3.5 percent range since 2012. And if both institutions' estimates are met, 2017 will be yet another year of growth being stuck within these narrow parameters. Based on a five-year rolling standard deviation of quarterly global real GDP growth rates, global macro volatility is at around 0.5 percent, says JP Morgan. That's the lowest level in at least 40 years. Goldilocks The level of borrowing today is far removed from the period leading up to the crisis. Over the last five years, annual private sector credit growth, excluding

TRUMP IN DETROIT THIS WEEK TO TALK CARS

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump will head this week to Detroit to meet with auto industry executives and workers to discuss deregulation, one of his major policy promises, the White House said yesterday. "On Wednesday, the president will visit Detroit for a trip focusing on job creation and automobile manufacturing," White House spokesman Sean Spicer told reporters. "He will meet with auto executives and workers and manufacturing suppliers, highlighting the need to eliminate burdensome regulation that needlessly hinders job growth." Several US media outlets reported that the Republican president could take the opportunity to announce a review of vehi-

KUWAIT'S EDUCATION PLAY! BETTING ON HIGHER EDUCATION

KAMCO RESEARCH ON HUMANSOFT HOLDING

We initiate coverage on Humansoft - a direct play on private education in Kuwait. Education sector fundamentals remain strong as future demand for tertiary education is ascribed to growth in youth population, government support for higher education and skills-gap in the corporate sector. Fundamentally, the company's earnings power, sustainability of cashflows and high operating margins are positive in our view. The stock has however re-rated significantly in 2016 and YTD-2017 (+11.9 percent), capturing significant value in the stock.

Nevertheless, factoring in positives from sector fundamentals, the company's strategic focus, and the absence of other large peers in the education space in the GCC, we see some more potential upside for the stock going forward.

Burgeoning demand

Youth population in Kuwait between the age group of 15-19 years is set to grow at a CAGR of 3.2 percent over 2016-2020. Moreover, high school graduates account for only 5.4 percent of the youth population as per our 2016 estimates, which should improve going forward. Kuwait continues to provide financial support to Kuwaiti students who wish to pursue university education. This should drive demand for tertiary education. Additionally, Kuwait has potential to improve in line with GCC peers in Higher Education and Training, as per the World Economic Forum. Higher Education to drive group revenue CAGR of +15.6 percent over 2016-2021, and a 2.9 percent CAGR increase in blended fees (KD/year) over the same period from American University of the Middle East (AUM) & American College of the Middle East (ACM). The upcoming auditoriums, exhibition center and amenities should attract a higher proportion of high school graduates to the AUM & ACM going forward.

There is also potential for additional revenues, if the management decides to lease out these facilities, which are currently not included in our forecasts.

Valuation and risks

Our TP for Humansoft of KD 3.42 per share was derived based on our blended valuation of discounted cashflow (DCF) and relative valuation methods, suggesting further upside, despite the run-up in the stock in the previous year and YTD.

Downside risks include: 1) Slower growth in the number of high school graduates over forecast period; 2) Lesser number of scholarships and lower funding; 3) Higher migration to international universities.

We value Humansoft using a blend of DCF and relative valuation methods. Revenue growth, EBITDA margin and terminal growth rate are key variables controlling our DCF valuation. For relative valuation, we use a combination of region's peers along

with international peers of similar size in terms of market capitalization. Both methodologies provide a price target higher to the current market price (CMP) of the Humansoft, and underpins our positive investment case. Our target price based on our blended DCF and relative valuation methods is KWD 3.42/share, representing a 13.3 percent upside to CMP.

Strong cashflows

Humansoft's share price rose significantly in 2016 and outperformed its regional and global peers. The share price rose over 2.8x in 2016, while MENA regional peers lost ground by 14 percent and global peers gained by only 2 percent. In 2017 YTD, Humansoft's share price moved up by 11.9 percent and outperformed both regional and global peers. As a result of the substantial increase in the stock price, the stock trades at a comparable trailing dividend yield of 5.1 percent compared to regional peers who trade at 5.2 percent. This would understandably raise concerns for the market about the potential for further upside for the stock going forward, given the substantial increase from the previous year.

Nevertheless, we believe that room for upside remains for Humansoft, driven by strong cashflows stemming from long-term earnings potential and sustainable margins. Moreover, we looked at relative value with international peers on a 2017E dividend yield basis, as consensus estimates for regional peers were unavailable. Humansoft now trades at an attractive 2017E dividend yield of 6.4 percent, which is higher than the international peers average of 3.1 percent and provides basis for potential share price upside in the future, given the strong fundamentals of the company.

Humansoft - easiest play

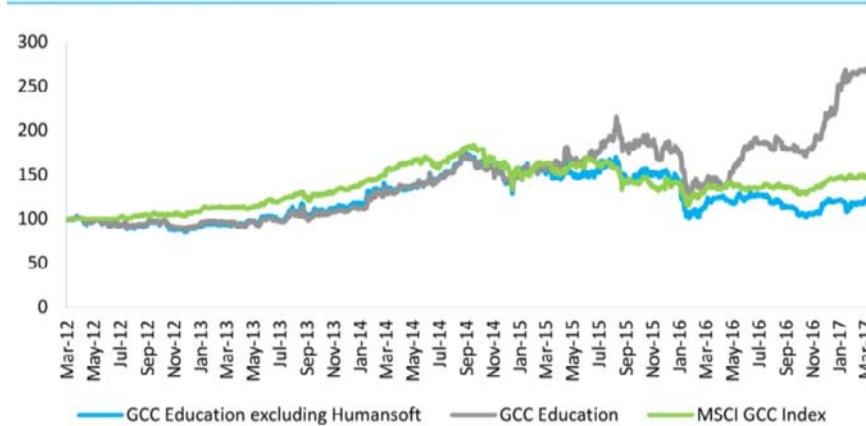
Humansoft has been the best performing stock in GCC's Education sector over the past 5 years. Barring Humansoft, the GCC Education sector has underperformed the broader index over the long term. Over the same aforementioned period, the GCC Education sector (excluding Humansoft) gained by 23 percent, while the MSCI GCC index rose by 45 percent.

In Kuwait, the other listed players in the Education sector are Educational Holding Group and Nafais Holding Company. However, Nafais Holding Company has equity participation in Educational Holding Group, which in turn owns Gulf University (GUST) and American Creativity Academy through its subsidiaries. Moreover, Nafais Holding has exposure into other sectors as well and one of its key business segments is healthcare. The presence of cross-holdings and multi-sector exposure for peers in Kuwait, leaves Humansoft as the only large pure-play on the Education sector for investors looking at exposure to sector.

GCC Education

The stock currently trades at a 2017E P/E multiple of 12.6x and a corresponding dividend yield of 6.4 percent. See our detailed relative valuation tables on page 5 for comparison with regional and international

GCC Education stocks vs. MSCI GCC



peers. A significant portion of our final blended valuation flows from a DCF based value. Our DCF value of KD 3.37 is based on explicit forecast of free cash flows for the next ten years (2017E-2026E) and terminal value thereafter.

For the DCF valuation, we have estimated a weighted average cost of capital (WACC) of 10.5 percent for the current year, and our future WACC assumptions (2018E-2026E) depends on the changing composition of debt and equity over the forecast period. We have arrived at our WACC based on a cost of equity of 12.4 percent and the cost of debt that is expected to increase as borrowing

in the age group between 15-19 currently, and future population that would enter in the same age group, as university education seekers would predominantly fall into this age bracket.

Private university education

As a result of aforementioned demographic trends, the number of high school graduates is expected to grow at a CAGR of 9.3 percent over 2016-2021 from 36,606 higher school graduates annually in 2016. Kuwait (15-19) age group population trends (in '000). High school graduates form the demand catchment segment of the popula-

admission trends). Typically, AUM and ACM admit about 8 percent-10 percent of the high school graduates annually. AUM & ACM number of students to grow at 13.0 percent CAGR; blended fees at over 2.9 percent We build our company model based on trends of existing students, incremental students from our sector model, the number of years students would take to graduate at AUM and ACM independently, and estimates of drop-outs annually for each college.

We model each college separately to arrive at our combined number of fee-paying students per year for the Higher Education division. Our model suggests that the total number of fee-paying students in AUM and ACM combined is set to increase at a CAGR of 13.3 percent from 8,162 students in 2016 to 15,037 students in 2021.

Based on estimates of average fees per KD 250 per credit per student for AUM and KD 190 per credit per student for ACM, blended fees is also expected to grow at a CAGR of close to 3.3 percent from KD 6,324 per student in 2016 to KD 7,303 in 2021.

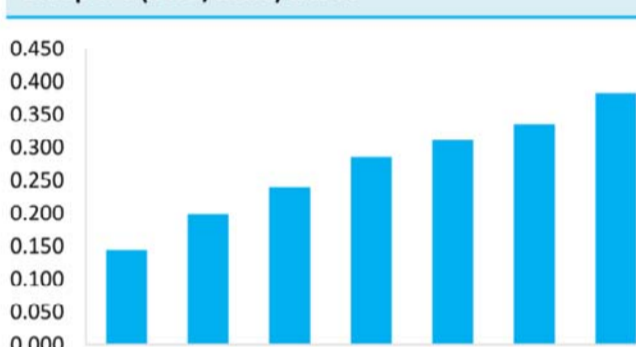
Higher Education segment

As a result of the trends, the revenues for the Higher education division are expected to drive group revenue growth over our explicit forecast period of 2016-2021, given its +95 percent average revenue contribution over the period. Group revenues are

Group Revenues & revenue growth - Humansoft



Group EPS (KWD/share) trends



rates should follow the rate tightening cycle in policy rates from the Fed. As a result, we have assumed an average effective cost of borrowing of 7.4 percent through our forecast period. We have assumed terminal growth rate of 2.5 percent, which we believe adequately represents a sustainable long-term growth rate for the company. For our terminal value, we have assumed a return on new investment capital (RONIC) that is comparable to the terminal year WACC.

Sensitivity analysis

Our positive investment case surrounding Humansoft is mainly driven by positive sector fundamentals for the tertiary education sector in Kuwait. Demographics form the cornerstone behind the potential for higher education in any economy. To study current and future demand for Kuwait's higher education, we looked at population

tion that is relevant for current and future demand of education in public and private universities in Kuwait, which is incorporated into our company model.

Private university in Kuwait has become the bridge between public university education from Kuwait University and education obtained from foreign universities abroad, and is gaining more popularity amongst high school graduates.

Humansoft's Higher Education division which consists of American University of the Middle East (AUM) and American College of the Middle East (ACM) are the largest university education providers in Kuwait that absorb high school graduates into private universities.

The total number of students admitted into AUM and ACM combined is comparable to the total of all other private universities combined (See page 15 for Private university

expected to grow at a CAGR of 15.6 percent from over KD 54 million to over KD 112 million over our explicit forecast period. Revenues for 2021 and 2022 are driven by our assumption for fee-hike provisions for AUM and ACM respectively, which the colleges are eligible for after a period of five years of resetting fees.

When comparing country specific data split into age groups, one stark feature is the poor ranking in the 15-24 age group highlighting the poor state of affairs in nurturing and deploying human capital in the region. On one hand, GCC countries have relatively better ranks in the 0 - 14 age group which is primarily due to the fact that primary school education is free in most of the GCC countries. However, on the other hand, the GCC countries have some of the lowest tertiary and vocational enrolment rates in the Index in the 15-24 age group.



PITTSBURGH: In this March 31, 2015 file photo, Ed Fotta sorts hardwood at the Allegheny Millwork and Lumberyard in Pittsburgh. The Labor Department reported yesterday that inflation at the wholesale level rose at just half the rate in February as the previous month as a surge in energy prices slowed. —AP

IATA WARY OF PROTECTIONISM AFTER TALKS WITH US OFFICIALS

MOVE ON INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT POSITIVE

ABU DHABI: Airline industry group IATA said it remains concerned about protectionist rhetoric from the United States and other governments, but also sees the new US administration's plans to invest in infrastructure as positive for the industry. IATA Director General Alexandre de Juniac told Reuters in Abu Dhabi yesterday that he met US Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao in Washington D.C. on March 2.

He described the meeting to reporters as "positive", but said that IATA was also "heavily concerned" about plans by governments, including the United States, "to raise barriers on borders for trade and for travel". "It was the opportunity for us to meet the new administration, to express our view and to understand what the new administration had in mind for aviation," de Juniac said, adding that US plans looked positive in terms of investment in infrastructure and regulation.

US President Donald Trump, who met aviation executives last month, proposed during his campaign to spend \$1 trillion over a decade to upgrade the country's infrastructure. "The plan to invest in infrastructure especially in airports is a good plan because there are some difficulties and weaknesses in the airline infrastructure in the US," de Juniac told Reuters.

IATA and its members were critical of Trump's Jan. 27 executive order that blocked refugees and nationals of seven Muslim majority countries from travelling to the United States, and many in the industry said it caused chaos and confusion. The Trump administration's revised travel ban is due to come into effect yesterday.

De Juniac said US officials had coordinated the second travel order with stakeholders, unlike the initial ban which came into immediate effect without notice. IATA has not seen a significant

impact on demand for travel to and from the US as a result of ban, although data for February is still being gathered, de Juniac said. Last week, Emirates President Tim Clark said bookings to and from the US dropped 35 percent overnight after the January order.

Others in the industry have also said demand has declined on US routes. Overall, IATA is concerned about "significant" protectionist rhetoric in the United States, Europe and other parts of the world, although it will take time before protectionist measures are felt in the industry, de Juniac said. This year has started off better than expected, he said.

Passenger demand reached a five-year high in January. However, IATA said in December that it expects profit in the airline industry to fall this year after a five-year rally and de Juniac said that view remained unchanged. — Reuters

US PRODUCER PRICES RISE BROADLY, INFLATION FIRMS

WASHINGTON: US producer prices increased more than expected in February as the cost of services such as hotel accommodation pushed higher and the year-on-year gain was the largest in nearly five years, pointing to steadily rising inflation pressures. Firming inflation, together with a tightening labor market, which is expected to generate strong wage growth, could allow the Federal Reserve to raise interest rates today. "Steadily rising inflation gives the Fed more reason to lift rates tomorrow," said Jennifer Lee, a senior economist at BMO Capital Markets in Toronto.

The Labor Department said yesterday that its producer price index for final demand increased 0.3 percent last month after rising 0.6 percent in January. Economists polled by Reuters had forecast a 0.1 percent uptick. In the 12 months through February, the PPI jumped 2.2 percent, the biggest advance since March 2012 and ahead of the 2.0 percent gain forecast in the Reuters poll. It followed a 1.6 percent increase in January.

The fairly strong producer inflation readings came as Fed officials gathered yesterday for a two-day policy meeting. The dollar was trading higher against a basket of currencies, while US stocks were lower ahead of the Fed meeting. Prices for US

Treasuries rose. Producer prices are rising as the prior weak readings, induced by cheap oil, drop out of the calculation. Crude oil prices have risen above \$50 per barrel. Also boosting price pressures are the dollar's 1.5 percent drop against the currencies of the United States' main trading partners since January and overall commodity price gains in tandem with a firming global economy.

Core PPI rising

A key gauge of underlying producer price pressures that excludes food, energy and trade services increased 0.3 percent in February, the biggest gain since April 2016. The so-called core PPI rose 0.2 percent in January. Core PPI increased 1.8 percent in the 12 months through February after advancing 1.6 percent in January.

The Fed has a 2 percent inflation target and tracks a measure that is currently at 1.7 percent. The US central bank is expected to raise its overnight benchmark interest rate by 25 basis points to a range of 0.75 percent and 1.00 percent today. It increased borrowing costs last December and has projected three rate hikes in 2017. In February, prices for final demand services increased 0.4 percent, accounting for more than 80 percent of the rise in the PPI. — Reuters

AS GREEK CRISIS GRINDS ON, CHILDREN PAY PRICE

ATHENS: In Greece's grinding economic crisis, a home for abused children is now taking in those whose parents are struggling to feed them. It is perhaps the darkest sign of economic devastation in Greece, where traditionally strong family ties are starting to crumble after years of depression.

A quarter of Greece's workforce is unemployed and a quarter of its children live in poverty, according to United Nations figures, forcing parents to depend on grandparents for handouts. But pensions too have been cut a dozen times. In Athens, the Model National Nursery, set up a century ago for orphans of war, can hardly keep up with the number of parents turning to it for help. Unable to cover their basic needs, parents leave their children in the home all week.

Iro Zervaki, its head, says at least 40 children are on the waiting list, four times as many as a couple of years ago. The home sleeps 25 in a bare room with rows of beds draped in blue blankets, and lacks the staff and funds to increase capacity, she said. Most places are for abused children.

Dozens of other children, all aged two to five, come in daily, but the days away from their parents are long. "We had incidents where children even attempted to leave, to run away, to go to their mother," Zervaki said.

In the buzzing playground, a little girl tugged the social worker's blouse and yelled: "Miss! When will I go to my mum?" "They can't tell the days apart so every day they ask: 'Is it Friday?'" Anthoula Zarmakoupi, the social worker, said. "They know mum will pick them up at the weekend."

But sometimes even that was not possible, she said. "We have children whose parents are homeless so it's very difficult for them to even collect them for the weekend."

For the home too, brighter days seem as far away as ever. State funding has been cut and covers just half of the staff's wages. The home depends on donations for food and clothes, and Zervaki says it is hard to tell if she will be able to make next month's payments.

"It doesn't look like tomorrow will be any better," she said. "It will take some years. I hope not too many." — Reuters

US TO URGE G20 TO MEET COMMITMENTS ON FOREX

WASHINGTON: US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin will attend his first Group of 20 meeting this week and will press members to fulfill their commitments on exchange rates, a senior Treasury official said Monday. The official, who briefed reporters on background, said the G20 can be a "helpful" forum to promote issues of interest to the US administration, including boosting global growth and pledges to avoid devaluing currencies to gain a competitive trade advantage.

The official declined to say whether the US would press for stronger language on exchange rates from the G20 ministers, who meet in Baden-Baden, Germany on Friday and Saturday. But, the official said, the commitments already made in previous communiqués "are very important." Currencies, always a sensitive topic, have been pushed to the forefront once again by White House economic advisor Peter Navarro, who has accused G20 members Germany and China of taking advantage of weak currencies to build a trade surplus with the United States.

The G20 language on currencies has remained consistent for several years, with members promising to "refrain from competitive devaluations and we will not target our exchange rates for competitive purposes." The Treasury official said implementation is key and the US will be it watching to ensure countries "follow through on those commitments." — AFP

WARBA BANK LAUNCHES APPLE WATCH APP

BOOSTING ITS DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE BASED ON ITS NEW STRATEGY

KUWAIT: Warba Bank, Kuwait's best investment bank and corporate consultancy firm, is committed to improving its digital infrastructure in response to the rapid growth in the Islamic banking sector in terms of applying the latest technologies that saves clients' time and effort by allowing them to easily carry out their banking transactions online.

Accordingly, Warba Bank presents today its latest innovation in digital banking by launching an application on Apple Watch that allows clients to track their accounts and transactions carried out through their banking cards through their Apple digital watch. This step also follows the bank's five-year strategy (2017 - 2021)

adopted in cooperation with McKinsey and Company, and focuses on improving the bank's digital infrastructure. Haitham Al-Terkait, Technology Group Chairman at Warba Bank, said in this regard: "Adopting digital technologies come in line with improving Warba Bank's digital infrastructure, especially with regards to coping with the information technology advancements in Islamic banks, and presenting modern products and services to clients. Digital banking services today have transformed every smartphone into a mobile bank branch through which the client can interact with new and modern methods to carry out their banking transactions." "We at

Warba Bank seek to increase our clients' confidence by offering advanced electronic services that help them perform transactions comfortably and in full privacy," he added. "We make sure that this become the essence of our relationship with our clients, as digital services offer multiple options that are more varied than any time before, and provide access to digital services in a way that greatly saves time and effort."

Al-Terkait further indicated that Warba Bank plans to release a number of digital services designed to add more flexibility and efficiency to banking transactions done through the bank's website or smartphone

applications. Warba Bank had recently achieved various achievements in terms of improving its digital infrastructure and launching innovative services, including the e-signature service launched recently in cooperation with the Public Authority of Civil Information, and which allows clients to benefit from the unique 'Express Finance' service. The e-signature allows clients to authorize the bank to view their information through Ci-net without having to report personally to the branch.

And in terms of digital advancement that Warba Bank witnessed as well, it launched a WhatsApp service that allows clients to stay

in touch with Warba Bank staff and inquire about banking operations at any time.

Warba Bank was established pursuant to Emiri decree and officially registered as an Islamic bank by the Kuwaiti central bank on 5 April, 2010. It offers a bundle of comprehensive integrated services and banking solutions that comply with the Islamic sharia jurisdiction, and such services are offered through three groups or services, namely, the Banking Group, the Company Financing Group and the Investment and Treasury Group. The bank has ten branches in strategic locations with over 400 employees working under its umbrella.

MASTERCARD HOSTS FIRST EDITION OF MENA LEADERSHIP FORUM

DUBAI: Mastercard, a leading technology company in the global payments industry, recently concluded the inaugural edition of the Mastercard MENA Leadership Forum that brought together senior banking officials from across the region for four days from 5 - 8 March, 2017, in London, UK.

Hosted by Mastercard as a customer engagement event offering key industry players a platform to explore new ideas, share the latest insights and discuss new opportunities of growth, the Forum drew attention to the digital future of the payments industry.



The packed agenda of sessions focusing on the theme, 'Building the Digital Future', was opened by Leonard Brody, the renowned Canadian entrepreneur, venture capitalist and author, with an insightful session on how the current era of innovation is impacting the world of banking and the steps banks and entrepreneurs need to take to stay competitive and relevant in today's fast-changing world.

"From gaining the most valuable insights to learning about the latest trends and developments and being part of a deeply meaningful exchange of perspectives and ideas - the first edition of the Mastercard MENA Leadership Forum has proven to be this highly productive gathering of banking officials and payment experts who together deliberated on how we need to respond to the evolution of the financial industry towards a stronger digital focus,"

said Heba Al-Tamimi - General Manager Group Retail Banking, Qatar National Bank.

"Effective partnerships between banks and leading technology providers like Mastercard are crucial to the long-term growth and development of the banking sector in the region. Events like the Mastercard MENA Leadership Forum help strengthen the industry-wide conversation on the changes impacting the long-term development of the financial sector, and help us understand how technology can best be leveraged to continuously stay ahead of the curve," said Suvo Sarkar, Senior Executive Vice President & Group Head - Retail Banking & Wealth Management, Emirates NBD.

"It is extremely important for banking professionals to understand the full extent of the digital revolution that is impacting all aspects of the wider financial industry. Mastercard's initiative to bring banking executives from across the region under one roof and initiate a dialogue on how we can capitalize on these emerging digital trends to drive greater value to our customers, is commendable," said David Aldred, MD, Treasury & Trade Solutions, MENAPT, Citibank.

"Our ability in making innovations in payments work for both our customers and consumers across markets has always been a result of successful collaborations with our partners in the region. The Mastercard MENA Leadership Forum proved to be a valuable engagement opportunity that enabled us to recognize our partners' support and also helped us gain valuable insights that will push us to equip ourselves better for the massive digital transformation shaping the industry's future course," said Khalid Elgibali, Division President for Middle East and North Africa, Mastercard.

The Forum also gave Mastercard an opportunity to honor its partners for their excellence in driving innovations in payments technology in their respective markets. Winners were recognized across ten different categories including Most Innovative Marketing Program, Most Innovative Card Acquisition Program, Best Premium Segment Solution, Best Mobile Payment Program, Best Loyalty and Rewards Program, Best SME Program, Best Program Delivery and Implementation, Most Inclusive Business Initiative, Best Multi-Party Cardholder Program and Best Commercial Card.



RENAULT AL-BABTAIN WINS BIG AT RENAULT CONVENTION IN DUBAI

AABC BRINGS HOME FIVE PRESTIGIOUS AWARDS

KUWAIT: Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al-Babtain Company (AABC), the authorized dealer of Renault vehicles in the State of Kuwait, is delighted to bring home five prestigious awards received at the Annual Convention organized by Renault Middle East (RME) in Dubai.

The highly-coveted awards were presented by senior Renault regional management to Renault Al-Babtain department managers. Renault Al-Babtain won these awards over 12 countries in the whole Middle East region like Egypt, Saudi Arabia, UAE and Qatar. Renault Al-Babtain won the 'Warranty Performance Champion' along with 'Best Customer Satisfaction' award, in recognition of its professionalism and unfaltering commitment to its customers. Service Manager at Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al-Babtain Company, was honored with the 'Best Service Manager award, while Al-Babtain Aftersales

was recognized for having the 'Best Business Development Initiative'. In addition, AABC parts department has been awarded for best parts business management of parts fulfilment rate exceeding 95% at all times. As well as, providing best aftersales care support for Renault customers.

Mohammad Shalaby, Group COO for Al-Babtain group said, "We are extremely pleased to win these awards as they are a testimony to recognizing the significant efforts Renault Al-Babtain has made across all aspects of the business, especially our efforts towards the satisfaction of our customers who are our highest priority. Customer service and business development are core components of our internal strategy and these awards have further strengthened our commitment to excellence in everything we do".

For Renault Al-Babtain, 2017 is the year of fur-

ther pushing boundaries on customer service, while proving over and again that the company is truly delivering on its promises. Senior management at Renault Al-Babtain is also highly dedicated to its employees, rewarding them for their upper career trajectory. Renault Al-Babtain encourages all its employees to work towards building a work culture that is collaborative and admired, as to always provide the best-in-class customer service that the world-class Renault brand commands.

In 1948, late Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al-Babtain established a small automotive business. Today Al-Babtain Group is a conglomerate organization located in the State of Kuwait.

Al-Babtain Group integrated honesty, integrity and dedication in all aspects of the business. The Group has established strongholds in the local, regional and international market.

ETIHAD CARGO BOOSTS FREIGHTER FLEET WITH 10TH AIRCRAFT



ABU DHABI: James Hogan, Etihad Aviation Group President and Chief Executive Officer (right) with Alexandre de Juniac, IATA Director General and CEO, at the International Air Transport Association's World Cargo Symposium in Abu Dhabi yesterday.

ABU DHABI: Etihad Cargo has taken delivery of its 10th freighter further boosting Etihad Airways' fastest growing division. The addition of an A330F takes its Airbus freighter fleet to five, joining five Boeing 777 freighters that collectively serve 42 destinations worldwide.

The delivery follows 12 months of sustained growth for the carrier, which launched 10 new freighter routes and carried 602,026 tons of cargo - a moderate increase on 2015. This growth was highlighted by James Hogan, Etihad Aviation Group President and Chief Executive Officer, as he delivered the welcome address on the opening day of the IATA World Cargo Symposium (WCS) at the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre. WCS runs until March 16.

"Etihad Cargo is a \$1 billion business, which makes it one of the world's most successful air cargo operations," he said, noting that it had become the fastest growing division of Etihad Airways since it was founded in 2004, a year after the airline itself. Hogan acknowledged the uncertain global outlook as factors such as capacity outpacing demand and China's transition to a service industry continued to impact the industry. He

said that Etihad Cargo was well positioned to maximize opportunities in 2017 thanks largely to the company's investment in partnerships.

"The Etihad Aviation Group's seven equity partner airlines form the world's sixth largest cargo group and wider partnerships are playing an increasing role in our business. We are working with Avianca to extend our reach in the important market of South America; with AirBridge Cargo in the US, Middle East and Moscow for the oil and gas industry; while our Preferred Handling Partner program builds strong partnerships and ensures consistent quality and service across the Etihad Cargo network."

Hogan also recognized the role Abu Dhabi and the Gulf region played in the global economy, and how its geocentricity put it in the perfect position to connect mature, expanding and emerging markets via Etihad's Abu Dhabi home. He pointed out that, for this reason, several major industry players including FedEx, UPS and DHL had strong Gulf hubs to achieve their business goals.

Etihad Cargo operates to 124 destinations from its Abu Dhabi hub with a mix of freighter and belly capacity.

GULF BANK ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF AL-DANAH DAILY DRAWS

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank held its Al-Danah daily draws on 12 March 2017 announcing the names of its winners for the week of 5 March - 9 March 2017. The Al-Danah daily draws include draws each and every working day for two prizes of KD 1,000 per winner.

The winners are:

(Sunday 5/3): Hashem Mohammed Khair Al-Assaf, Ayman Ahmed Abdulhameed Hassan (Monday 6/3): Maha Yousef Fareeh Al-Khayouti, Fulla Abdullah Nawaf (Tuesday 7/3): Ahmad Hasan Reda Dashti, Alya Ganem Al-Reshedi (Wednesday 8/3): Maytham Abdulrada Taher Al-Wazan, Shahin Hoseingoli Aghazadeh Benab (Thursday 9/3): Hamid Reza Fathalla Gholami, Mohammed Rashed Mohammed Al-Mary

Gulf Bank's Al-Danah 2017 draw lineup includes daily draws (2 winners per working day and each receive KD1000). Al-Danah's 1st



Quarterly draw for the prize of KD200,000 will be held on 30 March, the 2nd quarterly draw for the prize of KD250,000 will be held on 29 June and the 3rd quarterly draw for the prize of 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 year to 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 who open an account and/ or deposit more will enter the draw within two days. To take part in the Al-Danah 2017 upcoming quarterly and yearly draws, customers must have an Al-Danah account containing at least KD 200; customers can visit one of Gulf Bank's 56 branches.

CHINA INDUSTRIAL OUTPUT OFFERS SIGN OF STABILITY

BEIJING: China's industrial output growth held steady in January and February, official data showed yesterday, providing further evidence of stability in the world's second-largest economy despite slower retail sales growth.

Industrial output rose 6.3 percent year-on-year in the first two months of 2017, according to the National Bureau of Statistics, slightly beating the 6.2 forecast in a Bloomberg News survey.

Retail sales, a key indicator of consumer spending, increased 9.5 percent over the period, down from 10.2 percent in the same period last year.

Sales grew 10.9 percent in December. Fixed-asset investment, a gauge of infrastructure spending, rose 8.9 percent year-on-year in January-February.

Real estate investment increased a surprising 8.9 percent in the period, up from 3.0 percent over the same stretch last year, despite tighter regulations to thwart speculators and guard against a feared property bubble. Most data are "quite positive" and "apparently improving", NBS spokesman Sheng Laiyun said in a news briefing.

The figures are the latest in a slew of

upbeat data including positive fourth-quarter 2016 economic growth, and encouraging February results on factory activity, imports, and factory gate prices.

"China's economy is opening the year with a good start, although pro-growth policies to shore up consumption in coming months are needed," Gao Yuwei, a researcher at the Bank of China Ltd.'s Institute of International Finance, told Bloomberg News. "Fixed-asset investment got a boost largely because of infrastructure projects," Tommy Xie, economist at OCBC Bank, told Bloomberg, adding that "the proactive fiscal policy is playing out well".

However, rapid investment growth to boost the economy "will be difficult to sustain given clear signals that the fiscal and monetary policy stance will be less supportive this year", Julian Evans-Pritchard of Capital Economics said in a note. Premier Li Keqiang announced a 2017 official economic growth target of "around 6.5 percent, or higher if possible" in a government work report delivered to the National People's Congress on March 5, citing even "more complicated and graver situations" facing China this year. — AFP

NIGERIAN AIMS PASS 2017 BUDGET BY MARCH END

ABUJA: Nigerian lawmakers aim to pass the 2017 budget by the end of March, the president of the upper house of parliament said yesterday, following a meeting with President Muhammadu Buhari.

The budget lays out plans to pull Africa's largest economy out of its first recession for 25 years, largely prompted by low global prices for the oil it produces and by attacks on energy facilities in the OPEC member's Niger Delta oil hub last year. Buhari, a 74-year-old former military ruler who has faced rising disenchantment over his handling of Nigeria's economy, presented his record 7.298 trillion naira (\$23.21 billion) budget to lawmakers in December.

"This month is our deadline to finish work on the budget and return it to the executive," Senate President Bukola Saraki said after the meeting with Buhari and the head of parliament's lower house. "We are working very hard to ensure we meet that deadline." The budget must be agreed by lawmakers before the president can sign it into law. The 2016 budget became law in May last year after being delayed by several weeks of wrangling between the government and the Senate.

Saraki said he had also briefed Buhari at their meeting on the activities of parliament during the president's lengthy absence due to illness. Buhari resumed his presidential duties on Monday after spending seven weeks in Britain on medical leave for an undisclosed ailment. Saraki said the issues discussed with Buhari had included 'stability in the Niger Delta' and the \$1 billion Eurobond issued by Nigeria last month. — Reuters

CANON BOOSTS WEST AFRICA PRESENCE THROUGH SENEGAL COLLABORATIONS

KUWAIT: Canon Central and North Africa (CCNA) set another significant milestone in its overall Africa growth strategy by strengthening its presence in Senegal through partnerships with two major dealers, DEVEA and Electronic Corporation.

The Senegal announcement is part of a wider CCNA strategy to enhance its business in the Africa continent and strengthen its in-country presence. The collaboration with long-standing and reputed dealers in Senegal underlines Canon's focus on reinforcing the company's 'closer to customer' strategy in the West Africa region and strengthening its regional presence.

Canon will continue to provide value-added on-ground marketing and sales support to both partners in Senegal and meet customer demand in the rapidly evolving market for both its business and consumer segments. With a growing distribution network in Senegal that is still at a nascent stage, CCNA hopes to further develop and strengthen this network to cover the market through its diverse product portfolio. Small and Medium Businesses (SMB) form a huge segment of the Senegalese economy and there is an ongoing call by different local and international stakeholders to empower and support this sector to contribute to inclusive economic development. Canon's presence in Senegal will

therefore provide the company an opportunity to gain in-depth reach across Africa, and to better understand the changing market dynamics and customer demand.

Roman Troedthandl, Managing Director of CCNA, said: "Senegal is one of the fast advancing countries within West Africa with a rapidly growing young population and emergence of Small and Medium Businesses across the country. CCNA's goal is to penetrate this market and maximize the potential which it has to offer. "We will further enhance our network of distributors and partners in Senegal as we continue to work on strengthening our overall presence in the African region before we eventually open our first B2B & PV showroom in the country. Our partnership with DEVEA and Electronic Corporation will assist us to tap the huge potential offered by IT and consumer electronic dealer channels through channel penetration and visibility enhancement at key retail stores."

DEVEA and Electronic Corporation are among the most recognized distributors in the West and Central Africa region due to their wide channel reach, financial capabilities and IT market knowledge.

The partnership with Electronic Corporation will see Canon launch its first Photo Video (PV) showroom later

this year. It will also enable the opening of Senegal's first PV service centre for Canon Photo Video products in 2017. Additionally, Electronic Corporation will help CCNA in gaining market leadership for DSLR cameras. CCNA, through partnering with DEVEA, will position the brand as one of the preferred brands in the SMB sector with a wide range of inkjet and laser printers that is expected to be launched in Senegal in the coming months. CCNA will strongly participate in Government tenders for our Mid High range of Laser printers through a strong network of SI / VARs.

Visibility

CCNA will also hire a dedicated Channel Account Manager to take care of channel partners in ensuring the visibility of Canon products.

Troedthandl further added: "Through these valuable local partnerships, CCNA will also look to participate in government tenders for its mid to high range of laser printers." CCNA, through partnering with DEVEA, will further enhance its B2B portfolio and provide end to end solutions that will deliver high end results to benefit Senegal's businesses and industries, and leverage its expected growth. Its offerings will range from the basic copier to its production and wide format printing solutions to fulfil the mar-



ket need in terms of scanning and archiving solutions. While CCNA extends its geographic business footprint in the country and the wider region, the organization remains committed to Senegal's socio-economic development through several community initiatives. As part of a 'Celebrate Africa' campaign, CCNA announced the start of an Africa wide online photo competition which will foster creativity among amateur photographers. In previ-

ous years, Canon, along with Dubai Cares and as part of 'Adopt a School' initiative, has constructed a school in Senegal in partnership with a non-profit organization, buildOn.

Troedthandl explained: "With our corporate philosophy of 'Kyosei', meaning 'living and working together for the common good', we will look to maintain our growth and prosperity in the region through new business initiatives while also promoting our CSR activities."



NEW YORK: Members of the Orchard City Indivisible Group recite the pledge of allegiance during a city council meeting where they would speak against the policies of President Trump. —AP

LEFTIES, TECHIES LONG AT ODDS IN SF, TEAM UP AGAINST TRUMP

SAN FRANCISCO: Before Donald Trump's election, Laurence Berland viewed political protest as a sort of curiosity. He was in a good place to see it: San Francisco's Mission District, once an immigrant enclave in the country's heartland of radicalism that is increasingly populated by people like him - successful tech workers driving up rents while enjoying a daily commute to Silicon Valley on luxury motor coaches.

Berland regarded the activism of his adopted city with a mix of empathy and amusement, checking out Occupy Wall Street demonstrations and protests against the gentrification of his own neighborhood. But now there is less distance between him and activists on the street.

On a recent day Berland stood with about 100 others - from software engineers like himself to those who work in tech company cafeterias - outside a downtown museum for a rally against President Trump. A clipboard-carrying organizer approached Berland to ask if he wanted to join a network of grassroots activists, but Berland waved him away. He had already signed up.

In the place that fought against the Vietnam War and for gay rights and, more recently, has been roiled by dissent over the technology industry's impact on economic inequality, an unlikely alliance has formed in the left's resistance against Trump. Old-school, anti-capitalist activists and new-school, free-enterprise techies are pushing aside their differences to take on a common foe.

For years, these two strands of liberal America have been at each other's throats. There've been protests against evictions of those who can't afford the Bay Area's ever-soaring rents. And think back, not so long ago, to the raucous rallies to block those fancy buses shuttling tech workers from city neighborhoods to the Silicon Valley campus of Google, where Berland once worked. Cat Brooks, a Black Lives Matter

activist in Oakland, has seen the toll the tech industry has taken on some. Her daughter's elementary school teacher just moved to a distant suburb after her rent skyrocketed, and Brooks thinks more tech money must find its way into local communities. She nevertheless welcomes the infusion of new energy to the protest arena.

Travel ban

"It's not about the business of we were here first," Brooks said. "We're about the business of how can we support? Division at this time is not helpful." The tech industry opposition started when Trump imposed his initial travel ban on immigrants and refugees from seven majority Muslim nations. The industry prides itself on its openness to immigrants, who comprise about one-quarter of the US technology and science workforce and include the founders of iconic institutions.

Nearly 100 tech companies, including Google, Facebook and Uber, filed a court brief urging suspension of the ban, while Google co-founder Sergey Brin, a Russian immigrant, joined protests at San Francisco International Airport. That was followed by an unprecedented companywide walkout at Google and now, on March 14, nationwide rallies are planned for a "Tech Stands Up" day of protest.

"People whose pedigree is knocking on doors and calling representatives and waving signs are getting together with people who design apps," said Ka-Ping Yee, a software engineer from Canada who is a legal permanent resident of the US and who works at a startup to help immigrants send cash home. "People are working with people who do really, really different things because they realize it's an emergency." After the election he helped create an online pledge, signed by thousands of technology workers, against building databases for any potential Muslim registries or to aid deportations of immigrants. — AP

JUSTICE DEPT ASKS FOR MORE TIME ON WIRETAPPING PROOF

TRUMP'S UNPROVEN ASSERTION ON 'SURVEILLANCE'

WASHINGTON: Facing a Monday deadline, the Justice Department asked lawmakers for more time to provide evidence backing up President Donald Trump's unproven assertion that his predecessor wiretapped his New York skyscraper during the election. The request came as the White House appeared to soften Trump's explosive allegation.

The House intelligence committee said it would give the Justice Department until March 20 to comply with the evidence request. That's the date of the committee's first open hearing on the investigation into Russia's interference in the 2016 election and possible contacts between Trump associates and Russia. A spokesman for the committee's Republican chairman said that if the Justice Department doesn't meet the new deadline, the panel might use its subpoena power to gather information.

"If the committee does not receive a response by then, the committee will ask for this information during the March 20 hearing and may resort to a compulsory process if our questions continue to go unanswered," said Jack Langer, a spokesman for Rep. Devin Nunes, R-Calif.

Trump's assertions have put his administration in a bind. Current and former administration officials have been unable to provide any evidence of the Obama administration wiretapping Trump Tower, yet the president's aides have been reluctant to publicly contradict their boss.

White House spokesman Sean Spicer tried to clarify Trump's comments on Monday, saying the president wasn't using the word wiretapping literally, noting that Trump had put the term in quotation marks. "The president used the word wiretap in quotes to mean broadly surveillance and other activities," Spicer said. He also suggested Trump wasn't accusing former President Barack Obama specifically, but instead referring to the actions of the Obama administration.

Reviewing request

Trump himself has not commented on the matter since his March 4 tweets, in which he said he had "just found out that Obama had my 'wires tapped' in Trump Tower just before the victory." He also wrote: "Is it legal for a sitting President to be 'wiretapping' a race for president?"

In two other tweets, Trump described Obama tapping his phones, but did not put the phrases in quotation marks. The president's accusations against Obama came amid numerous political questions surrounding his associates' possible ties to Russia. The FBI is investigating Trump associates' contacts with Russia during the election, as are House and Senate intelligence com-



WASHINGTON: White House press secretary Sean Spicer speaks during the daily press briefing at the White House in Washington on Monday. —AP

mittees. The White House has asked those committees to also investigate Trump's unverified wiretapping allegations against Obama. The House committee has turned the matter back on the Trump administration, setting the Monday deadline for the Justice Department to provide evidence. In a response Monday evening, the Justice Department said it needed extra time to "review the request in compliance with the governing legal authorities and to determine what if any responsive documents may exist." Other congressional committees are also pushing the administration to clarify Trump's claims.

Sens. Lindsey Graham, R-SC, and Sheldon Whitehouse, D-R.I., asked Acting Deputy Attorney General Dana Boente and FBI Director James Comey to produce the paper trail created when the Justice Department's criminal division secures warrants for wiretaps. The senators, who head the Senate Judiciary Committee's crime and terrorism subcommittee, are seeking warrant applications and court orders, which they said can be scrubbed to protect secret intelligence sources and methods.

Trump's critics have slammed the president for making the wiretapping claim on his Twitter account without evidence. Wiretapping a US citizen would require special permission from a court, and Trump as president would have the ability to declassify that information. Sen. John

McCain, an influential Republican, said Sunday: "I think the president has one of two choices: either retract or to provide the information that the American people deserve."

"If his predecessor violated the law, President Obama violated the law, we have got a serious issue here, to say the least," McCain said. Comey has privately urged the Justice Department to dispute Trump's claim but has not come forward to do so himself. James Clapper, who was Obama's director of national intelligence, has said that nothing matching Trump's claims had taken place. White House counselor Kellyanne Conway sidestepped questions about the lack of proof Monday, saying she was "not in the job of having evidence." "That's what investigations are for," Conway told CNN's "New Day." "The president is pleased that the House and Senate intelligence committees have agreed that this should be part of the investigation that already exists about Russia and the campaign, an investigation that apparently has gone nowhere so far."

In a weekend interview with the Bergen Record, a newspaper in her home state of New Jersey, Conway appeared to point toward the recent WikiLeaks release of nearly 8,000 documents that reportedly reveal secrets about the CIA's tools for breaking into targeted computers, cellphones and even smart TVs. — AFP

AFRICAN GOVTS LEARN TO BLOCK THE INTERNET, BUT AT A COST

KAMPALA: The mysterious Facebook blogger kept dishing up alleged government secrets. One day it was a shadowy faction looting cash from Uganda's presidential palace with impunity. The next was a claim that the president was suffering from a debilitating illness.

For authorities in a country that has seen just one president since 1986, the critic who goes by Tom Voltaire Okwalinga is an example of the threat some African governments see in the exploding reach of the internet - bringing growing attempts to throttle it.

Since 2015 about a dozen African countries have had wide-ranging internet shutdowns, often during elections. Rights defenders say the blackouts are conducive to carrying out serious abuses. The internet outages also can inflict serious damage on the economies of African countries that desperately seek growth, according to research by the Brookings Institution think tank. Uganda learned that lesson. In February 2016, amid a tight election, authorities shut down access to Facebook and Twitter as anger

swelled over delayed delivery of ballots in opposition strongholds.

During the blackout, the police arrested the president's main challenger. Over \$2 million was shed from the country's GDP in just five

days of internet restrictions, the Brookings Institution said.

The shutdowns also have "potential devastating consequences" for education and health, says the Mozilla Foundation, an organiza-

tion founded by a mobile phone magnate that monitors trends in African governance. As more countries gain the technology to impose restrictions, rights observers see an urgent threat to democracy.

"The worrying trend of disrupting access to social media around polling time puts the possibility of a free and fair electoral process into serious jeopardy," said Maria Burnett, associate director for the Africa division of Human Rights Watch. In the past year, internet shutdowns during elections have been reported in Gabon, Republic of Congo and Gambia, where a long-time dictator cut off the internet on the eve of a vote he ultimately lost. In Uganda, where the opposition finds it hard to organize because of a law barring public meetings without the police chief's authorization, the mysterious blogger Okwalinga is widely seen as satisfying a hunger for information that the state would like to keep secret. His allegations, however, often are not backed up with evidence. It is widely believed that Uganda's government has spent millions trying to unmask Okwalinga. — AP



ADDIS ABABA: In this file photo, Ethiopian men read newspapers and drink coffee at a cafe in Addis Ababa. Since 2015 there have been wide-ranging internet shutdowns in about a dozen African countries, often during elections, and the trend worries rights defenders who say such blackouts are conducive to carrying out serious abuses against civilians. —AP

FACEBOOK SAYS ITS DATA CAN'T BE USED FOR 'SURVEILLANCE'

NEW YORK: Facebook is prohibiting developers from using the massive amount of data it collects on users for surveillance. This includes using such data to monitor activists and protesters.

The company said Monday that it is making an existing policy "explicit." Facebook says it has already taken action against developers who created or marketed tools meant to be used for surveillance. It says it wants to "be sure everyone understands the underlying policy and how to comply." Last fall, the American Civil Liberties Union obtained records that Facebook and its Instagram service provided user data access to Geofeedia, which develops a monitoring product marketed to law enforcement. The ACLU said at the time that while both Instagram and Facebook cut off access after finding out about this, Facebook did not have a "public policy specifically prohibiting developers" from taking user data for surveillance. The new prohibition states that developers - who get access to user data from Facebook to create apps - should protect "the information you receive from us

against unauthorized access, use, or disclosure. For example, don't use data obtained from us to provide tools that are used for surveillance."

The ACLU report says the data the companies provided to Geofeedia included only public posts, not those that users restricted to just friends or in some other way. But such access to Facebook data is still valuable to third parties because it would be very difficult to collect and comb through all the stuff on their own.

According to the ACLU, Facebook had provided Geofeedia with access to a data feed called the "Topic Feed API," which is supposed to be a tool for advertisers. But Geofeedia could use it to obtain a feed of public Facebook posts that mentioned a specific topic, place or event - for example, "monitor hashtags used by activists and allies, or target activist groups as 'overt threats,'" Matt Cagle, attorney for the ACLU of Northern California, wrote last October. Facebook terminated this access nearly a month earlier after being notified about it by the ACLU. —AP

CDC: DON'T DONATE SPERM IN 3 FLORIDA COUNTIES DUE TO ZIKA

NEW YORK: Men from three Florida counties shouldn't donate sperm because of a small risk of spreading Zika, US health officials said Monday. The guidance had previously applied to Miami-Dade County, the only place in Florida where there's evidence the virus was spread by mosquitoes. But infections were reported in people in South Florida who couldn't clearly be linked to Miami-Dade. On Monday, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said the advice should extend to two counties north of Miami - Broward and Palm Beach. The recommendation applies to men who lived or traveled in those counties since June 15.

Zika is mainly spread by mosquito bites but it can also be spread through sex. People can be infected without getting sick, and the virus can remain in semen for months. There is no evidence of a pregnant woman being infected by Zika through a sperm donation, and such a risk is considered low, CDC officials said. Infection during pregnancy can lead to severe brain-related birth defects.

The Food and Drug Administration regulates sperm donations, and previously advised sperm banks they shouldn't accept donors if they had been

diagnosed with Zika or had been to an area with widespread Zika within the past six months. Sperm banks should consider the CDC's new advice discouraging donations from men in the three counties, an FDA spokeswoman said. There are 12 sperm donor banks in the three south Florida counties, CDC officials said. While blood donations can be tested for Zika, there's not a good test for semen, according to the FDA.

The last case of mosquito transmission of Zika in Florida was in December. But officials think it's possible the bugs will start spreading it again this summer. Some 221 people got Zika from mosquitoes in the continental US last year, most in the Miami area. There were six cases in Texas. There's no evidence that mosquitoes in Broward or Palm Beach were spreading it, said Dr. Denise Jamieson, who is leading CDC's Zika emergency efforts. She said officials suspect the local infections occurred in Miami-Dade. "A lot of times people may not realize when they crossed the county line," she said. Since a large outbreak in Brazil, would-be moms and their sex partners have been told to avoid travel to Zika areas, use condoms or abstain from sex. — AP



BRAZIL: In this file photo, an *Aedes aegypti* mosquito known to carry the Zika virus, is photographed through a microscope at the Fiocruz institute in Recife, Pernambuco state, Brazil. — AP



BANGKOK, Thailand: Thai Custom officers display seized rhino horns during a press conference at the customs office in Suvarnabhumi airport, Bangkok yesterday. — AP photos

THAI CUSTOMS SEIZES 21 RHINO HORNS WORTH \$5 MILLION

BANGKOK: Thai authorities said yesterday they have seized 21 unusually large rhinoceros horns worth almost \$5 million that were smuggled from Ethiopia. The bags carrying the horns were discovered last Friday in a random customs search at

Bangkok's main airport, the Thai Customs Department said in a statement. They discovered the horns, weighing almost 50 kilograms (110 pounds), inside hard-shelled luggage bags originating from Addis Ababa. The bags' owners, two

Thai women who had arrived on separate flights but went to claim the luggage, fled as officers searched their bags and have not been apprehended, the statement said. Arrest warrants have been issued for them.

Customs officials said the horns are unusually large and pristine. "The rhino horns we confiscated this time are the most beautiful horns we've ever seized from this airport," the statement said. It's the second time in two years that rhino horns have been seized at the airport, with the previous haul being worth around \$600,000. Rhinoceros horns, blood, skin and urine are in high demand across Asia for their use in traditional Chinese medicine. Demand for the products has soared in Asia, particularly Vietnam, where they are considered a luxury item, according to the wildlife trade monitoring network TRAFFIC.

"These horns are huge, which means they came from big rhinos," said Somkiat Soontornpitakkool, director of the division in charge of protecting wildlife at the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment. The World Wildlife Fund says very few rhinos survive outside national parks and reserves, and some species are endangered. Experts who examined the smuggled horns concluded that the poachers who obtained them must have killed the rhinos. It's possible to cut off a rhinoceros' horn without killing it, but the dehorning process poses risks to their health. — AP



BANGKOK, Thailand: Thai Custom officers display seized rhino horns during a press conference.

FDA OKS NEW NOVARTIS DRUG FOR TYPE OF ADVANCED BREAST CANCER

TRENTON, New Jersey: US regulators have approved a new drug as an initial treatment for postmenopausal women with a type of advanced breast cancer. The drug, called Kisqali, is a pill that works to slow the spread of cancer by blocking two proteins that can stimulate growth and division of cancer cells. It's for women who have metastatic breast cancer known as HR+/HER2-.

The US Food and Drug Administration confirmed the drug's approval on Monday. Swiss drugmaker Novartis AG, which developed the treatment, said there are no firm statistics on how many US patients get this type of breast cancer. "This is an important therapy for these patients" who have limited options, said Dr. Vas Narasimhan, chief medical officer and head of drug development at Novartis, which has its U.S. headquarters in East Hanover, New Jersey.

Kisqali (KISS'-kahl-lee) is taken along with an older cancer drug called letrozole that works differently. Kisqali, part of the drug class called kinase inhibitors, is taken daily for three weeks, followed by a one-week break. Meanwhile, patients also take either letrozole or another aromatase inhibitor, depending on the characteristics of their disease, for the entire four-week cycle. A four-week supply of Kisqali, or 21 pills, will have a list price of

\$10,950 for the strongest dose - 600 milligrams. The 400-milligram dose will cost \$8,760 and the 200-milligram dose \$4,380, Novartis said.

Patients often need to switch doses and the smaller doses will save patients and insurance companies money. Novartis said it will offer patients several types of financial assistance and many won't have to make copayments. A study of 668 women funded by Novartis found that Kisqali and letrozole together reduced the risk of death or the cancer worsening by 44 percent, compared to those receiving only letrozole. Kisqali, known chemically as ribociclib, can have side effects, ranging from potentially fatal abnormal heartbeat, serious liver problems and severe infections to nausea, hair loss and fatigue. It cannot be taken by women who are pregnant or breastfeeding. Novartis developed Kisqali along with Astex Pharmaceuticals, a subsidiary of Japan's Otsuka Group.

Novartis said it's conducting additional Kisqali studies in combination with other treatments, and in women who haven't yet begun menopause. Two are late-stage studies, usually the last stage before seeking regulatory approval, and results should be available late this year or early next year, the company said. — AP

CHINA SAYS REBUILDING MAJOR WESTERN BUDDHIST LEARNING CENTER

BEIJING: China is rebuilding a major center of Tibetan Buddhist learning in the country's west to improve safety and public health, a local official and state media said yesterday, refuting reports last year that the complex was being demolished and its residents evicted. The sprawling Larung Gar complex had been home to thousands of monks, nuns and laypeople studying the religion's more esoteric aspects. Overseas monitoring groups said last year that buildings were being torn down in an apparent attempt to drive off those staying there.

However, county government spokesman Jiang Zhiming told The Associated Press that only some buildings had been razed to clear access lanes for firefighters. He didn't say how many Buddhist faithful remained at the site, but said about 800 had been resettled in a nearby town. "The purpose of the renovation is to improve the living standard of the residents there and eliminate fire hazards," Jiang said. Work began last May and will finish this month, he said. Along with the seminary and temples, the site included a settlement made of thousands of log cabins lining the steep sides of a valley that provided accommodation for residents and visitors attending short-term study courses.

Built in 1980, the seminary had hosted around 4,000 people, but was designed "haphazardly" and grew over the years "without regard to geological risks" in the seismically active area, the official China Daily newspaper said.

Government teams previously evicted thousands of monks in 2001, but the site has swelled significantly in the years since. A fire in 2014 had destroyed about 150 dwellings but caused no deaths or injuries, China Daily said. The seminary is located in Sichuan province's Sertar county, a remote mountainous region largely off-limits to foreign media. Information from the area is almost impossible to verify.

Access to traditionally Tibetan parts of western Sichuan has been restricted since anti-government riots swept across the region in 2008

and reporters who make it to the area are usually detained and sent back to the provincial capital. More recently, the area has seen a wave of self-immolations by Tibetan clergy and laypeople protesting government suppression and calling for the return of the Dalai Lama, the exiled Tibetan spiritual leader. Also yesterday, state newspapers quoted China's hand-picked Panchen Lama, the second-highest figure in Tibetan Buddhism, calling for stricter regulation of Buddhist temples and clergy, including "fake monks." — AP



SERTAR COUNTY: In this photo two followers of Tibetan Buddhism chats near the Sertar Buddhist Institution also known as Larung Gar in Sertar county in southwest China's Sichuan province. — AP

CYSTIC FIBROSIS PATIENTS SURVIVING LONGER IN CANADA THAN US

WASHINGTON: Canadians with cystic fibrosis survive about 10 years longer than Americans with the same genetic disease, according to startling new research that raises questions about how to improve care. Monday's study suggests access to lung transplants and health insurance may play a role in the survival gap. And it comes as Congress debates health legislation that could roll back Medicaid, a safety net for about half of children and a third of adults with the lung-destroying disease.

"We're about finding the best care wherever it is and trying to understand, if Canada's got better outcomes, how do they do that so we can copy it," said Dr Bruce Marshall of the US Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, which funded the study.

More than 30,000 Americans, and 70,000 people around the world, are living with cystic fibrosis, caused by inheriting a defective gene from each parent. Sticky mucus builds up in their lungs and other organs, leading to life-threatening respiratory infections and improper digestion and nutrient absorption. Only a few decades ago, children with the disease seldom survived elementary school. Now, thanks to earlier diagnosis and improvements in treatment, more and more live into adulthood and middle age.

But the median age of survival in Canada is almost 51 - meaning half live at least that long - compared to nearly 41 for US patients, researchers reported Monday in *Annals of Internal Medicine*. "These statistics are sobering," said Dr Anne Stephenson of St. Michael's Hospital in Toronto, who led the study. Researchers analyzed data from national registries of cystic fibrosis patients in each country from 1990 to 2013.

The findings mark "a hard reality we must accept," Drs. Patrick Flume of the

Medical University of South Carolina and Donald VanDevanter of Case Western Reserve University wrote in an accompanying editorial. Neither was part of the research.

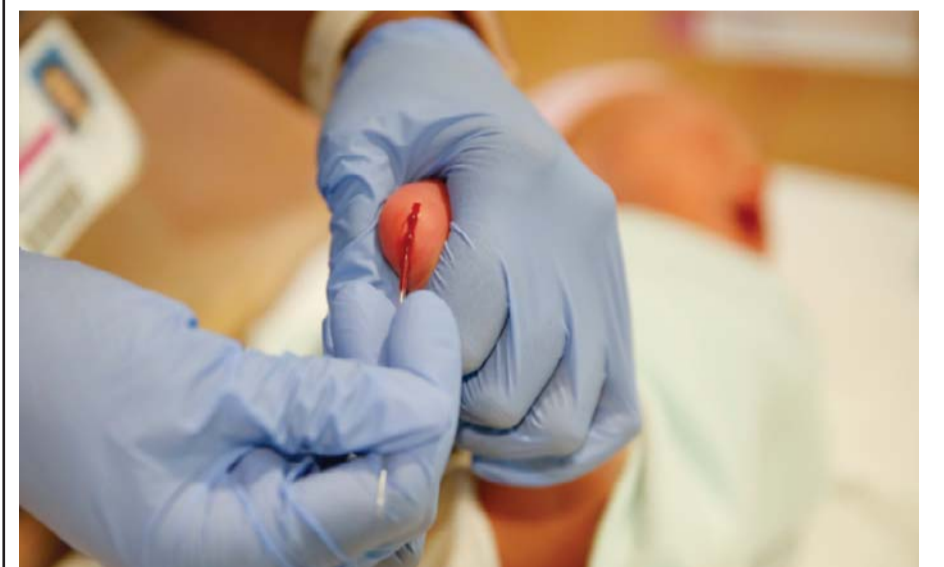
"Now we are faced with the more difficult task of trying to identify and implement solutions to bridge this survival gap, which seems to be based on fundamental differences in the two nations' health care systems," they said. Among possible causes:

A higher proportion of Canadian CF patients receive a life-prolonging lung transplant, 10.3 percent compared to 6.5 percent of US patients. It's not clear why. But the survival gap widened significantly in 2005, the year that the US introduced a new scoring system to prioritize people on the waiting list for lung transplants. Marshall said the CF Foundation is raising concerns with transplant regulators about whether nuances in that system give other lung diseases more priority.

Canada has universal health coverage. US patients with private health insurance had similar survival to their Canadian counterparts. But Canadians survived longer than US Medicaid patients and those with no insurance, the study found.

Because Medicaid gives participants important access to specialized CF care centers, Marshall said "our hunch" is that poverty is the real factor. Even with Medicaid it's still hard to take time off work, find child care and travel to a clinic.

One other factor: Canada adopted better nutritional care for cystic fibrosis in the 1970s, a decade before the US, a difference likely to be affecting survival only among older age groups. Survival gap aside, there still is no cure and "in both countries, there are still people who are very, very young who are dying," Stephenson noted. — AP



INDIANAPOLIS: In this file photo an obstetrician technician collects a blood sample from newborn in the nursery at Community Hospital North in Indianapolis. — AP

DESPITE CITY'S NEWEST RESIDENT, WASHINGTON DC PUSHES CLIMATE ACTION

LONDON: US President Donald Trump may not consider action on climate change a priority, but his newly adopted city has different ideas. In 2015, Washington DC signed a 20-year deal to get 35 percent of the electricity needed to power government buildings from a Pennsylvania wind farm - the largest wind power deal ever signed by a US city. It has since signed another 20-year agreement to buy solar power from a company that is installing solar panels on roofs and on parking lots in the city. And it's passed a law to help ensure that the benefits of solar power expansion reach the poor, the elderly and young people in need of jobs as well as wealthier business and families.

Mayor Muriel Bowser, who has run Washington DC since early 2015, says that in the face of federal backpedaling on climate change action, US cities are stepping forward - and saving money in the process. "We know in cities we can use our procurement power, our power in building codes and our bully pulpit to say we must fight climate change. And there are some very real effects on our bottom line," she said in a telephone interview with the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

The wind deal, for instance, will lock in power rates for Washington for the next 20 years, saving taxpayers an estimated \$45 million, she said. The solar deal is

expected to save \$25 million over the same period. "We regard our role as being at the forefront of moving climate change policy and fighting climate change," said Bowser, 44. "More than ever when federal policies are uncertain, we know cities can get a lot accomplished - and influence national policy."

Around the world, cities are increasingly at the forefront of action to curb climate change. Some have set ambitious emissions reduction goals, while others have pushed ahead with policies despite national-level foot dragging. Increasingly, many of the cities pushing green energy and other climate change action - including Paris, Cape Town and Sydney - are run by women.

In two years, the number of women leading large cities at the forefront of climate action has risen from 4 to 16, according to the C40 Cities network of cities committed to addressing climate change, which is organizing a conference for women leaders in New York this week. Bowser says there's good reason for women - and cities such as Washington, with large numbers of African-American residents - to take climate change risks personally. "We know the effects of climate change around the world have a disproportionate impact on women, people of color and people with lower incomes," she said. — Reuters



AUSTRALIA : This undated handout photo shows large swathes of dead mangroves in the Gulf of Carpentaria, Australia's remote north. — AFP

HUGE SWATHE OF AUSTRALIAN MANGROVES 'DIE OF THIRST'

SYDNEY: Thousands of hectares of mangroves in Australia's remote north "died of thirst" last year, scientists said yesterday, in the largest climate-related incident of its kind ever recorded. Some 7,400 hectares (18,000 acres), stretching 1,000 kilometers across the semi-arid Gulf of Carpentaria, perished, according to researchers from Australia's James Cook University. The so-called die-back - where mangroves are either dead or defoliated - was confirmed by aerial and satellite surveys, with subsequent analysis of weather and climate records leading to the conclusion that they died of thirst.

World-renowned mangrove ecologist Norm Duke, from James Cook University, said three factors came together to produce the unprecedented event. "From 2011 the coastline had experienced below-average rainfalls, and the 2015/16 drought was particularly severe," he said as the findings were published in the Journal of Marine and Freshwater Research. "Secondly the temperatures in the area were at record levels and thirdly some mangroves were left high and dry as the sea level dropped about 20 centimeters (eight inches) during a particularly strong El Nino."

El Nino is a climate phenomenon which occurs every four to five years, affecting

rainfall patterns and causing both drought and flooding. Duke said these factors were enough to produce what scientists regard as the worst instance of climate-related die-back of mangroves ever reported. "Essentially, they died of thirst," he said. Mangroves play an important ecological role, not only protecting seagrass and corals by filtering water runoff from the land, but acting as breeding grounds for fish stock and absorbing large amounts of carbon from the atmosphere.

Duke said scientists now know that mangroves, like coral reefs, are vulnerable to changes in climate and extreme weather events, with the situation being monitored closely. "The relative dominance of climate influences in this region is of critical interest to world observers of environmental responses to climate change," he said. Researchers believe the die-back took place in late November or early December with passing fisherman and scientists conducting unrelated work the first to notice it in the sparsely-populated region. Local rangers at the time reported that creatures like shellfish, which need the shade of the trees, were dying and that turtles and dugongs that are dependent on the ecosystem could soon starve. Australia is home to some seven percent of the world's mangroves. — AFP



RAISE YOUR YELLOW FLAG BEFORE IT TURNS RED.

مستشفى طيبة
Taiba Hospital

TAIBA HOSPITAL AND ENDOMETRIOSIS

'THE MILLION WOMEN MARCH FOR ENDOMETRIOSIS'

KUWAIT: As part of the global effort, we are pleased to announce that Taiba Hospital is once again leading the Middle East in the worldwide event called the Million Women March for Endometriosis.

Dr Salma Kayani, as Director of Endometriosis Centre, is pleased to formally announce that Kuwait is the only country in the Middle East and Taiba Hospital is the only Hospital in the region to formally stand up and show that they care about the health of their girls/women and are committed to treat this devastating disease called Endometriosis.

Through this article, we would like to introduce you to this ancient, but poorly understood disease, called Endometriosis. Endometriosis is a medical condition, which affects our girls and women, between the ages of 10 to 50. It can simply be described as a condition in which the lining of the uterus starts appearing outside the uterus in different shapes and sizes on different structures of the pelvis like - ovaries, tubes, bowel, vagina, urinary system etc. It causes severe pain and difficulty or inability to become pregnant by damaging the female pelvic organs. It is the disease of the female reproductive system, but, can spread, invade and cause damage to other parts of the body too.

It is one of the major causes of infertility and in extreme cases Endometriosis can develop into cancer. Worldwide 1 in 10 women suffer from Endometriosis and alarmingly this number increases to 1 in 5 women in Kuwait. This means that a significant number of women and teenage girls are suffering with this debilitating disease in Kuwait and sadly we know least about this disease!

Research has proven that Endometriosis often goes undiagnosed for 6-11 years from the initial symptoms, because the pain may be mistaken for normal menstrual pain, and it can mimic other diseases. As a result, pre-teens and



KUWAIT: Dr Salma Kayani, Director of Endometriosis Centre.

teenagers have particularly high rates of misdiagnosis. Once married, these young women suffer from even more pain and infertility for the rest of their reproductive lives. Therefore it is no surprise that Endometriosis is also called the 'Invisible Disease' - because despite its high prevalence, research has proven that it remains the least known condition worldwide.

Internationally recognized

Dr Salma Kayani, Consultant and Head of Obstetrics and Gynaecology Department and Director of Endometriosis Center at Taiba Hospital, is the Kuwait Chair for Endometriosis. She has been formally trained in the medical and surgical treatment of Endometriosis by the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG). She is internationally recognised and is an authority on Endometriosis with many international publications. She is among the pioneers

who developed Endometriosis services in the UK and has been providing this state-of-the-art service in Kuwait for the last four and a half years. In 2013, Dr Salma together with the support of Taiba Hospital Senior Management established a dedicated medical and surgical service of an international standard for the treatment of Endometriosis, which was recognized by leading world organisations. In 2014, this Endometriosis service received the 7th Annual National Award of Excellence in Healthcare presented by the Kuwait National Petroleum Company and Health Safety & Environment Agency of Kuwait.

The good news and most important thing to keep in mind is, that this disease is now treatable and therefore its devastating effects can be avoided. Now Dr Salma Kayani and the visionary management team at Taiba Hospital have made a commitment, that together, they will control and eradicate this devastating disease, seriously harming the lives of our women in Kuwait and the Middle East.

So now, the local female population of Kuwait who used to travel all the way to UK, Europe and US for their treatments, has the world-class Endometriosis service at their doorstep in their own Taiba Hospital.

This is our call to all the people of Kuwait that now it is time to "Raise Your Yellow Flag Before It Turns Red". Across the globe, millions of people are taking part to raise awareness of Endometriosis. Taiba Hospital is keeping with its tradition of patient care as its core value, has been leading this campaign in the Middle East region for the last 4 years. Dr Salma Kayani and Taiba Hospital are committed to Excellence in female healthcare.

To show your solidarity with this global effort and to increase your awareness about Endometriosis, please join us on Saturday March 25th, 2017, at Yarmouk Cultural Centre, to participate in this worldwide event - the Million Women March for Endometriosis.

CLINIC PAGE



Kuwait Times
248 33 199



Dr. Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem
ر. فهد علي المخيزيم



استشاري أطفال
M.B. Bch. FRCPC. FAAP. PEM



Al-Jabriya - Block 1A - St. 1 - Mazaya Building - 15th Floor - Clinic B - Tel.: 22269369 - Fax: 22269368



GUST Chairman Dr Salem Al-Tuhaih



Minister of Commerce Khaled Nasser Al-Roudhan and VP of Academic Affairs Dr Salah.



VP of Student Affairs Dr Sabah Qadoumi and GUST President Prof. Donal Bates.

GUST LAUNCHES 19TH ANNUAL CAREER FAIR

Gulf University for Science and Technology (GUST) opened its 19th Annual Career Fair on its campus. Held under the patronage and attendance of HE Khaled Naser Al-Roudan, Minister of Commerce & Industry (MOC) and Acting Minister of the Ministry of State for Youth Affairs, The event was also attended by GUST Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Professor Salem Al-Tuhaih, GUST top management, and also hosted close to 40 different entities from various sectors, which connected GUST students and alumni with potential career opportunities. Minister of Commerce & Industry and Acting Minister of the Ministry of State for Youth Affairs, HE Khaled Al-Roudan, said, "It is critical that Kuwait nurtures our youth's, and harbors its entrepreneurs, to prevent their immigration elsewhere. Our country is in need of capable graduates with the drive to initiate change."

This year, the opening ceremony included a panel discussion titled "Transformation and Career Opportunities for Youth in Kuwait", in which the MOC took part as one of the panel speakers alongside Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi, General Manager at the Public Authority for Youth, and Mishal Al-Subaie, Director of Recreational Activities in the Ministry of State for Youth Affairs. There were many other sessions held over the two-day period in order to give GUST students and alumni insight, knowledge, and expert opinion on employment and the local labor market.

GUST Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Professor Salem Al-Tuhaih, said, "The Career Fair provides the opportunity for our students and alumni to familiarize themselves with what the job market has to offer. The university aims to connect our students with the biggest companies and corporations in our country, and aligning their capabilities with their goals. We strive to provide the highest level of education which equips and prepares our pupils for the challenges of the modern job market."



The businesses that sponsored this year's fair were the National Bank of Kuwait, Kuwait Finance House, Gulf Bank, Al-Ahli United Bank, Zain, Ooredoo, Viva, Boubyan Bank, Alghanim Industries, Warba Bank, Commercial Bank of Kuwait, Nestle, National Investments Company, Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Centre, MGRP, and the GUST Student Association. It is also worthy to note that nearly 40 companies from a wide variety of business sectors participated in this year's career fair and include: Global Investment House, Ernst & Young, YIACO, Ahli Bank of Kuwait, KOC, ITS, Mabane, and Agility Logistics.

The various businesses were present on campus for GUST students and alumni to be able to network with and apply for internships, full-time, and volunteer positions on location. Potential employers offered their services, market insights, advice, collected CVs, helped students apply online for possible job opportunities, and conducted on-site interviews with candidates. The Career Fair is one of the most prominent events the univer-

sity organizes each year as it helps ensure a smooth transition for students into the work force after graduation. GUST continuously works on improving the fair by providing a wide variety of different employers to cater to graduates' interests and talents, as well as maintain diversity by including institutions from the education, medical, real estate development, technology, public relations, media, and industrial sector.

GUST President, Professor Donald Bates, said, "At GUST, we understand the importance of equipping our students with all the tools they need for their future, and part of that includes connecting them with the best possible group of future employers. This career fair is a golden opportunity for both students and employers alike to make meaningful connections and start their post-GUST lives on the right track." GUST also organized sessions and discussions that focused on job market inclinations. These included a "Corporate Governance and CMA Compliancy" presenta-



sion on the updates of the PIFSS law by the Public Institute for Social Security, and lastly, a presentation by AIESEC to emphasize the value of volunteering. These sessions added a

distinctive factor to the event, and proved beneficial to students and alumni. The Career Fair is a yearly event open to all GUST students and alumni for free.



Panel discussion



AL-MULLA MOTORS' EMPLOYEES CAN AVAIL SPECIAL DISCOUNTS AT SHIFA AL-JAZEERA MEDICAL CENTERS

Al Mulla Motors has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Shifa Al-Jazeera Medical Center, a leading medical service provider in Kuwait and the GCC. A special ceremony was held at Al-Mulla Motors Management Office at Sharq to sign and convey this MoU in presence of all Senior Management Executives.

Hisham Fakhir, Divisional General Manager, speaking on the occasion, stated that, Employee Welfare Activities are very much vital and it's a core element of our Strategic Initiatives, MoU between Al-Mulla Motors and Shifa Al-Jazeera Medical Center will enable our Automotive Division's employees and their families to avail special discounts at three Shifa Al-Jazeera Medical Centers, ie at Farwaniya, Fahaheel and Jaleeb Shuwaik, all General Managers, Group Managers and Senior Managers were present on the occasion.

Further, Hisham Fakhir, explained about the excellent support and guidance on Employee Welfare Activities from our MD, Imad Flayhan with great Consistency and Continuity along with enhanced approach. This MoU is not limited to Consultations Discounts but it's already included 25% Discounts in X-Ray's, Laboratory Tests and Other Available Medical Facilities.

Al Mulla Motors "Employee Welfare Activities" have a very excellent Length and Breadth, which covers Safety Issues, Medical Awareness to support all preventive health

measures, Staff Recognition and Appreciation, Facilities Improvements to support Individual Hygiene and Cleanliness and Sports and Physical Fitness Activities. Zubair Musliyarath, General Manager Shifa Al-Jazeera - Farwaniya, Razwan Abdul Khader, General Manager Shifa Al-Jazeera - Fahaheel and their key team members were present on MoU signing ceremony.

Aboobacker PT, General Manager - Aftersales, Ayman Jaber, General Manager - Commercial Vehicles, Mohammed S Khuzam, Group Manager - Retail & Marketing, Pradeep Kumar, Group Manager - Parts & Accessories, Ahmed Sadaah, Consultant, Yousef Haider - ASM - Fleet and Huma Parveen, Group Manager - Research & CRM, all from Al-Mulla Motors were present and extended their full support and cooperation to this noble initiative.

Syed Ifthekar Ahmed, Project Manager - Human Resources from Al-Mulla Motors and Mona Hassan Hamed, Marketing Manager from Shifa Al-Jazeera were the instrumental in fine-tuning the MoU in between Al-Mulla Motors and Shifa Al-Jazeera Medical Center. Before concluding the ceremony, all the attendees from Al-Mulla Motors and Shifa Al-Jazeera Medical Center agreed to work firmly to make this MoU as a best tool for both the parties to enrich our mutual beneficial relationship.

INFINITI AL-BABTAIN SHINES WITH INFINITI Q30 IN AN EXCLUSIVE DISPLAY AT AUK



Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al Babtain, the authorized dealer of Infiniti vehicles in the state of Kuwait displayed the All-new Infiniti Q30 on campus and shined for 2 days allowing the students to experience it. The Kuwaiti artist Yousef Al-Saleh gave the display an artistic touch through a graffiti piece of art inspired by the stylish Infiniti Q30.

The Infiniti Q30 takes Infiniti's signature design cues and evolves them into new dynamic shapes. The double-arch grille with 3D mesh, for example, has grown from the Q50, with a more fluid movement into the headlamps. The dramatic curves and turbulent lines flow up the bonnet, over the fenders and across the body line into the strong shoulder of the car.

The signature C-pillar arcs forward in a dynamic crescent shape that emphasizes motion, even when stationary. The contrast of the long, low-slung roof-line, conjuring an image of a rakish shooting brake in silhouette, and elevated stance add to the visual impact. This also adds to a sleek look that gives the impression of the car being in motion even when standing still. The balance of sculptural shapes moving past one another creates a harmonious design that can be appreciated at a glance.

On the technology front, the Infiniti Q30 delivers level of assistive technology in the segment. This includes' Around View Monitor with Moving Object Detection, Intelligent Parking Assist, Forward Collision Warning with Forward Emergency Braking and Blind Spot Warning.

A first for Infiniti and this category, the Intelligent Parking Assist is designed to work in the three most common parking situations, tight parallel parking, 90 degree backing-in and heading -in parking. Using 12 sensors in the front and rear, the system automatically steers the vehicle into place with the additional help or audio and visual warnings whilst the driver controls the brake and accelerator.

The Infiniti Q30 is available in 1.6L or 2.0L Turbo variants in a 2WD configuration. The 2.0L Turbo is also offered with an optional AWD drive train. The 2.0L Turbo engine delivers 208hp and 350Nm torque. When equipped with front-wheel drive or all-wheel drive, the highest-performing engine in the range is capable of powering the Infiniti Q30 from 0-to-100kph in 7.3 seconds.

Infiniti Al Babtain's focus has always been to bring their products closer to their customers and at important places, which provide a unique setting for customers to experience Infiniti's products at their own convenience. Infiniti is considered to be one of the leading, luxurious, elegant and attractive car brands all over the world. Infiniti vehicles are also known for their power and leading technology, which makes them one of the smartest and most developed. All these values are portrayed in the Infiniti showroom by Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al-Babtain, which gives our unique VIP customers a very lavish experience.

'LAMAR INTERNATIONAL RESTAURANTS' CELEBRATES UNFORGETTABLE SEAFOOD NIGHT EVERY THURSDAY

Millennium Hotel & Convention Center Kuwait is welcoming its guests at 'Lamar International Restaurant' - one of most prestigious buffets in the city - to celebrate its famous 'Sea Food Night' every Thursday evening from 7:30 to 11:30 p.m. The restaurant will be serving a wide range of oriental and international seafood dishes for visitors to have a great weekend break with Lamar's upscale ambiance and excellent cuisine.

Area General Manager of Millennium and Copthorne Hotels Kuwait - Dani Saleh, Said: "As part of our commitment to maintaining the highest standards of hospitality, we now invite our guests to a spectacular seafood festival at Lamar International Restaurant, where they are sure to enjoy our extraordinary selection of mouth-watering lobsters, prawns, mussels and oysters of all kinds. Lamar's premium quality seafood buffet also includes an assortment of delicious appetizers, salads and sauces".

Lamar's talented chefs will also be preparing the tastiest and most flavorsome seafood dishes in front of their guests at a fascinating live cooking station, where they can choose to add from the varied selection of spices and

toppings to offer for a more unique dining experience. Millennium Hotel & Convention Centre is one of the grandest emerging 5-star quality business hotels in the country strategically located on the 4th ring road in the heart of Al-Salmiya area, close to the main shopping malls, dining and entertainment spots around the block. It is also home to business conferences and trade exhibitions with varying capacities.

The hotel is designed for business and leisure travelers, offering 295 rooms and suites equipped with state-of-the-art technology, complimentary high speed Wi-Fi and luxury amenities. Millennium Hotel facilities also include a health club - with modern Techno-gym brand machines, an outdoor swimming pool, and sauna/steam rooms. The hotel's integrated business center offers secretarial services and comprehensive office facilities. With 3 different cuisines and a pool bar, guests are spoiled for choice when it comes to dining in the hotel's world-class restaurants.



BOULEVARD ANNOUNCES THE WINNERS OF THE 'BEST PHOTO COMPETITION'

As part of Al-Salmiya Group for Enterprise Development Company plans to support youth, encourage them and motivate their talents, the Company announced the winners of the recently concluded Boulevard's Best Photo Competition. Having received participation from many professional and amateur photographers, three winners were selected. The winners were picked based on the recommendation of the Boulevard committee which was specially setup that consisted of professional photographers and specialists.

The best photos were judged and selected based on their creativity in presenting new ideas. The three winners

enjoyed valuable gift vouchers from AAB World on 9th of March, 2017 which was presented to them by General Manager Amir William. In order to honor all the photographers who participated in this competition, Boulevard Management dedicated a special photo gallery wall located inside the Boulevard Mall which can be viewed by all the visitors. Rawan Adnan - Marketing and Leasing Manager stated that "Boulevard continues organizing various entertainment and educational activities all year around". The announcements for all the activities and the competitions hosted and organized by Boulevard is available on all our social media platforms.

SEVA KIRAN 2017 MEGA EVENT TAKES KUWAIT BY STORM

Seva Darshan Kuwait organized Seva Kiran 2017 on February 25 at the Marina Hall in Kuwait. Indian Ambassador Sunil Jain inaugurated the function which was preceded by the rendering of patriotic song Vande Matharam by over 100 members of the Seva Darshan family. This was followed by the welcome address by General Secretary T R Sanjuraj. President Ajayakumar T K presented the organization report. S Mohankumar introduced a project proposal and organizing secretary Praveen Pillai proposed a vote of thanks.

Ayob Kachery gave the felicitation speech. The first copy of the annual souvenir with 'Seva' as the theme was handed over by cultural secretary Vibheesh Thikkodi to NK Ramachandran, Chairman, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Middle East. The musical dance drama, 'Aarshakeralam' presented by over 180 artists from Seva Darshan and prominent dance schools in Kuwait, Upasana Dance Studio, Thapasya and Bhavan's Rhythmscape, was well appreciated by the audience. The two and half hour drama told the story of the personalities who led the cultural and social revolution in Kerala. The script was written by Dr Madhu Meenachil



with recording by Sreeragam Studios and direction by Seva Darshan. The 'Sounds For Seva' instrumental fusion was led by renowned percussionists Padmasree Mattanur Sakarankurru. He was joined by noted Thavil Vidhan

Karunamoorthy, vocalist Palakkad Sreeram, Flute and saxophone player Josey Allapuzha, keyboardist Prakash Ullieyri, violinist Abhijit Nair and Perunna Harikumar on the mritthangam. The event was coordinated by Veda Events Kuwait.



LAPA TO HOLD ITS THIRD CONCERT

Within the activities of the first Gulf Youth Festival, LOYAC's Academy for Performance Arts (LAPA) will hold its third concert at 8:00 pm at the Shaheed Park's Amphitheatre. The third concert will include singers Bader Al-Shu'aibi and Abdul Salam Mohammed while the third concert scheduled for tomorrow (Thursday) will be presented by the Miami band.



OSN MOVIES ACTION

- 00:30 REC 4: Apocalypse
- 02:15 Outcast
- 04:00 Kingsblade: Final Fantasy XV
- 06:00 Seventh Son
- 07:45 Die Hard
- 10:00 Golden Eye
- 12:15 Six Days Seven Nights
- 14:00 Divergent
- 16:30 Tracers
- 18:15 Tekken: Kazuya's Revenge
- 20:00 Real Steel
- 22:15 Never Back Down: No Surrender

ANIMAL PLANET HD

- 00:50 Ten Deadliest Snakes With Nigel Marven
- 01:45 Bondi Vet
- 02:40 Catching Monsters
- 03:35 Tanked
- 04:25 Escape To Chimp Eden
- 04:50 Escape To Chimp Eden
- 05:15 Gator Boys
- 06:02 Ten Deadliest Snakes With Nigel Marven
- 06:49 Catching Monsters
- 07:36 Call Of The Wildman
- 08:00 Call Of The Wildman
- 08:25 Dogs/Cats/Pets 101
- 09:15 Catching Monsters
- 10:10 Escape To Chimp Eden
- 10:35 Escape To Chimp Eden
- 11:05 Tanked
- 12:00 Dogs/Cats/Pets 101
- 12:55 Bondi Vet
- 13:50 Catching Monsters
- 14:45 Gator Boys
- 15:40 Escape To Chimp Eden
- 16:05 Escape To Chimp Eden
- 16:35 Tanked
- 17:30 Ten Deadliest Snakes With Nigel Marven
- 18:25 Restoration Wild
- 19:20 Insane Pools: Off The Deep End
- 20:15 Tanked
- 21:10 Escape To Chimp Eden
- 22:05 Restoration Wild
- 23:00 Insane Pools: Off The Deep End
- 23:55 Gator Boys

BBC FIRST

- 00:00 Doctors
- 00:35 Call The Midwife

- 05:05 How It's Made
- 05:30 Dirty Jobs
- 06:20 Mythbusters
- 07:00 Dick 'n' Dom Go Wild
- 07:25 Awesome Adventures
- 07:50 Bondi Vet
- 08:40 How It's Made
- 09:05 How It's Made
- 09:30 Prototype This
- 10:20 Mythbusters
- 11:10 Bondi Vet
- 12:00 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor
- 12:50 How It's Made
- 13:15 How It's Made
- 13:40 Dirty Jobs
- 14:30 Dick 'n' Dom Go Wild
- 14:55 Awesome Adventures
- 15:20 Mythbusters
- 16:10 Prototype This
- 17:00 Wildest Africa
- 17:50 Lost & Found With Mike & Jesse
- 18:40 What Happened Next?
- 19:05 What Happened Next?
- 19:30 How It's Made
- 19:55 How It's Made
- 20:20 Mythbusters
- 21:10 Wildest Africa
- 22:00 Lost & Found With Mike & Jesse
- 22:50 What Happened Next?
- 23:15 What Happened Next?
- 23:40 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor



- 00:10 Hank Zipzer
- 00:35 Binny And The Ghost
- 01:00 Violetta
- 01:45 The Hive
- 01:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
- 02:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
- 02:40 Hank Zipzer
- 03:05 Binny And The Ghost
- 03:30 Violetta
- 04:15 The Hive
- 04:20 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
- 04:45 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
- 05:10 Hank Zipzer
- 05:35 Binny And The Ghost
- 06:00 Violetta
- 06:45 The Hive
- 07:00 The 7D
- 07:25 Jessie
- 07:50 Jessie
- 07:55 Tsum Tsum Shorts
- 07:55 The ZhuZhus

- 06:00 Art Attack
- 06:30 Henry Hugglemonster
- 06:45 Loopydoo
- 07:00 Zou
- 07:15 Calimero
- 07:30 Loopydoo
- 07:45 Henry Hugglemonster
- 08:00 Minnie's Bow-Toons
- 08:05 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
- 08:15 Jake And The Neverland Pirates
- 08:30 Miles From Tomorrow
- 08:45 Goldie & Bear
- 08:55 The Lion Guard
- 09:20 PJ Masks
- 09:35 Jake And The Neverland Pirates
- 09:50 Doc McStuffins
- 10:00 Goldie & Bear
- 10:15 PJ Masks
- 10:30 Minnie's Bow-Toons
- 10:35 The Lion Guard
- 10:50 Sofia The First
- 11:30 Doc McStuffins
- 11:55 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
- 12:20 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
- 12:50 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
- 13:15 Gummi Bears
- 13:40 Sofia The First
- 14:10 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
- 14:35 PJ Masks
- 15:00 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
- 15:30 The Lion Guard
- 15:55 Unbungalevable
- 16:00 Sofia The First
- 16:30 Doc McStuffins
- 16:55 Goldie & Bear
- 17:20 The Lion Guard
- 17:50 PJ Masks
- 18:15 Sofia The First
- 18:40 Doc McStuffins
- 19:05 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
- 19:30 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
- 20:00 PJ Masks
- 20:30 PJ Masks
- 21:00 Unbungalevable
- 21:05 Goldie & Bear
- 21:35 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
- 22:00 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
- 22:25 Gummi Bears
- 22:55 Minnie's Bow-Toons
- 23:00 Sofia The First
- 23:30 Sofia The First
- 23:55 PJ Masks



- 00:20 Street Outlaws
- 01:10 The Wheel: Survival Games
- 02:00 Running Wild With Bear Grylls
- 02:50 Ed Stafford: Into The Unknown
- 03:40 Fast N' Loud
- 04:30 Storage Hunters

- 19:55 K.C. Undercover
- 20:20 Kickin' It
- 20:45 Mighty Med
- 21:10 Danger Mouse
- 21:40 Disney Mickey Mouse
- 21:45 Marvel's Avengers Assemble
- 22:10 Marvel Ultimate Spider-Man vs The Sinister 6
- 22:35 Booster
- 23:00 Programmes Start At 6:00am KSA



- 00:05 Botched
- 00:55 Botched
- 01:50 E! News
- 02:50 WAGS
- 03:45 WAGS
- 04:40 WAGS
- 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
- 09:10 WAGS Miami
- 10:05 WAGS Miami
- 11:00 WAGS Miami
- 12:00 E! News
- 12:15 WAGS
- 13:10 WAGS
- 14:05 WAGS
- 15:00 E! News
- 15:15 Celebrity Style Story
- 15:40 Celebrity Style Story
- 16:10 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
- 17:05 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
- 18:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
- 19:00 E! News
- 20:00 So Cosmo
- 21:00 So Cosmo
- 22:00 So Cosmo
- 23:00 E! News
- 23:15 Mariah's World



- 00:00 Man Fire Food
- 00:30 Man Fire Food
- 01:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 01:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 02:00 Man Fire Food
- 02:30 Man Fire Food
- 03:00 Chopped
- 04:00 Guy's Grocery Games
- 05:00 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics
- 05:30 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics
- 06:00 The Kitchen
- 07:00 The Pioneer Woman
- 07:30 The Pioneer Woman
- 08:00 Siba's Table: Fast Feasts
- 08:30 Siba's Table: Fast Feasts
- 09:00 The Pioneer Woman
- 09:30 The Pioneer Woman
- 10:00 The Kitchen
- 11:00 The Pioneer Woman
- 11:30 The Pioneer Woman
- 12:00 Siba's Table
- 12:30 Siba's Table
- 13:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 13:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 14:00 Chopped
- 15:00 The Kitchen
- 16:00 The Pioneer Woman
- 16:30 The Pioneer Woman
- 17:00 Chopped
- 18:00 Iron Chef America
- 19:00 Chopped
- 20:00 Food Network Star
- 21:00 Kitchen Inferno
- 22:00 Guy's Grocery Games
- 23:00 Chopped



- 00:10 The Chase
- 01:00 Emmerdale
- 01:30 Coronation Street
- 02:00 Coronation Street
- 02:30 The Jonathan Ross Show
- 03:25 Murdoch Mysteries
- 04:20 Brief Encounters
- 05:15 Broadchurch
- 06:10 The Chase
- 07:05 The Jonathan Ross Show
- 08:00 Murdoch Mysteries
- 09:00 Brief Encounters
- 10:00 Broadchurch
- 10:55 The Chase
- 11:50 The Jonathan Ross Show
- 12:45 Emmerdale
- 13:15 Coronation Street
- 13:45 Coronation Street
- 14:15 The Chase
- 15:10 The Jonathan Ross Show
- 16:00 Paul O'Grady: The Sally Army And Me
- 16:30 Paul O'Grady: The Sally Army And Me
- 17:00 Autopsy: The Last Hours Of...
- 17:50 Home Fires
- 18:45 Emmerdale
- 19:15 Coronation Street
- 19:45 Coronation Street
- 20:10 The Jonathan Ross Show
- 21:00 Paul O'Grady: The Sally Army And Me

- Me
- 21:30 Paul O'Grady: The Sally Army And Me
- 22:00 Autopsy: The Last Hours Of... Emmerdale
- 23:15 Coronation Street
- 23:40 Coronation Street



- 00:00 Hangar 1: The UFO Files
- 01:00 Patton 360
- 02:00 Cities Of The Underworld
- 03:00 America's Book Of Secrets
- 03:50 Ancient Aliens
- 04:40 Ancient Aliens
- 05:30 Hangar 1: The UFO Files
- 06:20 Patton 360
- 07:10 The Universe
- 08:00 Cities Of The Underworld
- 09:00 The Universe
- 10:00 Ancient Aliens
- 11:00 Ancient Aliens
- 12:00 Hangar 1: The UFO Files
- 13:00 Patton 360
- 14:00 Cities Of The Underworld
- 15:00 The Universe
- 16:00 Ancient Aliens
- 17:00 Ancient Aliens
- 18:00 Hangar 1: The UFO Files
- 19:00 Patton 360
- 20:00 Cities Of The Underworld
- 21:00 The Universe
- 22:00 Ancient Aliens
- 23:00 Ancient Top 10



- 00:20 Forged In Fire
- 01:10 Leepu And Pitbull
- 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 American Restoration
- 06:50 Shipping Wars
- 07:15 Shipping Wars
- 07:40 Counting Cars
- 08:05 Counting Cars
- 08:30 Pawn Stars
- 08:55 Pawn Stars
- 09:20 Storage Wars Texas
- 09:45 Storage Wars Texas
- 10:10 American Pickers
- 11:00 Hunting Hiller
- 11:50 Time Team
- 12:40 Swamp People
- 13:30 Ax Men
- 14:20 Mountain Men
- 15:10 Shipping Wars
- 15:35 Shipping Wars
- 16:00 Counting Cars
- 16:25 Counting Cars
- 16:50 Pawn Stars
- 17:15 Pawn Stars
- 17:40 Leepu And Pitbull
- 18:30 Swamp People
- 19:20 Mountain Men
- 20:10 American Pickers
- 21:00 Counting Cars
- 21:25 Car Hunters
- 21:50 Forged In Fire
- 22:40 Forged In Fire
- 23:30 American Pickers



- 00:15 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia
- 00:40 Wineroads
- 01:05 Poh & Co
- 01:30 Dog Whisperer
- 02:20 Sara's Australia Unveiled
- 02:45 Grandma's Boy
- 03:10 Testing The Menu With Nic Watt
- 03:35 Croatia's Finest
- 04:00 Rustic Adventure Argentina
- 04:25 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
- 05:20 The Great Food Revolution
- 06:15 Eat Street
- 06:40 Eat Street
- 07:10 Poh & Co
- 07:35 Dog Whisperer
- 08:30 Sara's Australia Unveiled
- 09:00 Grandma's Boy
- 09:25 Testing The Menu With Nic Watt
- 09:55 Croatia's Finest
- 10:20 Rustic Adventure Argentina
- 10:50 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
- 11:45 The Great Food Revolution
- 12:40 Route Awakening
- 13:05 Dog Whisperer
- 14:00 Sara's Australia Unveiled
- 14:30 Grandma's Boy
- 14:55 Grandma's Boy
- 15:25 Croatia's Finest
- 15:50 Rustic Adventure Argentina
- 16:20 Mega Food
- 17:15 The Great Food Revolution
- 18:10 Eat Street
- 18:35 Eat Street
- 19:05 Grandma's Boy
- 19:30 Croatia's Finest



BEACHES ON OSN OSN MOVIES HD

- 20:00 Rustic Adventure Argentina
- 20:25 Eat Street
- 20:55 Eat Street
- 21:20 The Great Food Revolution
- 22:10 Mega Food
- 23:00 Route Awakening
- 23:25 Dog Whisperer

- 18:00 Lost River
- 20:00 The Kings Of Summer
- 22:00 The Danish Girl

OSN MOVIES KIDS

- 00:45 Worms
- 02:30 Daddy I'm A Zombie
- 04:15 The Olsen Gang In Deep Trouble
- 06:00 Rugrats In Paris: The Movie
- 07:30 The Heart Of The Oak
- 09:00 Curious George
- 10:45 Worms
- 12:15 Daddy I'm A Zombie
- 14:00 The Adventures Of Don Quixote
- 16:00 Curious George
- 18:00 Sava
- 20:00 Dixie And The Zombie Rebellion
- 21:45 The Adventures Of Don Quixote
- 23:30 The Heart Of The Oak

OSN MOVIES HD

- 00:15 Fear And Loathing In Las Vegas
- 02:15 Big Fish
- 04:30 The Walk
- 06:45 A Beautiful Mind
- 09:00 Beaches
- 11:15 The Walk
- 13:45 Big
- 15:30 Invictus
- 18:00 The Color Of Money
- 20:00 The Taking Of Pelham 123
- 22:00 Insidious: Chapter 3
- 23:45 Death Race



- 00:20 Tiger Queen
- 01:10 Animals Gone Wild
- 02:00 Attack Of The Big Cats
- 02:50 Dangerous Encounters
- 03:45 Dangerous Encounters
- 04:40 Predator Fails
- 05:35 Attack Of The Big Cats
- 06:30 Dangerous Encounters
- 07:25 Dangerous Encounters
- 08:20 Predator Fails
- 09:15 Africa's Hunters
- 10:10 Wild Case Files
- 11:05 Savage Kingdom
- 12:00 Shark Kill Zone
- 12:55 Snake Underworld
- 13:50 Dangerous Encounters
- 14:45 Dangerous Encounters
- 15:40 Predator Fails
- 16:35 Africa's Hunters
- 17:30 Wild Case Files
- 18:25 Savage Kingdom
- 19:20 Dangerous Encounters
- 20:10 Predator Fails
- 21:00 Africa's Hunters
- 21:50 Wild Case Files
- 22:40 Savage Kingdom
- 23:30 Shark Kill Zone

OSN MOVIES HD FAMILY

- 01:00 Emma's Chance
- 03:00 D3: The Mighty Ducks
- 05:00 The Wild Thornberys Movie
- 07:00 Hercules (1997)
- 09:00 The Hunchback Of Notre Dame II
- 10:15 Chicken Little
- 11:45 The Wild Thornberys Movie
- 13:30 The Hunchback Of Notre Dame II
- 15:00 White Fang
- 17:00 Inside Out
- 19:00 Beyond The Mask
- 21:00 Batman Unlimited: Animal Instincts
- 22:30 White Fang



- 00:20 The Day I Almost Died
- 01:10 Monsters Inside Me
- 02:00 My Big Fat Fabulous Life
- 02:25 Say Yes To The Dress: Bridesmaids
- 02:50 Love At First Swipe
- 03:15 Cake Boss
- 03:35 Little People, Big World
- 04:20 Little People, Big World
- 04:45 Little People, Big World
- 05:10 Toddlers & Tiaras
- 06:00 Ultimate Shopper
- 06:50 Oprah: Where Are They Now?
- 07:40 Iyana: Fix My Life
- 08:30 Little People, Big World
- 08:55 Little People, Big World
- 09:20 Kate Plus 8
- 10:10 Love At First Swipe
- 10:35 Cake Boss
- 11:00 My Big Fat Fabulous Life
- 11:25 Say Yes To The Dress: Bridesmaids
- 11:50 Ultimate Shopper
- 12:40 Little People, Big World
- 13:30 Cake Boss
- 13:55 Cake Boss
- 14:20 Designer Darlings
- 15:10 Toddlers & Tiaras
- 16:00 Little People, Big World
- 16:25 Little People, Big World
- 16:50 Kate Plus 8
- 17:40 Love At First Swipe
- 18:05 Cake Boss
- 18:30 Oprah: Where Are They Now?
- 19:20 My Big Fat Fabulous Life
- 19:45 Say Yes To The Dress: Bridesmaids
- 20:15 Ultimate Shopper

OSN MOVIES HD COMEDY

- 00:00 Adventures Of A Pizza Guy
- 02:00 A Merry Christmas Miracle
- 04:00 Perfect Match
- 06:00 Twins
- 08:00 A Merry Christmas Miracle
- 10:00 Perfect Match
- 12:00 Twins
- 14:00 Big Ass Spider!
- 16:00 Take Care
- 18:00 Pixels
- 20:00 The Invention Of Lying
- 22:00 Tim And Eric's Billion Dollar Movie

OSN MOVIES FESTIVAL

- 01:00 Waking Life
- 02:45 Very Good Girls
- 04:15 Oliver's Deal
- 06:00 No God No Master
- 08:00 Mood Indigo
- 10:15 The Fold
- 12:00 Land Of Mine
- 14:00 Half Of A Yellow Sun
- 16:00 Tracks



OUTCAST ON OSN MOVIES ACTION

- 01:35 The Level
- 02:25 Ripper Street
- 03:20 Orphan Black
- 04:05 Doctors
- 04:35 Doctors
- 05:05 New Tricks
- 06:00 Doctors
- 06:30 Doctors
- 07:00 Holby City
- 07:55 Father Brown
- 08:45 Doctor Who
- 09:35 New Tricks
- 10:30 Doctors
- 11:00 Doctors
- 11:30 Father Brown
- 12:20 Doctor Who
- 13:10 New Tricks
- 14:10 Doctors
- 14:45 Doctors
- 15:20 Father Brown
- 16:10 Doctor Who
- 17:05 New Tricks
- 18:00 Doctors
- 18:30 Me & Mrs Jones
- 19:05 Father Brown
- 20:00 Poldark
- 21:00 Last Tango In Halifax
- 21:55 DCI Banks
- 22:45 DCI Banks
- 23:35 Doctors

- 08:20 Elena Of Avalor
- 08:45 Bunk'd
- 09:10 Stuck In The Middle
- 09:35 Wizards Of Waverly Place
- 10:00 Wizards Of Waverly Place
- 10:25 A.N.T. Farm
- 10:50 A.N.T. Farm
- 11:15 Good Luck Charlie
- 11:40 Good Luck Charlie
- 12:05 Shake It Up
- 12:30 Shake It Up
- 12:55 Disney Mickey Mouse
- 13:00 Welcome To The Ronks
- 13:15 Gravity Falls
- 13:40 Hank Zipzer
- 14:05 Star Darlings
- 14:10 Austin & Ally
- 14:35 Jessie
- 15:00 Bunk'd
- 15:25 Kirby Buckets
- 15:50 Sunny Bunnies
- 15:55 The ZhuZhus
- 16:20 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
- 16:45 Elena Of Avalor
- 17:10 Stuck In The Middle
- 17:35 Descendants Wicked World
- 17:40 Girl Meets World
- 18:05 Bizaardvark
- 18:30 Bunk'd
- 18:55 Best Friends Whenever
- 19:20 Disney Mickey Mouse
- 19:25 The Next Step
- 19:50 Austin & Ally
- 20:15 Star Darlings
- 20:20 Shake It Up
- 20:45 Backstage
- 21:10 Liv And Maddie
- 21:35 Cracked
- 21:40 Dog With A Blog
- 22:05 Best Friends Whenever
- 22:30 Jessie
- 22:55 Tsum Tsum Shorts
- 23:00 Kirby Buckets
- 23:25 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
- 23:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch

- 05:00 How Do They Do It?
- 05:30 How Do They Do It?
- 06:00 Outback Truckers
- 06:50 Street Outlaws
- 07:40 Fast N' Loud
- 08:30 The Island With Bear Grylls
- 09:20 Storage Wars Canada
- 09:45 How Do They Do It?
- 10:10 How Do They Do It?
- 10:35 The Wheel: Survival Games
- 11:25 Running Wild With Bear Grylls
- 12:15 Ed Stafford: Into The Unknown
- 13:05 How Do They Do It?
- 13:30 Storage Hunters
- 13:55 Storage Hunters
- 14:20 Alaska: The Last Frontier
- 15:10 The Island With Bear Grylls
- 16:00 Outback Truckers
- 16:50 Fast N' Loud
- 17:40 Street Outlaws
- 18:30 How Do They Do It?
- 18:55 How Do They Do It?
- 19:20 The Island With Bear Grylls
- 20:10 Storage Hunters
- 20:35 Storage Hunters
- 20:55 Made By Destruction
- 21:25 Made By Destruction
- 21:50 How Do They Do It?
- 22:15 How Do They Do It?
- 22:40 Impossible Engineering
- 23:30 Fast N' Loud

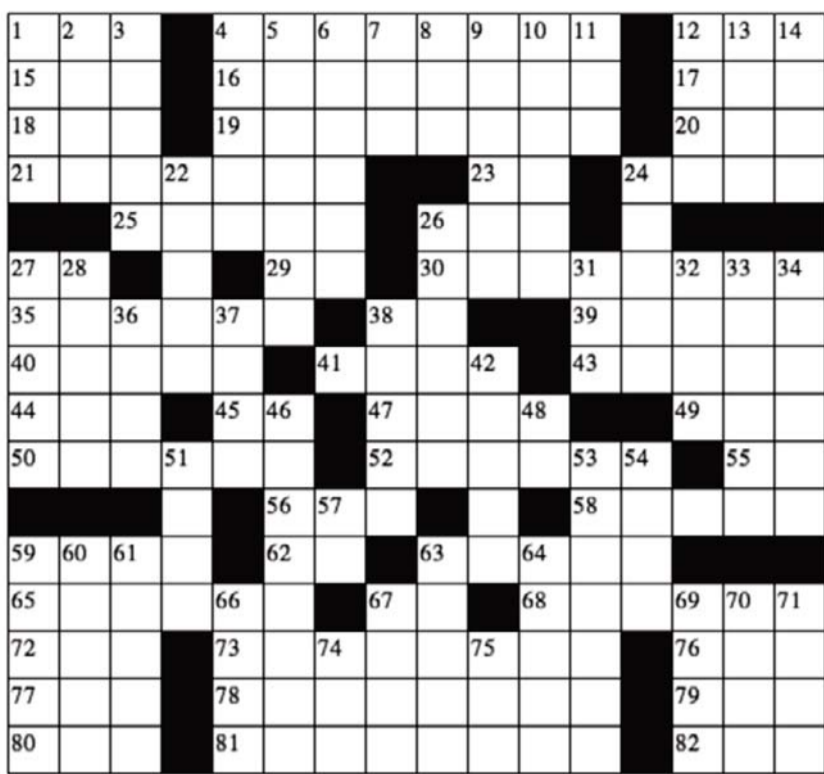


- 06:00 Gravity Falls
- 06:25 Counterfeit Cat
- 06:50 Atomic Puppet
- 07:15 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
- 07:25 Danger Mouse
- 07:40 Supa Strikas
- 08:10 K.C. Undercover
- 08:35 Star Wars Freemaker Adventures
- 09:00 Lab Rats
- 09:25 Lab Rats
- 09:50 Danger Mouse
- 10:20 Supa Strikas
- 10:45 Supa Strikas
- 11:10 Counterfeit Cat
- 11:35 Pair Of Kings
- 12:00 Pair Of Kings
- 12:30 Future-Worm!
- 12:55 Lab Rats: Bionic Island
- 13:20 Lab Rats: Bionic Island
- 13:45 Atomic Puppet
- 14:10 Disney Mickey Mouse
- 14:15 Counterfeit Cat
- 14:40 Supa Strikas
- 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 Future-Worm!
- 17:15 Gravity Falls
- 17:40 Lab Rats
- 18:05 Disney Mickey Mouse
- 18:10 Mighty Med
- 18:35 Right Now Kapow
- 19:00 Atomic Puppet
- 19:25 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything



TAKE CARE ON MOVIES COMEDY HD

CROSSWORD 1548



ACROSS

1. A light touch or stroke.
 4. Elder brother of Krishna.
 12. Inquire about.
 15. How long something has existed.
 16. Red Asian weaverbirds often kept as cage birds.
 17. Aircraft landing in bad weather in which the pilot is talked down by ground control using precision approach radar.
 18. A nucleic acid consisting of large molecules shaped like a double helix.
 19. Insect larva that constructs a protective case around its body.
 20. The most common computer memory which can be used by programs to perform necessary tasks while the computer is on.
 21. A system of conveying mail by aircraft.
 23. A state in northwestern United States on the Pacific.
 25. An Italian poet famous for 'The Divine Comedy'—a journey through hell and purgatory and paradise guided by Virgil and his idealized Beatrice (1265-1321).
 27. A mouth or mouthlike opening.
 29. Denoting a quantity consisting of one more than eight and one less than ten.
 30. Causing alarm or fear.
 35. The wife of a sheik.
 39. Relating to or accompanying birth.
 40. An island (part of Campania) in the Bay of Naples in southern Italy.
 41. An amino acid that is found in the central nervous system.
 43. (computer science) American Standard Code for Information Interchange.
 44. A rapid bustling commotion.
 45. A person who announces and plays popular recorded music.
 47. A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.
 49. 10 hao equal 1 dong.
 50. Any plant of the genus Reseda.
 52. A unit of apothecary weight equal to an eighth of an ounce or to 60 grains.
 55. A metric unit of length equal to one billionth of a meter.
 56. A beverage made by steeping tea leaves in water.
 58. A woman gossip.
 59. (Babylonian) God of storms and wind.
 62. An intensely radioactive metallic element that occurs in minute amounts in uranium ores.
 65. A constitutional monarchy in a tiny enclave on the French Riviera.
 68. Of or concerning Qatar.
 72. Relating to or containing the azo radical.
 73. A swinging blow directed upward (especially at an opponent's chin).
 76. A unit of absorbed ionizing radiation equal to 100 ergs per gram of irradiated material.
 77. The 26th letter of the Roman alphabet.
 78. The largest city of China.
 79. Rare (usually fatal) brain disease (usually in middle age) caused by an unidentified slow virus.
 80. The compass point midway between northeast and east.
 81. A river in northeastern Brazil that flows generally northward to the Atlantic Ocean.
 82. Thigh of a hog (usually smoked).
- DOWN**
1. An informal term for a father.
 2. God of fire.
 3. The hair growing on the lower part of a man's face.
 4. Back and sides of a hog salted and dried or smoked.
 5. Absence of the mammary glands (either through surgery or developmental defect).
 6. (trade mark) Yarn that has an elastic core wound around with cotton or silk or nylon or rayon threads.
 7. A sweetened beverage of diluted fruit juice.
 8. (used especially of commodities) In the natural unprocessed condition.
 9. A statement asserting the existence or the truth of something.
 10. A percussion instrument consisting of a pair of hollow pieces of wood or bone (usually held between the thumb and fingers) that are made to click together (as by Spanish dancers) in rhythm with the dance.
 11. A unit of pressure.
 12. A city in northern India.
 13. A fraudulent business scheme.
 14. God of love and erotic desire.
 22. A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.
 24. French writer remembered for his swash-buckling historical tales (1802-1870).
 26. South Asian deer with three-tined antlers.
 28. Relative darkness caused by light rays being intercepted by an opaque body.
 31. A nucleic acid that transmits genetic information from DNA to the cytoplasm.
 32. A contagious skin infection caused by the itch mite.
 33. (heraldry) Applied to a fish depicted horizontally.
 34. A tumor of the brain consisting of neuroglia.
 36. A body of poetry that conveys the traditions of a society by treating some epic theme.
 37. Scottish sea captain who was hired to protect British shipping in the Indian Ocean and then was accused of piracy and hanged (1645-1701).
 38. A genus of Ploceidae.
 42. Lower in esteem.
 46. A mainly tropical genus of American plant belonging to the family Euphorbiaceae.
 48. A radioactive element of the actinide series.
 51. Tropical starchy tuberous root.
 53. Greek philosopher and astronomer.
 54. The flesh of animals (including fishes and birds and snails) used as food.
 57. (Akkadian) God of wisdom.
 60. Denoting a quantity consisting of 12 items or units.
 61. A positively charged electrode by which electrons leave an electrical device.
 63. Light wispy precipitation that evaporates before it reaches the ground (especially when the lower air is low in humidity).
 64. Short and fat.
 66. Point formed by two intersecting arcs (as from the intrados of a Gothic arch).
 67. English Quaker who founded the colony of Pennsylvania (1644-1718).
 69. (of persons) Highest in rank or authority or office.
 70. A Hindu prince or king in India.
 71. Severe diabetes mellitus with an early onset.
 74. (in golf) The standard number of strokes set for each hole on a golf course, or for the entire course.
 75. The 22nd letter of the Greek alphabet.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You are considerate and tolerant of any complaints that a customer may have today. The decisions and actions of this day have long-lasting effects—there are success and recognition. A new sense of self, a more assertive personal style and a more dynamic approach to life are the mark of the cycle that begins for you now. This afternoon you may spend a great deal of time on the phone. You are a natural-born psychic, an old hand at understanding other people. You also enjoy deciphering dreams and your friends like to get your point of view—often. You portray a sense of compassion as you communicate with others. This evening, you deal with your own personal needs as well as the requirements of family members and perhaps a mate.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Have confidence and carry an attitude of the accomplished individual you are! Look at all the odds you have overcome—be proud of yourself! Soon, you will get into the habit of walking tall. You may not appreciate tradition or someone older or in authority today, but you respect them. This attitude, in turn, will gain you respect. You could find that you are appreciated or valued for your feelings or your ability to act and get things done, regardless of how you feel. This is a time when you can expect a little boost as well as some extra support. A creative project connected with your career works out to your advantage. A colleague wants to know you better, as a friend. A game of chance is a good connection and will build the relationship.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You are reserved today and may try to discourage communication with others so that you can concentrate. If deep concentration is important in your work, mark a time when you can stop for a break. This way, you are more likely to give your best effort all day long. You will find that co-workers respect your work and often comment on the results. Siblings and young people want to control your afternoon. Considering this could be a nice change of pace from your own work—you may want to welcome the promised laughter that is sure to come. If it is possible, a trip to the park, a movie or a shopping trip can be included. On the way home you may decide to pick up some favorite food to enjoy in a relaxed atmosphere. Life is good.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

There is a heightened artistic inspiration that may manifest itself in some creative work. This may mean you will be helping others rephrase or reorganize their project. A fun break during the noontime today may find you with your shoes off, enjoying a bubbling spring or experiencing the beauty of nature in some way. A sense of good cheer is contagious and all the people around you are better for having seen your smile. All of your relationships seem to be on solid ground. Expressing affection comes easily at this time and can do much for your disposition. This evening is a good time for writing on anything about which you feel deeply. You are more creative than usual and you may be inclined to write a little poetry.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

A new sense of self, a more assertive personal style and a more dynamic approach to life are the hallmarks of the cycle that begins for you now. You lead the way on a project, for your originality is better than most. You are self-assertive and independent and many things that have been confusing to you will become clear. Travel and higher education are possible soon. Action, achievement and rapid progress toward your goals occur this whole week. General good feeling and a sense of support make this a happy time. You draw emotional sustenance and a sense of security from ideals, friends and art. To avoid discontent, initiate exciting new activities. A yearning for the stimulation of new ideas and ideals is emphasized now.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You may be busy juggling your time now but you could decrease the stress that comes with your business day by looking at your time as though it was money. There is a need for change, a desire to break away from old schedules and patterns and set new ones. You will succeed at what you set out to accomplish and you will find there is much about attitude. A new sense of self, a more assertive personal style and a more dynamic approach to life are the hallmarks of this time and it all begins now. Doubts fade into the background and reserve is more a thing of the past. It is time for action; your destiny is in your hands, rather than set apart. There is a chance to understand those around you and to have a special time with someone you love this evening.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Luck is on your side today in almost everything you set out to accomplish. This is one of your best overall days and a good day for love. You are self-assertive and independent and many things that have been confusing to you will become clear and focused. Events in the workplace make it easy for you to be original, have breakthroughs and find solutions. Travel and higher education are possible and a great deal of time may be spent with a loved one in discussing the next vacation or adventure. Action, achievement and rapid progress toward your goals are possible this whole week. General good feeling and a sense of support and harmony make this a happy time. You draw emotional sustenance from friends and social involvement now.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

There may be a lot of tension this morning. If this is not from any physical complaint, it could be that your time schedule has been thrown off a bit—progress seems slow or hard to achieve just now. Soon enough, schedules and projects and energies will regain their momentum, and move along at a more proper speed. Meanwhile, look to discover the benefits of any delays. Some things happen for the best, although they may not seem to be the best at the moment of unfolding. Your current situation may demand some reevaluation—things are never as simple or as difficult as they seem. Learning to go with the flow and inserting some flexibility into the day from time to time will create endurance for the long haul—or end results. You gain in positive thinking.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

A period of intellectual creativity has dawned in your life; expressing yourself with flair comes to mean a lot to you. If you are in advertising, creative writing, management, etc., you will find inventive ways to gain the attention and interest of the public. An increase in sales can be expected because of your inventiveness. Fun conversations during break time with co-worker friends may bring a little wager your way. Beating the odds through cleverness is appealing and may lead to an interest in all kinds of financial speculation. This afternoon you will have the opportunity to share some time with a young person. You may be called upon to encourage or instruct regarding educational problems. You are an incentive to others.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

A new sense of self, a more assertive personal style and a more dynamic approach to life are the hallmarks of the energies that begin for you now. Doubts fade into the background and reserve is more and more a thing of the past. Co-workers are helpful and you are intuitive—able to ask the right questions in order to make advancements in the workplace. This afternoon you seem ultra-sensitive. You listen intently to someone else's problems. If your intuitive side is channeled properly—and your sensitive side can merge with your intuitive side—you will quickly find answers for many of life's quandaries. You will be rewarded for any community service you involve yourself with now. You might shop this evening for a special present.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

A new sense of self, a more confident and dynamic approach to life are the hallmarks of the cycle that begins for you now. Doubts fade into the background and reserve is more and more a thing of the past. It's time for action; your destiny is in your hands rather than set apart. Full speed ahead is your motto now, for better or for worse! Be open to new ways of investing through insurance, stocks, coins, stamps, etc. Ideas and interaction with authority figures or older people may be in the forecast now. Working with—rather than against—the flow should be easy to do. You may enjoy a quiet evening with a book or some good music this evening. A trip to the library would be a good side trip before you settle down for the evening.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

The mountain looked magnificent with the fireball of a sun outlining the slopes and glistening on the snow. You know that extreme fun is either waiting to happen or dug into your memory so strongly that you have decided to return to the scene or to write about the event. If you are not near the mountain, you are planning or remembering an adventure that is just as thrilling. The topic of discussion from you and others around you is to talk about the most exciting adventure. If you are naturally a writer, you may decide a series of articles are appropriate. If you are an artist, the expression of your memories can be enjoyed through photography. Today is a good day and after the normal goals are completed, celebrations are enjoyed.

WORD SEARCH

Public Library

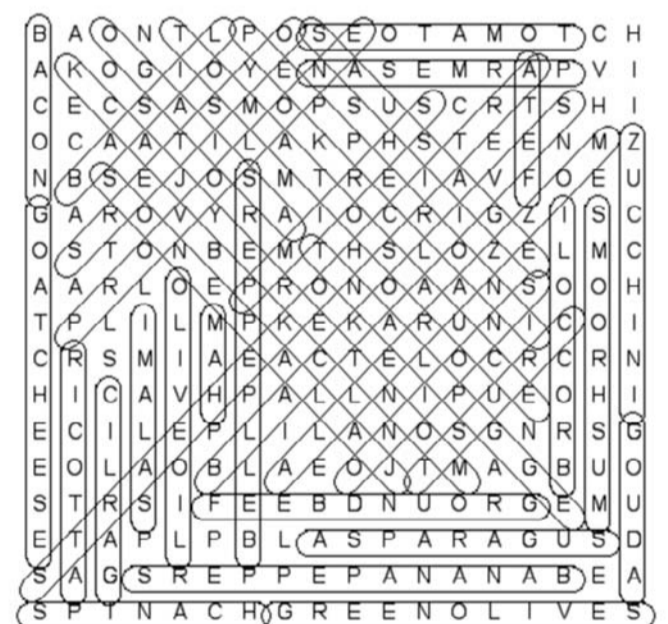
Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell a secret message - a Henry Ward Beecher quotation.



- | | | | |
|-----------------|--------------|-------------|-----------------|
| APPLIED SCIENCE | ENCYCLOPEDIA | MAGAZINES | QUIET |
| ARTS | FICTION | MATHEMATICS | READ |
| BIOGRAPHY | FINES | MOVIES | RECREATION |
| BOOKS | GEOGRAPHY | MUSIC | RELIGION |
| BORROW | HARDCOVER | NEWSPAPERS | RENEW |
| BRANCH | HISTORY | NOVELS | RESEARCH |
| CATALOG | INFORMATION | OVERDUE | RESERVE |
| CHAIRS | INTERNET | PAPERBACK | SHELVES |
| CHECKOUT | LANGUAGES | PERIODICALS | SOCIAL SCIENCES |
| COMPUTERS | LIBRARIAN | PHILOSOPHY | TABLES |
| DICTIONARY | LIBRARY CARD | PHOTOCOPIER | TECHNOLOGY |
| DUE DATE | LITERATURE | PSYCHOLOGY | |

Yesterday's Solution

Pizza



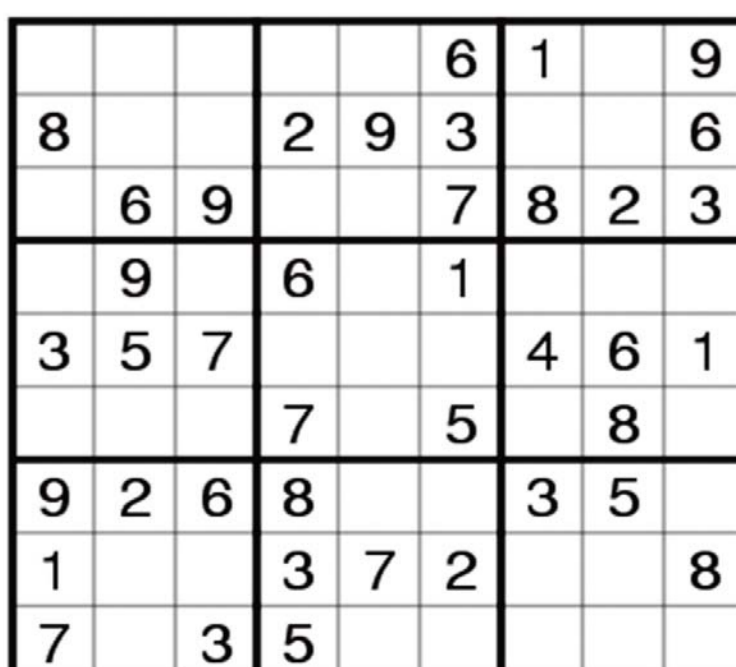
- | | | | |
|------------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| ARTICHOKE HEARTS | CRUST | JALAPENOS | PROVOLONE |
| ASIAGO | EGGPLANT | MONTEREY JACK | RICOTTA |
| ASPARAGUS | FETA | MOZZARELLA | SALAMI |
| BACON | GARLIC | MUSHROOMS | SAUSAGE |
| BANANA PEPPERS | GOAT CHEESE | OLIVE OIL | SHRIMP |
| BASIL | GOUDA | ONIONS | SPINACH |
| BELL PEPPERS | GREEN OLIVES | OYSTERS | TOMATO SAUCE |
| BLACK OLIVES | GROUND BEEF | PARMESAN | TOMATOES |
| BROCCOLI | HAM | PEPPERONI | ZUCCHINI |

The hidden words are: ANCHOVIES CHICKEN MEATBALLS PINEAPPLE

Yesterday's Solution



Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution



For labor-related inquiries and complaints:
Call MSAL hotline 128

Hospitals

Sabah Hospital	24812000
Amiri Hospital	22450005
Maternity Hospital	24843100
Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital	25312700
Chest Hospital	24849400
Farwaniya Hospital	24892010
Adan Hospital	23940620
Ibn Sina Hospital	24840300
Al-Razi Hospital	24846000
Physiotherapy Hospital	24874330/9

Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khalidiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadisiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401
Jabriya	25316254
Maidan Hawally	25623444
Bayan	25388462
Mishref	25381200
W Hawally	22630786
Sabah	24810221
Jahra	24770319
New Jahra	24575755
West Jahra	24772608
South Jahra	24775066
North Jahra	24775992
North Jleeb	24311795
Ardhiya	24884079
Firdous	24892674
Omariya	24719048
N Khaitan	24710044
Fintas	23900322



PHARMACIES ON 24 HRS DUTY

GOVERNORATE	PHARMACY	ADDRESS	PHONE
Ahmadi	Sama Safwan Abu Halaifa Danat Al-Sultan	Fahaee Makka St Abu Halaifa-Coastal Rd Mahboula Block 1, Coastal Rd	23915883 23715414 23726558
Jahra	Modern Jahra Madina Munawara	Jahra-Block 3 Lot 1 Jahra-Block 92	24575518 24566622
Capital	Ahlam Khaldiya Coop	Fahad Al-Salem St Khaldiya Coop	22436184 24833967
Farwaniya	New Shifa Ferdous Coop Modern Safwan	Farwaniya Block 40 Ferdous Coop Old Kheitan Block 11	24734000 24881201 24726638
Hawally	Tariq Hana Ikhlas Hawally & Rawdha Ghadeer Kindy Ibn Al-Nafis Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Salmiya-Amman St Hawally-Beirut St Hawally & Rawdha Coop Jabriya-Block 1A Jabriya-Block 3B Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	25726265 25647075 22625999 22564549 25340559 25326554 25721264 25380581 25628241

INTERNATIONAL CALLS



Afghanistan	0093	Lithuania	00370
Albania	00355	Luxembourg	00352
Algeria	00213	Macau	00853
Andorra	00376	Macedonia	00389
Angola	00244	Madagascar	00261
Anguilla	001264	Majorca	0034
Antiga	001268	Malawi	00265
Argentina	0054	Malaysia	0060
Armenia	00374	Maldives	00960
Australia	0061	Mali	00223
Austria	0043	Malta	00356
Azerbaijan	00994	Marshall Islands	00692
Bahamas	001242	Martinique	00596
Bahrain	00973	Mauritania	00222
Bangladesh	00880	Mauritius	00230
Barbados	001246	Mayotte	00269
Belarus	00375	Mexico	0052
Belgium	0032	Micronesia	00691
Belize	00501	Moldova	00373
Benin	00229	Monaco	00377
Bermuda	001441	Mongolia	00976
Bhutan	00975	Montserrat	001664
Bolivia	00591	Morocco	00212
Bosnia	00387	Mozambique	00258
Botswana	00267	Myanmar (Burma)	0095
Brazil	0055	Namibia	00264
Brunei	00673	Nepal	00977
Bulgaria	00359	Netherlands	0031
Burkina	00226	Netherlands Antilles	00599
Burundi	00257	New Caledonia	00687
Cambodia	00855	New Zealand	0064
Cameroon	00237	Nicaragua	00505
Canada	001	Niger	00227
Cape Verde	00238	Nigeria	00234
Cayman Islands	001345	Niue	00683
Central African	00236	Norfolk Island	00672
Chad	00235	N. Ireland (UK)	0044
Chile	0056	North Korea	00850
China	0086	Norway	0047
Colombia	0057	Oman	00968
Comoros	00269	Pakistan	0092
Congo	00242	Palau	00680
Cook Islands	00682	Panama	00507
Costa Rica	00506	Papua New Guinea	00675
Croatia	00385	Paraguay	00595
Cuba	0053	Peru	0051
Cyprus	00357	Philippines	0063
Cyprus (Northern)	0090392	Poland	0048
Czech Republic	00420	Portugal	00351
Denmark	0045	Puerto Rico	001787
Diego Garcia	00246	Qatar	00974
Djibouti	00253	Romania	0040
Dominica	001767	Russian Federation	007
Dominican Republic	001809	Rwanda	00250
Ecuador	00593	Saint Helena	00290
Egypt	0020	Saint Kitts	001869
El Salvador	00503	Saint Lucia	001758
England (UK)	0044	Saint Pierre	00508
Equatorial Guinea	00240	Saint Vincent	001784
Eritrea	00291	Samoa US	00684
Estonia	00372	Samoa West	00685
Ethiopia	00251	San Marino	00378
Falkland Islands	00500	Sao Tome	00239
Faroe Islands	00298	Saudi Arabia	00966
Fiji	00679	Scotland (UK)	0044
Finland	00358	Senegal	00221
France	0033	Seychelles	00284
French Guiana	00594	Sierra Leone	00232
French Polynesia	00689	Singapore	0065
Gabon	00241	Slovakia	00421
Gambia	00220	Slovenia	00386
Georgia	00995	Solomon Islands	00677
Germany	0049	Somalia	00252
Ghana	00233	South Africa	0027
Gibraltar	00350	South Korea	0082
Greece	0030	Spain	0034
Greenland	00299	Sri Lanka	0094
Grenada	001473	Sudan	00249
Guadeloupe	00590	Suriname	00597
Guam	001671	Swaziland	00268
Guatemala	00502	Sweden	0046
Guinea	00224	Switzerland	0041
Guyana	00592	Syria	00963
Haiti	00509	Serbia	00381
Holland (Netherlands)	0031	Taiwan	00886
Honduras	00504	Tanzania	00255
Hong Kong	00852	Thailand	0066
Hungary	0036	Togo	00228
Ibiza (Spain)	0034	Tonga	00676
Iceland	00354	Tokelau	00690
India	0091	Trinidad	001868
Indian Ocean	00873	Tunisia	00216
Indonesia	0062	Turkey	0090
Iran	0098	Tuvalu	00688
Iraq	00964	Uganda	00256
Ireland	00353	Ukraine	00380
Italy	0039	United Arab Emirates	00976
Ivory Coast	00225	United Kingdom	0044
Jamaica	001876	Uruguay	00598
Japan	0081	USA	001
Jordan	00962	Uzbekistan	00998
Kazakhstan	007	Vanuatu	00678
Kenya	00254	Venezuela	00582
Kiribati	00686	Vietnam	0084
Kuwait	00965	Virgin Islands UK	001284
Kyrgyzstan	00996	Virgin Islands US	001340
Laos	00856	Wales (UK)	0044
Latvia	00371	Yemen	00967
Lebanon	00961	Yugoslavia	00381
Liberia	00231	Zambia	00260
Libya	00218	Zimbabwe	00263
Lesotho	00266		

STATE OF KUWAIT DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



Tel: (+965) 161 Ext: 2627 - 2630
Fax: (+965) 24348714
www.met.gov.kw

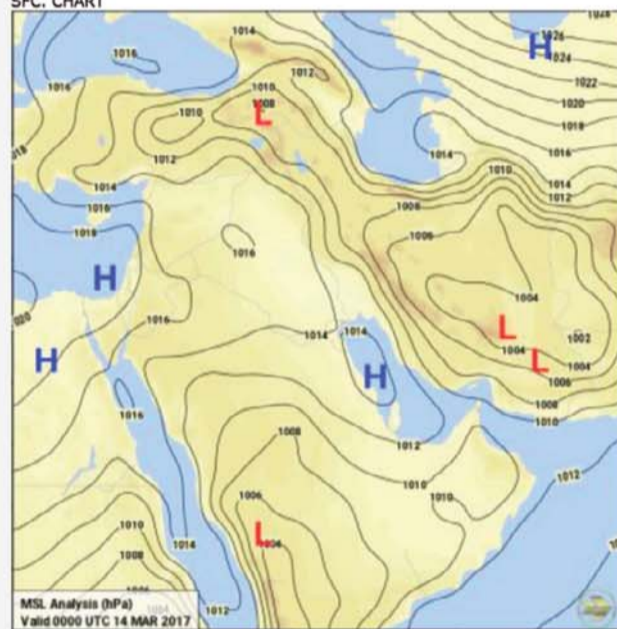
Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

Issued 14/03/2017-07:00 LT UTC +3hr

Max Temperature 26 °C

By Day : Sunny with light north easterly to light variable wind, with speed of 08 - 20 km/h.
By Night : Fair with light variable wind, with speed of 06 - 20 km/h

SFC. CHART



Four-Day Forecast

	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Expected Weather	sunny	sunny + raising dust	sunny	partly cloudy + scattered rain
Min Temp °C	13	14	13	14
Max Temp °C	26	30	26	28
Wind Direction	north easterly to light variable	south easterly	north westerly to northerly	south easterly changing to north westerly
Wind Speed km/h	08 - 28	15 - 40	12 - 35	12 - 32

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	18		26	
KUWAIT AIRPORT	18		26	
ABDALY	13		27	
BUBYAN	14		26	
JAHRA	16		27	
FAILAKA ISLAND	16		25	
SALMIYAH	18		26	
AHMADI	18		26	
JAL ALIYAH	14		26	
QAROH ISLAND	17		24	
UMM AL-MARADEM	17		24	
NUWAISIB	15		26	
WAFRA	14		26	
SALMY	12		26	
MUTRIBA	13		27	

Recorded Yesterday at Kuwait Airport

Max Temp (°C)	32
Min Temp (°C)	19
Max Rel Hum (%)	88
Min Rel Hum (%)	08
Max Wind Speed (km/h) and Direction	60 W
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR	.19 mm

Sunrise	06:00
Sunset	17:55

Prayer Times

Fajr	04:41
Sunrise	06:00
Zuhr	11:57
Asr	15:22
Sunset	17:55
Isha	19:12



PRIVATE CLINICS

Ophthalmologists	
Dr. Abdallah Al-Mansoor	25622444
Dr. Samy Al-Rabeea	25752222
Dr. Masoma Habeeb	25321171
Dr. Mubarak Al-Ajmy	25739999
Dr. Mohsen Abel	25757700
Dr. Adnan Hasan Alwayl	25732223
Dr. Abdallah Al-Baghly	25732223
Ear, Nose & Throat (ENT)	
Dr. Ahmed Fouad Mouner	24555050 Ext 510
Dr. Abdallah Al-Ali	25644660
Dr. Abd Al-Hameed Al-Taweel	25646478
Dr. Sanad Al-Fathalah	25311996
Dr. Mohammad Al-Daory	25731988
Dr. Ismail Al-Fodary	22620166
Dr. Mahmoud Al-Booz	25651426
General Practitioners	
Dr. Mohammed Y Majidi	24555050 Ext 123
Dr. Yousef Al-Omar	24719312
Dr. Tarek Al-Mikhaizeem	23926920
Dr. Kathem Maarafi	25730465
Dr. Abdallah Ahmad Eyadah	25655528
Dr. Nabeel Al-Ayoobi	24577781
Dr. Dina Abdallah Al-Rafea	25333501
Urologists	
Dr. Ali Naser Al-Serfy	22641534
Dr. Fawzi Taher Abul	22639955
Dr. Khaleel Abdallah Al-Awadi	22616660
Dr. Adel Al-Hunayan FRCS (C)	25313120
Dr. Leons Joseph	66703427

Plastic Surgeons	
Dr. Mohammad Al-Khalaf	22547272
Dr. Abdal-Redha Lari	22617700
Dr. Abdel Quttainah	25625030/60
Family Doctor	
Dr Divya Damodar	23729596/23729581
Psychiatrists	
Dr. Esam Al-Ansari	22635047
Dr. Eisa M. Al-Balhan	22613623/0
Gynaecologists & Obstetricians	
Dr Adrian arbe	23729596/23729581
Dr. Verginia s.Marin	2572-6666 ext 8321
Dr. Fozeya Ali Al-Qatan	22655539
Dr. Majeda Khalefa Aliyami	25343406
Dr. Ahmad Al-Khooly	25739272
Dr. Salem soso	22618787
General Surgeons	
Dr. Amer Zawaz Al-Amer	22610044
Dr. Mohammad Yousef Basher	25327148
Internists, Chest & Heart	
Dr. Adnan Ebil	22639939
Dr. Mousa Khadada	22666300
Dr. Latefa Al-Duweisan	25728004
Dr. Nadem Al-Ghabra	25355515
Dr. Mobarak Aldoub	24726446
Dr Nasser Behbehani	25654300/3

Paediatricians	
Dr. Khaled Hamadi	25665898
Dr. Abd Al-Aziz Al-Rashed	25340300
Dr. Zahra Qabazard	25710444
Dr. Sohail Qamar	22621099
Dr. Snaa Maarouf	25713514
Dr. Pradip Gupje	23713100
Dr. Zacharias Mathew	24334282
Dermatology	
Dr. Mohammed Salam Bern University	23845955
Dentists	
Dr Anil Thomas	3729596/3729581
Dr. Shamah Al-Matar	22641071/2
Dr. Anesah Al-Rasheed	22562226
Dr. Abdallah Al-Amer	22561444
Dr. Faysal Al-Fozan	22619557
Dr. Abdallateef Al-Katrash	22525888
Dr. Abdallah Al-Duweisan	25653755
Dr. Bader Al-Ansari	25620111
Neurologists	
Dr. Sohal Najem Al-Shemeri	25633324
Dr. Jasem Mola Hassan	25345875
Gastrologists	
Dr. Sami Aman	22636464
Dr. Mohammad Al-Shamaly	25322030
Dr. Foad Abdallah Al-Ali	22633135

Endocrinologist	
Dr. Abd Al-Naser Al-Othman	25339330
Physiotherapists & VD	
Dr. Ahmad Al-Ansari	25658888
Dr. Kamal Al-Shomr	25329924
Rheumatologists:	
Dr. Deyaa Shehab	25722291
Dr. Mused Faraj Khamees	22666288
Internist, Chest & Heart	
DR.Mohammes Akkad	24555050 Ext 210
Consultant Cardiologist	
Dr. Mohammad Zubaid MB, ChB, FRCP, PACC Assistant Professor Of Medicine Head, Division of Cardiology Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital	25339667
Dr. Farida Al-Habib MD, PH.D, FACC	2611555-2622555
Inaya German Medical Center Te: 2575077 Fax: 25723123	

GOSSIP

Pearl Jam invites ex-drummers for rock Hall of Fame

Pearl Jam has invited all of its former drummers to join the group when the grunge greats are inducted next month into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. The Seattle band led by Eddie Vedder has had five drummers since its inception in 1990 despite an otherwise steady lineup. In announcing Pearl Jam's selection, the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame only included the band's first drummer Dave Krusen and its current drummer Matt Cameron. But Pearl Jam said it was inviting its three others drummers-Matt Chamberlain, Dave Abbruzzese and Jack Irons-to join them at the gala on April 7 in New York. The three "are each individually great players who gave their all to the early recordings and live gigs," the band said in a handwritten statement posted to its social media accounts over the weekend. "Looking forward to seeing them and all the other musicians on the bill," the band said. Pearl Jam said it also had hoped for the induction of two Hall of Fame nominees who did not make this year's cut-Perry Farrell of fellow alternative rockers Jane's Addiction and H.R. of Washington hardcore punks Bad Brains. Krusen was the original drummer

of Pearl Jam, performing on the band's breakthrough debut album "Ten," but left soon afterwards as he struggled with alcoholism. Abbruzzese, who played on the band's popular next two albums "Vs." and "Vitalogy," had voiced dismay at his exclusion. He wrote on Facebook in December: "Whoever is ultimately responsible for the decision that deemed my work with Pearl Jam as an effort that was not important enough to grant me induction knows nothing of what we accomplished." Cameron joined Pearl Jam in 1998 after playing with Soundgarden, another major act in the grunge scene. It was unclear whether the former drummers will perform at the ceremony. Navigating relationships between current and former band members has frequently clouded over the annual ceremony. Last year, former Deep Purple guitarist Richie Blackmore did not attend as the band was appearing with its current lineup.



Vaughn in talks to helm new Man of Steel 2

Matthew Vaughn is reportedly wanted to direct 'Man of Steel 2'. The 46-year-old British director-and-producer has opened initial talks with Warner Bros. Pictures about taking the reins on the second standalone Superman movie starring Henry Cavill as the Son of Krypton, according to website Collider. Plans for the sequel were announced last August and the 'Kingsman: The Secret Service' filmmaker is the studio's top choice to take control of the latest film set in the DC Extended Universe. Vaughn previously pitched a new Superman movie to Warner Bros. back in 2010 before they decided to reboot the character on the big screen with 'Man of Steel' - which was conceived by 'The Dark Knight' director Christopher Nolan and David S. Goyer and helmed by Zack Snyder. Speaking previously about what he believes a Superman film should be, Vaughn said: "I think that's the one thing not to do with Superman, trying to do the serious 'The Dark Knight' version. Superman is about colour and fun, or it should be, for me." Vaughn - who is

married to German supermodel Claudia Schiffer - has experience when it comes to the comic book genre as he was responsible for helming 2010's 'Kick-Ass' and making 2011's 'X-Men: First Class' and he also acted as a producer on 'Kick-Ass 2', 'X-Men: Days of Future Past' and 'Fantastic Four'. 'Man of Steel' was followed by 'Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice' which pitted DC's two iconic characters against each other and acted as a set up to the 'Justice League' film which is coming to cinemas this November. Since those movies the DC Extended Universe continues to expand with the release of 'Suicide Squad', while 'Wonder Woman' starring Gal Gadot hits the big screen on June 2 then 'Aquaman' starring Jason Momoa will follow in 2018. Warner Bros has also confirmed that 'Cloverfield' director Matt Reeves is to take control of 'The Batman', in which Ben Affleck will reprise his role as The Caped Crusader.



THE WHO TO PLAY VEGAS RESIDENCY AS FINAL TOUR ENDS

Rock legends The Who on Monday announced a residency in Las Vegas, putting off retirement as they wind down what they called a final tour. Caesars Palace, one of the landmarks of Sin City, said that The Who will begin playing at the hotel on July 29. The residency will initially be only six shows, although a statement described it as a "first run." The English band, led by 71-year-old guitarist and songwriter Pete Townshend and 73-year-old singer Roger Daltrey, in late 2014 kicked off a tour described as a "long goodbye." The tour is set to end next month in England with five rescheduled shows. The Who will also play an acoustic version of "Tommy," one of the defining rock operas, at Royal Albert Hall in London in two shows to raise money for young people with cancer. The Who has put out

some of the most emblematic songs of the rock era including "I Can't Explain," "My Generation," "The Kids are Alright" and "Who Are You." With angst-ridden lyrics, guitar feedback and volumes at painfully high decibels, The Who is often credited with setting the stage for heavy metal and punk rock. The Who was one of six acts that last year performed the Desert Trip festival in California that was meant to bring together the most influential living rock bands. It will be the first rock band to play at The Colosseum at Caesars Palace since the concert venue opened in 2003. Other performers with residencies at The Colosseum include Mariah Carey, Celine Dion, Elton John and Rod Stewart.

Benedict Cumberbatch to Stop Time in new role

Benedict Cumberbatch is to star in upcoming film 'How to Stop Time'. Following his cosmic role in Marvel Cinematic Universe movie 'Doctor Strange', the 40-year-old actor is to appear in another sci-fi film. The movie is an adaptation of Matt Haig's forthcoming novel and even before the book hits the shelves its film rights have been snapped up by Cumberbatch's production company SunnyMarch and StudioCanal. Haig shared the news on his official Twitter account yesterday, posting: "Look! Exciting news alert! Benedict Cumberbatch is going to star in the adaptation of my new novel. Am so happy." In a separate tweet, he wrote: "Benedict is the only person I could think of to play the part of Tom Hazard. No-one quite like him. So amazing when a wish actually HAPPENS. (sic)" Cumberbatch's alter ego Tom Hazard is a man in his early 40s whom thanks to an extremely rare condition has been alive for centuries. Haig added: "I only finished writing this book about two weeks ago. And now this is happening. It feels fast and surreal. Beautiful, but surreal!" Speaking about the project, StudioCanal UK CEO Danny Perkins said in a statement: "We are delighted to be continuing our successful relationship with Matt Haig as well as build upon our long-running and dynamic partnership with SunnyMarch, Benedict Cumberbatch and Adam Ackland. This compelling novel will make for a powerful film that falls in line with StudioCanal's ongoing commitment to British talent, storytelling and production. We look forward to bringing it to audiences around the world." Haig, a best-selling author whose books have been translated into 30 different languages, has penned his first adult novel in four years. His most recent children's book 'The Girl Who Saved Christmas' - the sequel to 'A Boy Called Christmas' - was published in late 2016 in more than 20 countries. StudioCanal and Blueprint Pictures own the screen rights to that book series. As well as starring in the film, Cumberbatch is also attached to executive produce alongside Jamie Byngh, CEO of Canongate Books, which is publishing the book in July. Cumberbatch will reprise his role as Dr Stephen Strange for 'Thor: Ragnarok' and will follow that up with a spot in 'Avengers: Infinity War' which is currently in production.



Hanson announce 25th anniversary tour

Hanson have announced a 25th anniversary world tour. The 'MMMBop' hitmakers - comprised of brothers Isaac, 36, Taylor, 34, and Zac, 31 - couldn't let more than two decades as a band go by without something kind of celebration and just for their fans they've decided to hit the road for the special milestone. They will kick off 'The Middle of Everywhere 25th Anniversary Tour' in May at Hop Jam Beer and Music Festival in Tulsa, Oklahoma Taylor said: "Making music together for 25 years is a milestone that we had to acknowledge, and what a better way to do it than with an anniversary tour. "This year is not only about the two decades of music, it's about celebrating the incredible community of fans who have been with us, singing along year after year." The tour announcement comes after they revealed in December that they'd "just finished" working on a new festive LP following their success 20 years ago with 'Snowed In', which is slated for release in 2017. The trio revealed tracks including 'Winter Wonderland' and 'Blue Christmas' will feature on their compilation. They announced the news via social media, which saw them post links to their 1997 album, including never before seen footage of when they joined forces to record the popular record. The group shared a string of tweets, which

read: "20 years ago we made Snowed In. Just finished a new Christmas album for 2017 -Z https://youtu.be/ueRMiD-busY via @YouTube "HANSON's New Christmas Album: Ooh Christmas - Z https://youtu.be/1ZvBr3bJZgQ via @YouTube "Live version of Winter Wonderland, studio version will be on the new Christmas album in 2017 -Z https://youtu.be/86kYFNDtNA via @YouTube "Just posted a new Christmas Song on http://Hanson.net part of the members Super Digital Pants album -Z #Merry #ChristmasBall (sic)." Although Hanson have teased the album will be out next year, a set release date has yet to be confirmed. Meanwhile, the brothers have admitted they would love '24K magic' hitmaker Bruno Mars to cover their 90s classic 'MMMBop' because they think he would do the song justice. Speaking previously, Isaac said: "People can't sing the chorus right. Most of the time they syncopate it wrong. "But if Bruno Mars were interested, he'd probably find a way to kill it." Whilst Taylor added: "Someone needs to either make it totally their own in a genuinely unique way, or it needs to be a band that has a sensibility for old R&B. Fitz and the Tantrums could maybe do it."



Oz sparks speculation Yoda is in The Last Jedi

Frunk Oz has sparked speculation Yoda is to appear in 'Star Wars: Episode VIII - The Last Jedi'. The 72-year-old puppeteer was responsible for bringing the diminutive green alien to life in original trilogy films 'The Empire Strikes Back' and 'Return of the Jedi'. Although the Jedi Master died in 'Star Wars: Episode VI' after being visited for a final time by Luke Skywalker (Mark Hamill) he does appear as a Force Ghost to the young Jedi along with Obi-Wan Kenobi (Alec Guinness) and Luke's father Anakin Skywalker, who came back to the Light Side of The Force from his Dark Side alter ego Darth Vader after saving his son from being killed by Emperor Palpatine. Oz was quizzed at the South By Southwest (SXSW) Festival on whether he would be voicing the character again for Rian Johnson's sequel or any other Disney 'Star Wars' film and his cryptic answer has sent fans into meltdown that Yoda is coming back either as Force Ghost again to speak with Luke and Rey (Daisy Ridley) or in a flashback scene. 'The Muppets' puppeteer Oz - who is married to Victoria Labalme - said: "I feel like I'm a prisoner at war here, and I can only give you my name, rank and serial number. To be true to the people who asked me, and they are kind of my family, I have to say I've been asked not to talk about it. I

love Yoda. I would be happy to talk to you about it at the time they let me." Oz's Yoda voice did feature in 'The Force Awakens' when Maz Kanata presents Rey with Luke's old lost lightsaber sparking a powerful series of flashback memories which also featured the voices of Ewan McGregor and Guinness who played Obi-Wan Kenobi in George Lucas' prequels and the original trilogy respectively. Explaining the significance of the voices, 'The Force Awakens' director J.J. Abrams said: "The idea of the voices was, we wanted the audience to feel - but not necessarily be presented right in your face - this idea that familiar, Force-strong voices were connecting with her. At least as well as they could." 'The Last Jedi' will be released worldwide on December 15, 2017, and the returning cast includes John Boyega (Finn), Oscar Isaac (Poe Dameron), Adam Driver (Kylo Ren), Lupita Nyong'o (Maz Kanata), Gwendoline Christie (Captain Phasma), Dohmann Gleeson (General Hux), Anthony Daniels (C-3PO), Andy Serkis (Supreme Leader Snoke) and the late Carrie Fisher as General Leia. While Benicio Del Toro, Laura Dern and Kelly Marie Tran are all newcomers to the sci-fi franchise-Bang Showbiz

Nicole Scherzinger working on new music

Nicole Scherzinger is back in the studio working on top secret new music. The 38-year-old singer has teased her 3 million plus followers on Instagram with a photo of her listening back to her fresh tunes in the studio. Nicole was working late into the night on the music but has spilled no details on the project to her fans. The accompanying caption read: "Nothing I love more. #studio #music #latenight #create (sic)" Following her judging stint on the last series of 'The X Factor', on which she mentored her act Matt Terry to victory, Nicole has been focusing on her own music again. And while in the middle of the TV talent show, the former Pussycat Dolls star was reported to be recording a song with the Black Eyed Peas - Will.i.am, Fergie, apl.de.ap and Taboo - last year. A source at the time: "Nicole met the band members and was laying down vocals until the early hours. She was singing about 'feeling the fire' and 'wanting her way like a holiday'. "Taboo and apl.de.ap went into the recording booth to do their bit first, then Will and Nicole went in before she went back in with Fergie." Nicole let slip in 2013 that she was originally supposed to be part of the band in the early 2000s before Fergie joined as the female vocalist. Will.i.am - who is a mentor on 'The Voice UK' - and Nicole have a lengthy friendship and he helped her become a member of the Pussycat Dolls. Nicole went on to have a solo career after the Pussycat Dolls disbanded in 2010, releasing a solo album 'Killer Love' which featured her number one hit 'Don't Hold Your Breath'.



Saudi film fest head says cinema needs state funding



The head of the main film festival in Saudi Arabia, Ahmed Al-Mulla, poses for a picture on March 13, 2017 ahead of the fourth Saudi Film Festival, which runs from March 23-28 in the Gulf coastal city of Dhahran. — AFP

The head of the main film festival in Saudi Arabia, where cinemas are banned, wants the government to invest in the sector as part of its campaign to encourage entertainment. Ahmed Al-Mulla made the comments in an interview with AFP ahead of the fourth Saudi Film Festival, which runs from March 23-28 in the Gulf coastal city of Dhahran. This year's festival is the first since the kingdom late last year began a cautious push to introduce entertainment, despite opposition from Muslim hardliners. Among the events on offer for Saudi spectators have been the New York theatrical group iLuminate, the Comic-Con pop culture festival, and WWE wrestling. "It's nice to see all kinds of events here and people coming from outside," Al-Mulla said.

But local talent needs to be trained, with support from the government, he said in a telephone interview. "I think they must" fund it, he said, "because this is investment, the real investment". Among directors of the 59 Saudi films to be screened at this year's festival are some who trained overseas, he said. Saudi Arabia has created a government agency to support private firms organizing entertainment events, under a widening "Vision 2030" plan for economic and social reform. The plan also calls for development of an arts and media industry, but with public theatres and cinemas banned,

the sector is starting from a low base. "We are waiting for the change, really. We want to create it from inside, not hosting events only," Al-Mulla said. "We have lots of talent working underground and nobody knows about them." Despite the annual film festival, Saudi Arabia lacks a film industry although female students can study filmmaking at a women's university in Jeddah.

Bigger than ever

Saudi films have also won international recognition. The romantic comedy "Barakah Meets Barakah" by Mahmoud Sabbagh was screened at last year's Berlinale, and in 2013 Haifaa Al-Mansour's "Wadjda" became the first Saudi film listed as a candidate for a foreign-language Oscar. Saudis are voracious consumers of online videos and rank among the world's top viewers of YouTube. Private film screenings are also held in the kingdom, but Saudi Arabia's highest-ranking cleric warned in January of the "depravity" of cinemas and music concerts.

This is the third consecutive annual film festival after it resumed in 2015 following an absence of seven years. The event is organized by Dammam's Society of Culture and Arts, and last year went ahead with permission from the local government. Al-Mulla says this year's festival will be bigger than

ever, even though he laughs off a question about how it will be financed. "We'll arrange for that," he says, adding that some sponsors have been found. The festival moves this year from cramped quarters at the arts society to larger grounds near a new cultural center run by Saudi state oil giant Aramco. The indoor and outdoor screening areas can hold almost 2,000 people. Aside from the new venue, this year's festival will feature a "production market" where filmmakers can meet with local production houses "to make deals", Al-Mulla said.

The festival is also increasing its public education effort. Students will be brought in to watch children's films, local and international experts will hold panel discussions, and the festival is to issue a book on late Japanese filmmaker Akira Kurosawa. The number of films and scripts vying for competition has increased but fewer applicants were accepted for screening in an effort to raise quality, Al-Mulla said. The festival opens with a drama that resonates as the kingdom's efforts to expand entertainment face resistance from conservatives. "Wasati" directed by Ali Alkalthami is based on the true story of extremists trying to disrupt a play at a university theatre in Riyadh 10 years ago. — AFP

PLAYWRIGHT USES ART TO HELP FRANCE FIGHT EXTREMISM

'Jihad' play follows radicals en route to Syria

As France wrestles with questions of security and immigration during its presidential election campaign, a Belgian playwright is using his art as a weapon in the fight against radicalization. Ismael Saidi, 40, has an unexpected hit with his dark comedy "Jihad", which follows three men on their hapless journey from Brussels' Schaerbeek district to Homs in Syria. "I've written this play to say 'That's enough, it has to stop,'" says Saidi, a Muslim. "It's now become more than a play, it's become a real social issue." France was traumatized by violence including a truck attack that killed 86 people in Nice last July and coordinated attacks in Paris in November 2015 when 130 people died. Saidi says writing was a way to "free himself" of the guilt he felt, having dodged the trap some of his acquaintances fell into. He says militants recruited boys like him to fight in Afghanistan when he was a teenager living in Schaerbeek and years later, in 2014, a former classmate posted a photo on Facebook holding a rifle in Syria.

The departure of about 700 French citizens to fight for Islamic State in Syria and Iraq has also made terrorism and immigration important issues in France's presidential race. Centrist Emmanuel Macron, the front-runner, has proposed setting up detention centers to "re-socialize" jihadists returning from Syria and Iraq.

Far-right National Front leader Marine Le Pen would expel all foreigners linked to Islamist fundamentalism, while conservative Francois Fillon has repeatedly warned of the risk of French Muslims being radicalized. The government, which estimates 11,500 people are radicalized in France, plans to spend 15 million euros (\$19 million) this year on preventing radicalization, up from around one million euros in 2014. It's unclear if those funds will remain in place after the presidential election.

The current campaign includes websites to raise awareness of recruitment techniques. Critics say the government has not delivered a coherent strategy to counter radicalization among France's five-million Muslims. But government officials say state-sponsored programs must be supplemented by private projects, such as Saidi's play, which has drawn large crowds in its two-year tour of France and Belgium. More than 700 secondary-school students saw it recently in the northern French city of Valenciennes. "With plays like that, we can really make change happen," said 16-year-old Sarah Moussaddak.

Jihadi utopia

Muriel Domenach, who leads government efforts to prevent radicalization, supports the initiative. "Making Daesh (Islamic State) uncool is very important," she said. Some experts argue former jihadists are the only ones who can reach people at risk. "They have lived it from the inside, they know the invisible threads of jihadi utopia," says French anthropologist Dounia Bouzar, who until last year helped the government train local authorities to fight radicalization. David Vallat, who appears in one government online counter-radicalization campaign, was jailed for five years in the 1990s for joining networks linked to Algeria's Armed Islamic Group. He had previously travelled to Bosnia and Afghanistan. Now, the 45-year-old project manager from Lyon wants to spend all his time telling his story. But Vallat says that without public funding, he cannot make his voice heard. French authorities are reluctant to work closely with former jihadists, wary about whether their reform is sincere. — Reuters

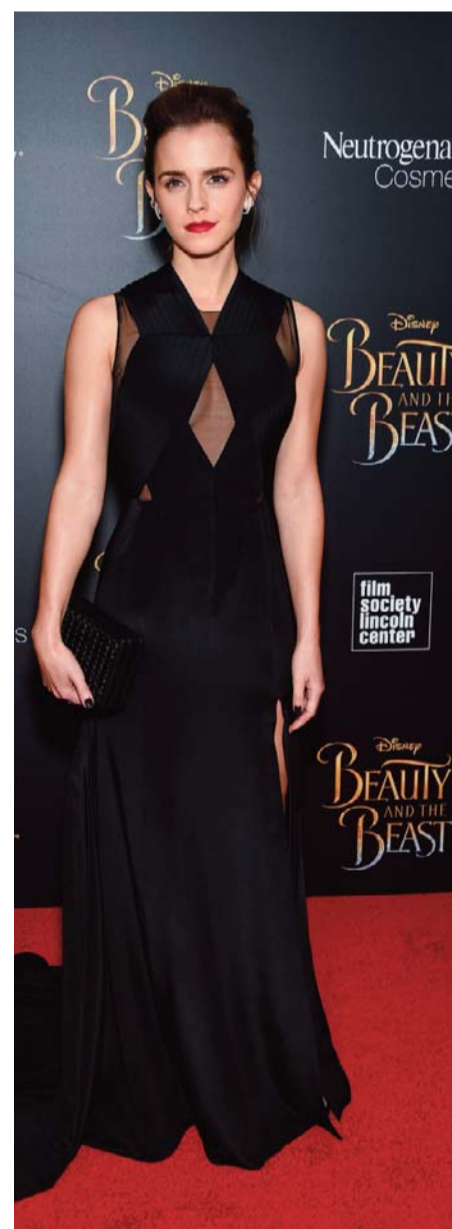


This image released by Disney shows Dan Stevens as The Beast, left, and Emma Watson as Belle in a live-action adaptation of the animated classic 'Beauty and the Beast.'



From left actor Josh Gad, Dan Stevens, Actress Emma Watson and Luke Evans pose during a photocall for the movie 'La belle et la bete (beauty and the beast)', in Paris. — AP photos

Emma Watson is Belle of the ball in 'Beauty and the Beast'



It is a tale as old as time (or one dating back to the 1990s, at least): Disney dusts off an animated classic, adds bells, whistles and real people, and everyone makes a fortune. Since Jason Scott Lee annoyed purists as a grown-up Mowgli in "Rudyard Kipling's The Jungle Book" (1994), the company has churned out numerous big-screen live-action remakes of its hand-drawn favorites, recouping \$4 billion worldwide. The latest to get the Mouse House makeover is "Beauty and the Beast," set for release on Friday with an all-star cast led by Emma Watson, 26, who grew up playing Hermione Granger in the "Harry Potter" films.

No movie will arrive in theaters this year weighed down by as much expectation, in the wake of a 90-second trailer that generated a record 92 million views in its first day online. "Beauty and the Beast" — which revisits the smash hit 1991 cartoon starring the voice of Paige O'Hara as Belle — had a whopping \$300 million production and marketing budget but shouldn't struggle to turn a profit. It is already the fastest selling family film in history, outpacing previous record-holder "Finding Dory," according to online ticket seller Fandango, with analysts projecting a \$150 million opening weekend.

It could also be the most controversial Disney remake in history — and the bar is higher than you might think — having weathered all manner of social media storms over its production and stars. Among the more trivial controversies was an angry fan reaction to the design of teapot character Mrs Potts, who doesn't have a spout for a nose in the new version as she did in the animated classic.

Capturing hearts

More recently, critics made snarky remarks about a revealing Vanity Fair photo shoot by Watson, claiming that exposing flesh wasn't in keeping with the United Nations Women Goodwill Ambassador's feminist image. And then all hell broke loose when it emerged that Le Fou, the sycophantic sidekick to antagonist Gaston, was being portrayed by comedian and actor Josh Gad as a gay man, making him Disney's first ever out LGBT character. The move sparked an international controversy, with at least one theater in Alabama refusing to show the film and the Russian government considering a ban before settling on an adults-only rating.

"What has this story always been about for 300 years? It's about looking closer, going deeper, accepting people for who they really are," director Bill Condon ("Gods and Monsters," "Twilight: Breaking Dawn") told journalists in Beverly Hills last week. "In a very Disney way, we are including everybody. I think this movie is for everybody and I think on the screen you'll see everybody, and that was important to me." Six years after the last of her eight "Harry Potter" movies, Watson — who turned down Emma Stone's Oscar-winning role in "La La Land" — is taking on by far her largest role as an adult. "The tagline of

the movie is 'a tale as old as time' and it's true," said the actress — a fan of the 1946 Jean Cocteau version as well as the 1991 film at the star-dusted US premiere in Hollywood on March 2. "It's been retold in so many different ways... but I think there's just something about the Disney version that was really a telling of it that was so inspiring and really captured people's hearts."



This image released by Disney shows Dan Stevens as The Beast in a live-action adaptation of the animated classic 'Beauty and the Beast.'

Activist

She and co-star Dan Stevens ("Downton Abbey") as the Beast lead a stellar cast including Oscar winners Kevin Kline and Emma Thompson as well as Ewan McGregor, Ian McKellen and Stanley Tucci. Watson told the Beverly Hills news conference that the character from the 1991 movie had helped shape the adult she became, and she wanted her version to embody the same spirit and values. "I love that in our version Belle is not only odd and doesn't fit in — you see her reading and you see her not really a part of the community. In our film, she's actually an activist within her own community," she said.

If you're not a big fan of Disney's live-action remakes, you might want to crawl under a rock for the next few years, as another 13 are in various stages of production. "Cruella" and "Mulan" are both scheduled for release next year, and Tim Burton's "Dumbo," Guy Ritchie's "Aladdin" and Jon Favreau's "The Lion King" are due to follow. "The Little Mermaid" will see Lin-Manuel Miranda of "Hamilton" fame collaborating with legendary Disney composer Alan Menken, while two remakes of "Peter Pan" are in the works along with new versions of "Winnie the Pooh," "Fantasia," "Pinocchio," "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" and "The Sword in the Stone." — AFP

In sensation of 'Get Out,' hints of a Trump-effect

There have been monster gorillas and sharp-clawed superheroes at the box office this month, but the biggest beast of them all has been Jordan Peele's \$4.5 million, race-exploding thriller "Get Out." In just 16 days, Peele's low-budget self-described "social horror" film has already crossed the \$100 million mark. While "Get Out," made by Blumhouse Productions and released by Universal Pictures, doesn't match the hefty global totals of "Logan" or "Kong: Skull Island," few films can touch its extreme profitability — or its firm grip of the zeitgeist. "Get Out" isn't a Redbox, VOD, iTunes movie, Peele said recently on Twitter. "If you don't see it with the theater energy, you'll miss the full intended experience."

And moviegoers have taken the advice. "Get Out" made \$21.1 million in its third weekend, according to studio estimates Sunday, bringing its total to \$111 million. Whereas most movies — especially horror films — drop considerably after opening weekend, "Get Out" has barely slipped. It dropped about 15 percent after its first weekend, and 25 percent after its second. "Get Out," which is the directorial debut of the former "Key and Peele" star, first led the box office the same weekend "Moonlight" won best picture at the Academy Awards. It also follows the spectacular success of the Oscar-nominated "Hidden Figures," which has made more than \$160 million since its no. 1 wide-release debut in early January.

For those who still cling to the old stereotype that films led by black actors are limited at the box office, 2017 is making an already difficult to defend notion downright ridiculous. And

"Get Out" has done it without a big name; it stars British actor Daniel Kaluuya as an African-American photographer whose white girlfriend (Allison Williams) brings him home to meet her family (Bradley Whitford, Catherine Keener). "It's time to put to bed the idea that movies with any kind of cast don't perform at the box office. The only thing audiences care about is whether a movie is good or not," says Paul Dergarabedian, senior media analyst for comScore.

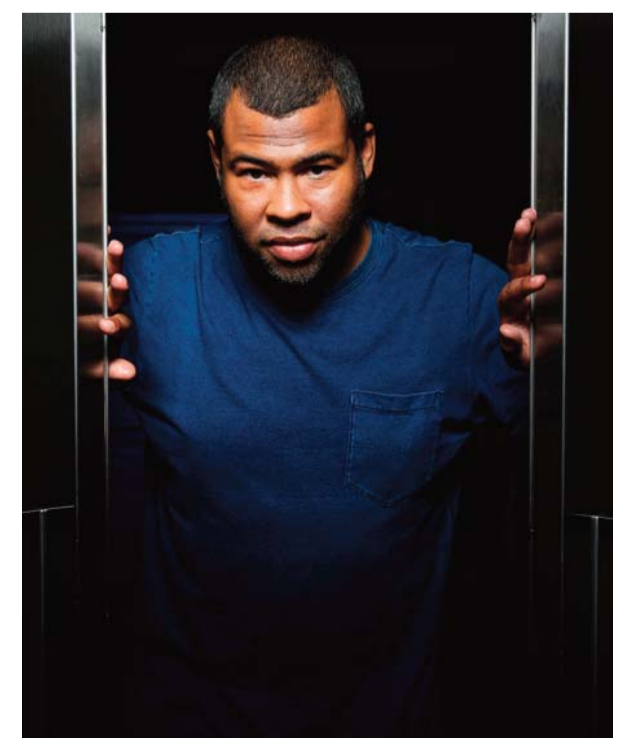
The success of "Get Out," Dergarabedian says, has been driven by its quality (at 99 percent fresh on Rotten Tomatoes, it's the best-reviewed film of the year), its capacity to entertain and its ability to remain in the conversation. "You can't just put this movie in a box," he says. In some ways, "Get Out" — where deep and violent racism is papered over by smiles and protests of liberal enlightenment — suggests the movie theater is already a different place since before Donald Trump's presidency. Peele conceived of his movie years ago as a rebuke to the Obama-era idea of a post-racial America, but it has struck many as an unusually timely film.

Direct parallels

"Get Out" shows how the public racism of (the civil rights era) has hidden itself by burrowing like a ravenous tapeworm into the bowels of America, growing fatter each year as it feeds off good intentions and bad faith," Kareem Abdul-Jabbar wrote in a Hollywood Reporter column that called "Get Out" "Invasion of the Black Body Snatchers" for the Trump era. The comedy

website FunnyOrDie made even more direct parallels, recutting the film's trailer to put Trump — who has defended himself as "the least racist person that you ever met" — in the father's role and Ivanka as the daughter. It's been watched by more than 3.6 million.

Audiences have recently been showing a hunger for films that confront race issues head-on. Raoul Peck's Oscar-nominated James Baldwin documentary "I Am Not Your Negro" has made \$5.8 million since opening last month, an exceptional result for any documentary, particularly a literary-minded one. Ava Duvernay's Oscar-nominated documentary about the historical roots of mass incarceration, "The 13th," has also been a hit on Netflix. "Original" and "though-provoking" are suddenly looking like profitable qualities in a movie landscape that has been (and still is) overwhelmed with sequels, reboots and brand-name adaptations. That's good news for indie distributors like A24 (which released "Moonlight") and production companies like Blumhouse that are forging a more cutting-edge cinema predicated on filmmakers with singular visions. Blumhouse was also behind M. Night Shyamalan's "Split," which, with \$135.8 million in box office, is also one of the biggest successes of 2017. Peele, for his part, has said "Get Out" is just the start for him. He is planning a series of films about our "social demons." — AP



In this photo, Jordan Peele poses for a portrait at the SLS Hotel in Los Angeles to promote his film, 'Get Out.' — AP



Indian revelers take part in the game of 'Huranga' at The Dauji Temple in Mathura, some 100 kms south of New Delhi yesterday. 'Huranga' is a game played between men and women a day after Holi, the festival of colors, during which men drench women with liquid colors and women tear off the clothes of the men. — AFP

Up on the roof, revamping Istanbul's Grand Bazaar

Atop Istanbul's iconic Grand Bazaar the scene of a high-speed motorbike chase in the 2012 James Bond film "Skyfall" — a full force drive to revamp it has begun. The centuries-old marketplace has already undergone a security upgrade after a spate of terror attacks in Istanbul. For the bazaar's traders, the primary concern now is not the restoration but lack of tourists. Round-the-clock workers on the roof take the cats' path to renovate the bazaar, which topped the list of the world's most visited destinations in 2014.

The roof renovation is estimated to cost 10 million Turkish lira (2.6 million euros, \$2.7 million). Work began on July 14 last year — only one day before a coup attempt to oust the government, but the work went on. The restoration of the entire bazaar is likely to cost 200 million Turkish lira and is expected to take four years to complete, but officials add that there will always be work needed at the Grand Bazaar because of its historic identity.

"The Grand Bazaar is a historical place. It's not possible to complete the restoration from today to tomorrow," said Okan Erhan Oflaz, deputy mayor of the Fatih municipality where it is located. One of the largest and oldest covered markets in the world, the Grand Bazaar was a trade hub during the Ottoman Empire which dominated swathes of the Middle East and North Africa for more than six centuries until it collapsed at the end of World War I.

Construction of the marketplace began in 1455, two years after the Ottomans seized Istanbul then known as Constantinople from the Byzantines, under the reign of Sultan Mehmet II-Fatih the Conqueror. With the rise of the empire, the bazaar thrived and by the 17th century it had taken on its

current shape, giving the bazaar its Turkish name Kapalıcaarsi (Covered Market). Situated in Istanbul's historic peninsula-home to the Sultanahmet mosque and Hagia Sophia—the Grand Bazaar plays host to around 3,000 shops where over 30,000 people work.

Shop owners wait Authorities say the bazaar is currently earthquake resistant but what makes it vulnerable is the modifications done by property owners changing its structuring. Over its long history the structure has suffered quake and fire damage. Today it

is in dire need of a facelift, with shop owners lamenting roof leaks and bad air conditioning. Numan, who owns a souvenir shop selling traditional pots and plates, said he believes the renovation will be a plus. "I think it will have a positive impact on the bazaar because there will be air conditioning for the summer and a heating system will be established for the winter after the work is done," he said. Omer, 48, who sells embroidered pillow cases, complained that he has seen no improvement, although shop owners pay a monthly fee of about 75 euros.

"We give money but there's nothing happening. We clean here in the evening and in the morning all in dirt. When it rains, it's afloat," he said. "The roof needs to be fixed. It's much worse in the winter. They are insulating (the roof) but we don't know how it will be." And the Grand Bazaar saw damage to its structure when it hosted the motorcycle chase scene in the Agent 007 film "Skyfall". But Oflaz said the damage caused

'Security doubled'

A slew of attacks blamed on Kurdish militants and Islamic State jihadists over the last year have dealt a blow to tourism in Istanbul, where top destinations such as Sultanahmet were targeted. Turkish authorities say the Grand Bazaar could be a possible target and so they have "doubled security measures compared to the past," said Oflaz. Detector gates, X-ray scanning as well as the deployment of additional police provided by the governor's office around the historic neighborhood are aimed at keeping it "away from a terror threat," he said.

But more than the renovation, shop owners and sales peo-

ple are primarily concerned with getting back to business, longing for the good old days when tourists flocked to the bazaar. "I've been at the Grand Bazaar for 35 years. At that time, it was good, there were tourists, Europeans," Omer said. But now "things are getting worse. People barely pay their rents," he added. Oflaz admitted there has been a decline in the number of visitors to the bazaar from over 90 million in 2014 — though officials have given no specific numbers. The bazaar is an "army in itself" with its 30,000 sales people, said Oflaz. And not only tourists visit, locals do too. "The Grand Bazaar is not that much alone. It is a place where many people stop by all the time," he said. — AFP



This file photo shows Okan Erhan Oflaz, Turkish deputy mayor of the Fatih municipality, posing during an interview on the top of Istanbul's iconic marketplace, the Grand Bazaar, during its renovation in Istanbul. — AFP photos

current shape, giving the bazaar its Turkish name Kapalıcaarsi (Covered Market). Situated in Istanbul's historic peninsula-home to the Sultanahmet mosque and Hagia Sophia—the Grand Bazaar plays host to around 3,000 shops where over 30,000 people work.

Shop owners wait

Authorities say the bazaar is currently earthquake resistant but what makes it vulnerable is the modifications done by property owners changing its structuring. Over its long history the structure has suffered quake and fire damage. Today it



Workers pushing wheelbarrows on the top of Istanbul's iconic marketplace, the Grand Bazaar, during its renovation in Istanbul.



FEATURES



South African artist Esther Mahlangu, 81, poses at her home in Mabhoko Village, Siyabuswa, Mpumalanga.



South African artist Esther Mahlangu, 81, sweeping the floor of her home.



This photo at the home of South African artist Esther Mahlangu in Mabhoko Village, Siyabuswa, Mpumalanga, shows the rings and ankle-wear common to Ndebele women.

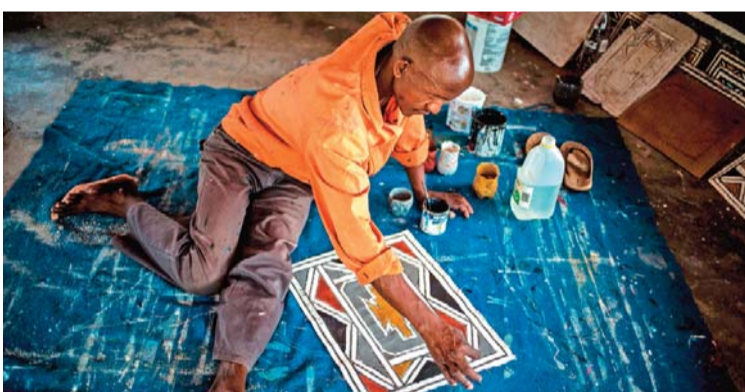
South Africa's 'chicken feather' painter brushes off fame



South African artist Esther Mahlangu, 81, paints at her home.



Photo shows a framed photograph of Mahlangu shaking hands with former South African president Thabo Mbeki.



A student of South African artist Esther Mahlangu, 81, paints a design in her home.

Esther Mahlangu's colorful geometric artwork is exhibited in galleries around the world, but she remains in her South African village unfazed by fame and determined to preserve her ethnic Ndebele culture. The 81-year-old painter and mural artist earned an international reputation with her Ndebele motifs at a time when the art scene in her home country was focused on contemporary styles. Now Johannesburg is hosting a major exhibition for Mahlangu, an elderly black woman with no art training who rose to global acclaim using a skill passed down for generations. With just a chicken feather, Mahlangu first painted mud huts and chipboards before moving on to luxury cars, vodka bottles, skateboards and footwear as her intricate patterns became huge commercial hits.

At home in a dusty village in South Africa's eastern province of Mpumalanga, the sprightly great-grandmother looks nothing like an artist who has exhibited at the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris, the 5th Biennale in Lyon, France, and London's British Museum. She goes about her daily chores, sweeping the courtyard in front of her hut and worrying about crying babies. Unlike many locals, she still dresses in the distinctive Ndebele traditional attire, with heavy beaded necklaces and dozens of copper rings around her neck and legs.

'I'm not intimidated'

"Working with famous people has not changed me," she told AFP. "I am not intimidated by anything and not even once have I changed who I am to fit in with their culture." The only change she has incorporated into her work is replacing natural pigments of cow dung and soil with acrylic paint. Mahlangu's first big international break came in 1989, when she was 54. Her ornately decorated house had caught the eye of French researchers who invited her to the Pompidou Centre.

In Paris, she painted a replica of her hut for an exhibition. Mahlangu's heavily wrinkled face lights up in disbelief when showcasing what she had been doing since she was a child. "I only used chicken feathers, no brushes," she told AFP taking a break from her chores. "I am an ordinary Ndebele woman, doing what I was taught by my mother and grandmother," she chuckled. She said she was amazed by the interest her work attracted, an experience that prompted her to teach the age-old Ndebele skill to youngsters in her village.

"My aim is to preserve the Ndebele culture. I don't want it to get lost with civilization," she said. German car-maker BMW has collaborated with Mahlangu on two



South African artist Esther Mahlangu, 81, poses at her home.— AFP photos

occasions, when she painted the body of their luxury sedans with her iconic Ndebele shapes. Her first collaboration with the company in 1991 made her the first woman to be invited to take part in the Art Car project, following in the footsteps of Andy Warhol and Roy Lichtenstein. "Painting the car was exciting. I never felt under pressure," she said. The car has been displayed in major exhibitions around the world, and in February ended a four-month show at the British Museum.

Recognition at home

South Africa was not quick to recognize Mahlangu's talent, though she has had solo exhibitions in Cape Town. In 2006 she was given a presidential award. "I had to travel to Pretoria to accept it," she said. "It made me proud to be seen as doing something for the people." In her cramped two-room thatched roof hut that doubles as a

makeshift gallery stands a wooden cabinet displaying some of her many accolades. "A lot of people have looked at Esther's work as being more on the craft side," said Craig Mark, director of The Melrose Gallery in Johannesburg.

"She hasn't been really recognized in the visual arts side in South Africa until very recently." The gallery is showing a collection of Mahlangu's latest work, a series of paintings paying tribute to the late freedom icon Nelson Mandela. The paintings were created by embellishing prints of drawings created by Mandela in 2001. At the opening of the exhibition, the painter said she had no intention of slowing down despite her age. "I may no longer have the same energy as I used to, but I can still do everything."— AFP

QATAR MUSEUM REVEALS THE ARTISTIC CONNECTIONS BETWEEN THREE MAJOR DYNASTIES IN LATEST EXHIBITION

A new exhibition, Imperial Threads: Motifs and Artisans from Turkey, Iran and India opened at the Museum of Islamic Art (MIA), under the patronage of Qatar Museums' (QM) Chairperson, Sheikha Al-Mayassa Bint Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani.

The exhibition, which will run from 15th March until 4th November 2017, brings a new perspective to MIA's remarkable permanent collection by showcasing the connection between three major dynasties that marked the start of the early modern period in Islamic art - the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal empires.

Imperial Threads: Motifs and Artisans from Turkey, Iran and India highlights the exchange of artistic and material cultures between the empires, primarily from the 15th to the 19th centuries. The exhibition illustrates the cultural and artistic background of this time by featuring artefacts including carpets, manuscripts, metalwork and ceramics. Dr Mounia Chekhab Abudaya, Curator of the show at the Museum of Islamic Art said: "MIA houses one of the greatest col-

lections of Islamic art spanning over 1,400 years, and we are extremely excited to showcase some of our most exquisite objects from the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal empires in this exhibition. Through this exhibition, we hope to take art and history lovers on a unique journey to truly understand the connection behind these major dynasties.

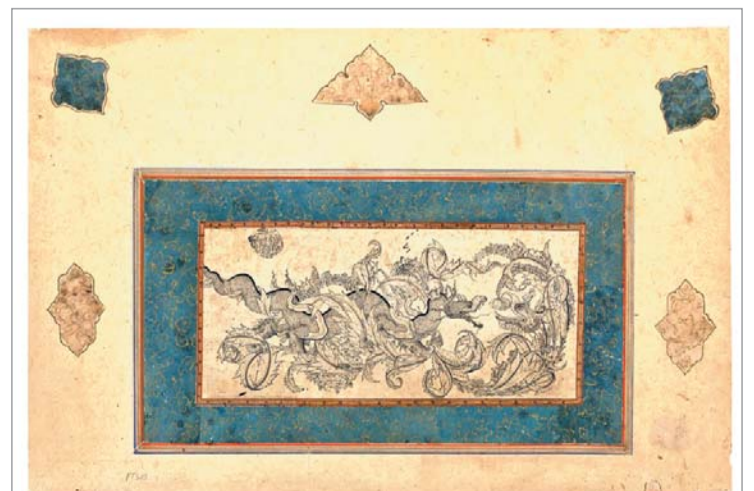
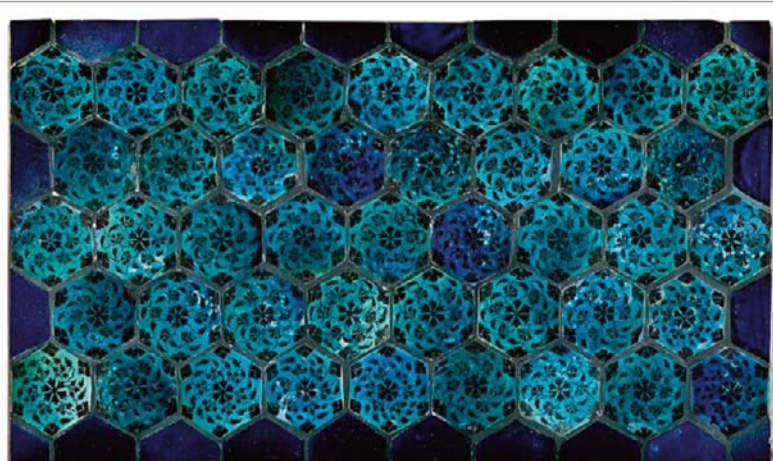
The exhibition is broken down into three sections, each one focusing on a specific empire. The Safavid Empire section (1501-1736) showcases works from the Safavid royal Kitabkhanah, or manuscripts workshop, as well as artistic motifs developed under patrons such as Shah Tahmasp. The Safavids played a major role in the transfer of artistic practices by means of travelling artists to the neighboring Ottoman and Mughal courts.

The second section introduces visitors to the Ottoman artistic production with works ranging from the 16th to 18th centuries. It showcases examples of carpets in addition to other mediums characteristic of

local tribal designs, merged with outside influences coming from Iranian ateliers.

The last section highlighting the Mughal Empire (1526-1858), offers a look into the culmination of artistic styles integrating Safavid, Ottoman and local traditions. Of note are the detailed floral designs that represent a major part of the decorative repertoire, found particularly in carpets and jewelry.

A range of educational programs, workshops, activities and events will be organized alongside the exhibition, which will inspire engagement and enrich young peoples' lives. Workshops and activities being organized include a talk by Artist Faig Ahmed who is inspired by designs from Islamic Art in his contemporary work. There will also be an introduction to Carpet Weaving workshop taking place from 19 till 23 March, 2017.



Lifestyle

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15, 2017

South Africa's 'chicken feather' painter brushes off fame

39



Kuwaiti newspapers clippings mural enters Guinness World Records



A school in Al-Jarha governorate entered the Guinness World Records for a mural made of 149,000 newspapers and magazines clippings depicting the face of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. The 'humanitarian leader' mural

which stands at two meters high and 24 meters wide-was made by 122 students from the Sabah Al-Nasser Al-Sabah high-school under the supervision of teachers and the school's administration. It took two years to complete. — KUNA

